FREESTONE COUNTY
COMMISSIONERS COURT

September 2, 2026

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WRITTEN STATEMENT AND SUPPORTING MATERIALS - Submitted for consideration and inclusion with the official meeting record of the September 2, 2026 Commissioners Court meeting.

Preserve what works. Identify what can improve. Support good people. Measure results. Keep citizens informed. Encourage citizens to participate.

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Opening Statement

Judge and Commissioners, before I get into these individual items, I want to explain why I have been asking for records and asking that some of these matters be placed on the agenda.

One thing the military taught me was the value of an After Action Review (AAR). After training, an exercise, or an operation, we asked: What was supposed to happen? What actually happened? What worked? What did not? And what should we change before the next mission? The purpose was not to assign blame. The purpose was to learn. I will refer to that process simply as an AAR throughout these remarks.

That is my objective in bringing these matters to the table. I have accumulated lessons over a lifetime of service, including lessons learned during the last four years while trying to navigate difficult situations involving county government, victim services, and community resources. I want to put those lessons to useful work. When I talk with citizens, they ask questions and repeat things they have heard. I do not want to answer with courthouse gossip or coffee-shop scuttlebutt. I want to be able to say: I asked the appropriate authority, I received the answer, and here is what the record shows.

Those records can reveal something that needs improvement, but they can also let me defend our public servants when criticism is not fair. My experience dealing with county offices has always been courteous, professional and responsive, and I want to say that publicly.

My goal is simple: preserve what works, connect what can work better, use resources we already have before creating new costs, measure whether the solution works, and help our elected officials and employees succeed.

Lessons learned should not die with the person who learned them.

AAR working method

1. FACTS	2. REVIEW	3. LESSON	4. IMPROVE	5. MEASURE

Then repeat. This is an AAR applied to local self-government.

Agenda

Item	Working subject	Citizen objective
19	Victim advocacy	Strengthen the existing VAC system; one clear front door; low-cost referral network; measurable results.
20	Flock / ALPR	Support law enforcement while adopting durable privacy, access, audit, retention and sharing safeguards.
21	Transparency	Make records citizens routinely need easy to find without repeated public-information requests.
22	Countywide healthcare	Treat emergency care as one chain: 911 -> first response -> EMS -> FMC -> transfer -> follow-up; build a long-range countywide strategy.

ITEM 19 - VICTIM ADVOCACY: STRENGTHEN WHAT ALREADY EXISTS

The September 1 public-information response from the District Attorney materially improves the factual picture. The records identify Beth Smith as the Victim Assistance Coordinator and show an established workflow involving victim contact, Victim Impact Statements, Crime Victims' Compensation materials, case-status communication and statutory victim-rights functions. Freestone County does not maintain a separate County Attorney office; matters outside the District Attorney's legal purview may involve retained outside counsel. The correct question is therefore not, “Why do we not have victim advocacy?” The better question is, “How can we make the existing foundation easier to reach, better connected and easier to measure?”

> Let's not replace what Freestone County already has. Make what it has easier to reach, easier to use, better connected, and measurable - while keeping additional costs as low as reasonably possible.

Recommended low-cost model

- Create one permanent “Start Here - Help for Crime Victims” page on the County website, with the VAC contact, victim rights, CVC, Victim Impact Statement, TDCJ/IVSS, protective-order information, shelters, counseling, behavioral-health, substance-use, transportation, veteran and family-support resources.
- Print a wallet-size business card that first-contact personnel can hand to a victim. Put only essential emergency/contact information on the card and one **QR code** to the permanent County page. Updating the webpage should not require reprinting the card.

Make self-referral just as visible as agency referral. A victim, family member, friend, veteran, or person who recognizes that alcohol, drugs, trauma, mental health, or another issue is contributing to the crisis should be able to use the same page to ask for qualified help without waiting for another law-enforcement contact or court date.

