

ATASCOSA COUNTY JUDGES REPORT

The County IT Manager, Justin Vasquez, and I had a great meeting with Frontera Communications and VTX to start a county-wide broadband program with the “American Rescue Act” funds. The idea is to develop a wireless line-of-sight system throughout the areas of the county with poor internet reception. We are reserving \$1,000,000 of the funds for this project. I believe this is important because the internet is not just for recreation. It now facilitates jobs, job hunting, working from home and going to school online. Internet access will encourage businesses locating here and the ease of doing business for those already here. Farming and ranching are big businesses in our county and they are very computer-oriented. This initiative will put us ahead of many other counties our size in Texas. We have received 42 applications for business grants to aid those Atascosa County Businesses that suffered business reverses in 2020 due to COVID. We have designated a committee to process these and apply up to \$1,000,000 in grants. The committee will be reviewing and preparing a recommendation for disbursement to Commissioners Court.

I recommend that anyone vaccinated and exposed to someone with COVID-19 go ahead with your regular schedule and monitor your symptoms closely. You will be contagious if positive and could infect others. The story I hear is that the vaccinated folks are over it quickly with reduced symptoms. The pandemic of COVID-19 is now the pandemic of the “unvaccinated.” The vaccine is available all over Atascosa County. If you have received the shots or had COVID, you can still get the infection. Exposed vaccinated have been spared extreme symptoms, and in most cases, the symptoms have been less severe. You can also still carry the germs and pass them on. Please be careful! There is no reason not to get the shots. I recommend masks be worn when around other people, especially indoors.

Thank you. I pray that God will bless Atascosa County and all its citizens.