- Build a verified referral directory behind the VAC rather than expecting the VAC to become a counselor, treatment specialist, housing specialist, transportation coordinator or VA case manager.
- Use existing state, federal, nonprofit, hospital, faith-based and volunteer resources before proposing a new County position or recurring local expenditure. Faith-based help should be available to those who want it, with secular alternatives available as well. County government cannot solve every personal problem, and it is not its job to do so; its role can be to make the path to qualified help easier to find.
- Use a short 90-120 day working group only if needed to map resources and gaps; give it deliverables and sunset it when the mission is complete.

Substance-use and repeat-contact intervention - give law enforcement a lawful treatment pathway

The Sheriff and deputies should not be left with only two choices when repeated contact shows that alcohol, drugs, mental health instability, or a combination is driving escalating behavior: make another arrest or leave and wait for the next 911 call. The County should map the lawful tools Texas already provides and make sure the people on the front line know how to use them.

The preferred model is stair-stepped and proportional: voluntary referral and peer/family support first when appropriate; outpatient assessment and treatment when the person will participate; treatment or testing conditions available through the criminal-justice process when legally authorized; and court-ordered or emergency intervention only when the statutory threshold and due-process requirements are met.

The practical question for the Sheriff, prosecutor, courts, and community supervision is: when the same citizen or household is encountered repeatedly, do we have a clear procedure, a qualified provider to call, transportation if needed, a funding pathway for an indigent person, and somewhere to send the person if a judge lawfully orders treatment?

This is not a request to weaken accountability. It is an effort to prevent the next DWI, assault, domestic disturbance, crash, arrest or tragedy when treatment can address an underlying condition. Protect the victim. Protect the public. Hold offenders accountable. Treat what can be treated. Intervene before the next crisis when the law allows.

The principle is compassionate but firm. Family, friends and public servants can offer a helping hand, but recovery still requires personal commitment. Sometimes a person needs a good kick in the pants and a helping hand to get back on his or her feet. The goal is not to enable destructive behavior; it is to connect accountability with qualified treatment, appropriate boundaries, peer support, family support and, for those who seek it, spiritual support.

My own faith teaches me to help my neighbor, but experience has also taught me that caring about someone does not make me qualified to treat addiction, trauma or mental illness. Professional help protects the person in crisis and can also help families learn when support becomes enabling. The County can strengthen that bridge without trying to become the treatment provider itself.

Victim pathway - one front door, many resources

FIRST CONTACT Deputy / EMS / Hospital	QR CARD Start Here	VAC Criminal-justice anchor	SPECIALIST REFERRAL Right help, right agency	FOLLOW-UP Did connection occur?

Measure outcomes, not paperwork

Use only a small set of aggregate measures that actually help management. Possible measures should be validated with the DA/VAC before adoption: victims contacted; VIS packets provided and returned; CVC applications assisted; referrals made; successful connections where reasonably trackable; shelter and safety referrals; counseling and behavioral-health referrals; restitution activity; and repeat crisis contacts. Do not create statistics merely to create another report.

In Closing

I am not asking Freestone County to build another bureaucracy. I am asking whether we can take the good people and resources we already have, connect them better, make them easier for a citizen in crisis to find, measure whether we are actually helping people, and give our District Attorney, Victim Assistance Coordinator, Sheriff and other public servants the tools they need to do their jobs as effectively as possible.

ITEM 20 - FLOCK / ALPR: PROTECT PUBLIC SAFETY AND LIBERTY

The position supports effective law-enforcement technology and constitutional safeguards at the same time. The issue is not whether we trust today's officials. Good policy should remain sound under an administration we cannot foresee.

> We do not need to fear technology. We need to govern it. I am not asking Freestone County to choose between law enforcement and liberty; I am asking us to establish the rules that allow us to protect both.

Core policy safeguards

- Purpose and scope: define lawful public-safety uses and prohibited uses.
- Authorized users and training: individual accounts; no shared credentials; least-privilege access.
- Documented search justification and verification before enforcement action.
- Audit logs, supervisory review, misuse investigation and consequences.
- Limited retention and documented destruction rules.
- Controlled interagency/network sharing and vendor safeguards.
- Protection for lawful First Amendment activity and other constitutionally protected conduct.
- Incident response and citizen complaint process.
- Annual review and review after any material technology, vendor, legal or network change.
- Publish the adopted policy on the County website in a predictable location, preferably as a text-searchable PDF, while protecting genuinely sensitive operational details.

Published policy examples that can give Freestone County direction

Brazoria County, Texas: its public LPR safeguards page emphasizes countywide law-enforcement cooperation, constitutional protections, responsible use, transparency, and public access to system-use information through a transparency portal.

Texarkana, Texas: its ALPR directive limits use to official and legitimate law-enforcement purposes and expressly ties ALPR use to legal and constitutional limitations, privacy concerns, and accepted ethical standards.

Wasatch County Sheriff, Utah: its published policy requires legitimate law-enforcement purpose, individual login/password access, access logs identifying the user/date/time, recorded search justification, and regular audits.

Sutter County Sheriff, California: its published order requires official use only, privacy safeguards, and verification of an ALPR match before enforcement action is taken.

History shows that surveillance technology can be used by governments to monitor, intimidate or suppress lawful dissent. Modern China is a prominent example of pervasive state surveillance. Freestone County should make clear in writing that ALPR or similar technology will never be used merely because a person is engaged in lawful political, religious, journalistic, associational or other First Amendment-protected activity. Americans have sacrificed too much for constitutional liberty to leave that line undefined.

These are examples for study, not language to copy blindly. A Freestone County policy should be drafted by Sheriff Shipley with District Attorney Evans and retained outside counsel, as appropriate, based on Texas law, the Texas Constitution, the U.S. Constitution, the County's actual technology and sharing arrangements, and the level of transparency the Court and Sheriff believe will preserve public trust. Once adopted, the policy should be publicly posted on the County website, preferably under the Sheriff's page and in a text-searchable PDF.

Judge Lloyd Lane has publicly stated that Freestone County does not own or operate Flock cameras and that I-45 cameras would belong to the state. That statement is useful public information, but it does not, by itself, answer every question about access, searches, sharing, or future use. The opportunity is to establish policy before controversy, not after it.

In Closing

There is a fine line between protection and abuse, and good policy helps us draw that line before anyone crosses it. The same technology can protect liberty when governed by law, policy, accountability and constitutional restraint. Let us put those guardrails in writing before we ever need them.

ITEM 21 - TRANSPARENCY: MAKE ROUTINE INFORMATION ROUTINELY AVAILABLE

Public-information requests are not a presumption of wrongdoing. They are one way citizens establish facts. But the best public-information request is often the one a citizen never has to file because routine records are already posted, current and searchable.

Practical transparency standard

- Post Commissioners Court agendas, approved minutes and supporting public materials in a predictable location and naming format. Whenever practical, post documents as text-searchable PDFs rather than image-only scans so a citizen can open a file and use a normal word search to find a name, subject, vote or dollar amount.
- Post adopted budgets, periodic financial reports and major amendments with clear fiscal-year labels.
- Post commonly requested policies, public contracts/MOUs when legally releasable, and public-facing program contacts.
- Use a simple “last updated” date so citizens can distinguish current information from archives.
- Assign ownership for each webpage/document category so maintenance is part of the normal workflow rather than an occasional cleanup.
- Keep confidential, privileged, security-sensitive and legally protected information protected; transparency is not indiscriminate disclosure.

Nondisclosure / confidentiality request - status and purpose

This inquiry remains open. I met with the District Clerk and explained that, if no responsive nondisclosure, confidentiality, or similar agreement is on file, a short written confirmation is sufficient. I am also awaiting written responses from Commissioners Court and the individual commissioners or offices to which the request was directed concerning whether the Court, a commissioner, or another appropriate County authority signed, received, or possesses such an agreement. A written response gives citizens and the County a paper trail that can be referenced later.

The purpose is not to treat confidentiality as wrongdoing. Legitimate confidentiality can protect trade secrets, proprietary technology, active economic-development negotiations, privileged legal advice, law-enforcement information, cybersecurity or public-safety information. The question citizens ask me is simply whether an agreement exists and, if it does, what lawful purpose it serves.

A public statement is helpful, but a written records response creates the paper trail I can accurately rely upon when a citizen asks. If nothing exists, say so in writing and the question can be closed. If something exists, identify what can lawfully be identified and the legal basis for any portion that cannot be released.

Working principle: if something is public, make it public. If something is lawfully confidential, protect it and explain as much as the law allows about why.

> The goal is not to make employees answer more questions. The goal is to organize routine public information so they have to answer fewer repetitive questions.

ITEM 22 - COUNTYWIDE HEALTHCARE: THINK IN SYSTEMS, NOT SILOS

In combat medicine, saving a life did not begin at the hospital. It was a chain. Rural emergency care works the same way: 911 -> first responder -> EMS -> emergency department -> stabilization -> ground or air transfer when needed -> regional specialty care -> follow-up. A weak link anywhere affects the outcome.

What is already known

- Freestone Medical Center states that in 2026 it began transition to Rural Emergency Hospital designation and continues 24/7 emergency care, observation, surgery, imaging, laboratory, respiratory and outpatient services.
- FMC describes its emergency department as the only 24/7 ER in Freestone County and a nine-bed Level IV trauma center focused on rapid stabilization.
- Official local records identify the Fairfield Hospital District as the hospital taxing district associated with FMC. Separate records identify the Teague Hospital District
- The healthcare question should therefore be countywide coordination, not an assumption that every entity has the same legal authority, tax base or mission.

A local example of consolidation already working: countywide public-safety communications

Freestone County has already moved toward shared public-safety infrastructure through its county dispatch center and countywide communications upgrades. Heart of Texas Council of Governments records show state grant funding for new dispatch consoles at the Freestone County Dispatch Center to improve communications among law enforcement, fire and other first responders. The County also accepted major funding for first-responder radio upgrades.

That is the same systems concept being proposed for healthcare: separate agencies can retain their missions while sharing infrastructure that works better when approached countywide. We consolidated 911 dispatch and upgraded interoperable communications because emergencies do not respect jurisdictional lines. A medical emergency is no different. This is not a proposal for government-controlled healthcare; Commissioners Court should not make individual medical decisions for citizens. It is a proposal for county leadership to help coordinate the public infrastructure that supports emergency care.

Recommended 360-degree inventory before new spending

Link	Questions to answer	Possible measures
911 / dispatch	Coverage, communications, call transfer, redundancy	Call-processing time; outages
First response	Law enforcement/volunteer medical response, AED/bleeding control	Training coverage; equipment readiness
EMS	Stationing, staffing, mutual aid, transport availability	Response/turnaround; mutual aid
FMC / ER	Capabilities, REH model, observation, stabilization	ER volume; transfer volume/time
Transfer	Ground/air partners, weather backup, receiving hospitals	Acceptance/transfer time

Follow-up	Primary care, behavioral health, indigent care, transport	Successful connection; avoidable repeat use

Long-range question

As Freestone County grows, what should our countywide emergency-healthcare system look like five, ten and twenty years from now - and what should we begin doing today to get there?

This presentation does not assume that consolidation will lower taxes, and it does not ask the Court to decide consolidation tomorrow. It asks for the conversation and the analysis: define the service area, determine who currently pays and who receives the benefit, model several funding structures, identify outside revenue and grants, and determine whether a countywide approach would be stronger, fairer and more sustainable than the present fragmented structure.

What consolidation would require - opening legal framework, not a final legal opinion

Texas treats school districts and hospital districts as separate local taxing units. A property may be taxed by the county, a school district, a city and a hospital or other special-purpose district at the same time. The school district's tax rate or school-finance recapture rules do not themselves set a hospital district's rate or boundaries.

For taxpayers, the practical connection is cumulative burden, not legal control: school-district taxes and hospital-district taxes are separate levies imposed by separate taxing units. Changes in school finance or recapture do not automatically change a hospital district's tax authority, but future state law and appraisal policy can affect the overall local tax environment. That is another reason projected industrial revenue should be modeled conservatively rather than treated as guaranteed.

Hospital-district restructuring is different. Current Texas law gives both Fairfield Hospital District and Teague Hospital District their own local-law dissolution procedures, and each requires approval by a majority of that district's voters voting in a dissolution election. Separately, Chapter 282 of the Health and Safety Code provides a voter-approved path for creating a hospital district in a county of 75,000 or less, but a new district may not include territory already inside another hospital district. That suggests that any true countywide replacement would require coordinated legal steps, elections, and possibly local enabling legislation. County counsel and the state legislative delegation should determine the exact path before any proposition is proposed.

Accordingly, today's request is not “consolidate the districts.” It is: begin the conversation. Convene the hospital districts, FMC, EMS, County, Sheriff, appraisal and finance experts, and state legislative delegation; map the present tax and service boundaries; model the alternatives; determine the legal path; and return with facts before anyone asks voters to approve a structural change.

Proposed stakeholder study committee - facts before a proposition

I propose a temporary, mission-specific stakeholder committee to investigate the countywide healthcare question and report its findings. This would not be a permanent bureaucracy, and it would not begin with a predetermined answer. Its purpose would be to gather facts, compare workable choices and give the citizens a clear presentation before any structural change or election is considered.

- The committee should include representatives from the Fairfield and Teague hospital districts; Freestone Medical Center; EMS; volunteer fire departments; the Sheriff's Office; the County; physicians, nurses and transfer partners; appraisal, finance and legal professionals; and citizen-taxpayer representatives from both inside and outside the present hospital-district boundaries. The Court should invite any other entity whose experience is necessary to understand the full chain of care.

Sheriff Shipley should be at the table because he is elected countywide, has substantial credibility in the community, sees where law enforcement, behavioral health, EMS, emergency stabilization and transport intersect, and has a direct interest in securing the best lawful care for his deputies and staff. That public confidence is measurable: the 2024 county results report 7,800 votes for Sheriff Shipley - the largest total among the listed county-office candidates and 300 more votes than the Trump-Vance ticket received in Freestone County.

The committee's charge should be specific:

- Map the present service areas, taxing boundaries, assets, debt, staffing, call volumes, transfers, indigent-care responsibilities and known gaps.
- Compare the status quo, stronger contracts and shared services, boundary changes, and a possible countywide replacement - without presuming which option is best.
- Model tax and funding effects under conservative, expected and high-growth assumptions, and identify grants or outside revenue that could reduce local burden.
- Hold public listening sessions, publish a written factual report and recommendations, present the findings to the citizenry, and sunset when that assignment is complete.

Rural Texas examples worth studying

Comanche County offers a completed rural example. In 2001, the Legislature authorized the dissolution of the DeLeon and Comanche County hospital districts and creation of the Comanche County Consolidated Hospital District. A coordinating committee with representatives from both communities researched the question and explained the proposal publicly before voters acted. This does not prove that Freestone County should copy Comanche County; it proves that rural communities can study a difficult question together and put a structured choice before their voters.

Two unsuccessful pathways are also instructive. The Legislature authorized voter-controlled countywide proposals involving the Gainesville and Muenster districts in Cooke County and the Ballinger and North Runnels districts in Runnels County, but current taxing records show those districts remain separate. Their experience is a reminder that legislation can open the door, but local voters keep the final say. A Freestone County committee should study both completed and uncompleted efforts to learn what built trust, what raised concern and what facts citizens needed.

Projected growth from a data center, Calpine expansion and Fairfield Lake development may materially strengthen the future tax base, but projected value is not guaranteed revenue. Construction schedules, abatements, taxable-value treatment, depreciation, state policy changes and future legislative decisions can all affect what ultimately reaches local tax rolls. A long-range plan should model conservative, expected and high-growth scenarios rather than spend anticipated revenue before it exists.

This is not a proposal for Commissioners Court to control healthcare decisions. It is a proposal for county leadership to convene the people who do have the authority and expertise to determine whether the financing, EMS, emergency-department and transfer system can be made stronger and fairer countywide.

One workforce-benefit concept worth studying is whether the County, hospital district and hospital management can lawfully establish a line-of-duty benefit for county employees and first responders injured while serving the public - for example, absorbing or waiving qualifying local stabilization costs that are not otherwise covered, followed by transfer or specialty care according to medical best practices. Even if our cash compensation proves average, a strong benefits package and a community that visibly stands behind the men and women serving it can improve recruitment, retention and morale. Any arrangement should be reviewed for hospital, insurance, tax, employment-benefit and federal emergency-care requirements before adoption.

CROSS-CUTTING GOVERNANCE: PEOPLE, RETENTION AND CITIZEN SERVICE

Compensation and retention

The compensation records request is included briefly to explain its purpose; any substantive compensation debate should occur under a properly posted agenda item. The purpose is to establish a factual basis for comparing Freestone County with surrounding and similarly situated counties and, where appropriate, the private-sector value of comparable responsibility.

> I never want Freestone County to be in a position where a failure is explained by saying, "You get what you pay for." Good public servants are difficult to replace. Once we identify good people, there is value in keeping them.

- Compare total compensation, not salary alone: base pay, supplements, benefits, retirement, allowances, leave, certification pay and other material compensation.
- Compare scope: budget, staff, statutory duties, after-hours availability, risk, public accountability and complexity.
- Use surrounding counties and similarly sized Texas counties; do not cherry-pick only high-paying comparators.

The same records are being requested from surrounding and comparable counties so the eventual recommendation can be based on objective total-compensation and workload comparisons. The County may already possess salary surveys, compensation studies or comparator work used in prior pay decisions; if so, those existing studies should be incorporated rather than duplicated. The goal is factual comparison, not a predetermined raise.

- Do not assume the answer in advance. If the data show underpayment, say so. If they do not, say that too.
- Connect pay to recruitment, retention, continuity, competence and taxpayer value - not simply to rewarding officeholders.

Culture of competence

If Freestone County ever has to answer to a regulator, auditor, the Texas Rangers, or state or federal oversight, the County should be able to demonstrate that it recruits competent people, values them, trains them, gives them appropriate tools, encourages interdepartmental collaboration, welcomes good ideas, recognizes initiative, and corrects problems when they are identified.

> Good government is not produced by a policy manual sitting on a shelf. It is produced by good people operating within good systems.

Citizen responsibility

Citizenship does not end with criticism or even with voting. No County Judge, Commissioner, Sheriff, prosecutor or other official can be a subject-matter expert in every problem county government encounters 365 days a year. A small county can benefit from expertise already present among its citizens without putting every expert on the payroll.

- Vote and encourage others to vote.
- Volunteer where appropriate - elections, boards, working groups, community organizations and service projects.
- Bring facts, not rumors; bring possible solutions, not only complaints.
- Offer professional and life experience when it can help solve a public problem.

- Recognize good service as readily as we criticize poor service.

Representative government was never intended to mean that we elect a handful of people and the rest of us become spectators. Elected officials have responsibilities, and citizens have responsibilities. Good local government happens when both fulfill them.

10,000 VOTER CHALLENGE - CIVIC PARTICIPATION

The 10,000 Voter Challenge is a civic-participation initiative, not a partisan turnout operation. It is not 10,000 Republicans or 10,000 Democrats. It is 10,000 informed Freestone County citizens exercising their right and responsibility to vote. An uncontested courthouse is no reason for an empty polling place.

Not 10,000 Republicans. Not 10,000 Democrats. 10,000 citizens.

The numbers behind the challenge

- The Texas Secretary of State reported 13,398 registered voters in Freestone County in March 2026. A turnout of 10,000 would equal approximately 74.6% of that registration figure - almost exactly three-quarters of the voter roll. Freestone County's final ranking among the 254 counties can be known only after statewide final results are available.
- The Secretary of State's historical table shows that the highest Freestone County voter count from 1988 through 2022 was 8,678 in 2020, a 69.53% turnout. The highest turnout rate shown was 70.53% in 1992. Using the March 2026 registration figure, reaching 10,000 would exceed the 2020 count by 1,322 votes and the historical high rate by about 4.1 percentage points.
- The certified 2026 candidate summary identifies 13 county-level offices: 11 with one regular-ballot candidate and two contested county races. It also identifies 21 contested races above the county level, for 23 contested races overall in the quick reference.

A locally uncontested office does not make a ballot meaningless. A vote can affirm an unopposed public servant, while the same ballot helps decide competitive federal, statewide, legislative, appellate, and county contests. Accountability works both ways: citizens should speak when something needs improvement and should also show support when public service is good.

Ten thousand informed voters

When I say I want 10,000 citizens to vote, I do not simply mean show up. I want 10,000 informed voters. Read the news. Study our history. Look at the issues, the candidates' records, and, when they have held public office, their voting records. Do not rely only on a campaign commercial, mailer, social-media post, or somebody else's opinion. Do your homework. Then decide which candidate best reflects your values, your priorities, and the future you want for your children and grandchildren. We do not tell people how to vote; we encourage them to learn, decide for themselves, and vote.

Rally around citizenship

I have seen Freestone County rally before. In March 1996, I hosted Pat Buchanan as my personal guest here in Freestone County, and local leaders and citizens helped us pull that event together. That event was political. The lesson I carry forward is not partisan: it is what this community can accomplish when people get involved and work together.

Thirty years later, I am not asking Commissioners Court to rally around a candidate or a party. I am asking the Court to rally around citizenship. I am not asking Commissioners Court to endorse my politics. I am asking Commissioners Court to endorse participation in our Republic. We worked together then. We can work together again. Rural Texans are going to have to carry the day - and Freestone County ought to lead from the front.

CLOSING STATEMENT

Judge and Commissioners, I am not bringing these things before you because I think Freestone County is broken. Quite the opposite. I believe we have something worth taking care of.

The military taught me to conduct an AAR: preserve what worked, identify what did not, capture the lesson, and make the next mission better. That is what I am trying to do here.

If something works, let us protect it. If something can work better, let us improve it. If two departments can solve something by working together, let us connect them. If an existing state, federal, nonprofit, church, volunteer or community resource can meet a need, let us use it before asking our taxpayers for another dollar. And when we find good people serving this county, let us value them and do what we reasonably can to keep them.

I also want my fellow citizens to hear conversations like this. I want them to see that they can come into this courtroom, respectfully bring an idea or criticism to their elected officials, be heard, disagree when necessary, work together when possible, and still walk out the door as neighbors.

Citizens should not just bring complaints to the courthouse. When we can, we ought to bring solutions - and occasionally roll up our sleeves and help implement them.

That is what local self-government is supposed to look like.

Preserve what works. Improve what can improve. Value good people. Measure results. Invite citizens to participate.

Respectfully submitted and at the Court's service, as requested,

Robert P. Sharpe

AFTER ACTION REVIEW - PROPOSED FOLLOW-UP CHECKLIST

Subject	30-day question	90-120 day question	Annual question
Victim advocacy	Is the public front door clear?	Are referral gaps mapped and low-cost fixes implemented?	Are victims reaching services more reliably?
ALPR	Who has access and under what written rules?	Are audit/retention/sharing safeguards adopted?	Did policy, technology or law materially change?
Transparency	Which routine records are hardest to find?	Are ownership and posting schedules established?	Are requests/rework decreasing?
Healthcare	What is the actual emergency-care chain?	Where are the highest-risk gaps and outside funding options?	Did response/transfer/access measures improve?
People / compensation	Are comparator records complete?	What does objective market comparison show?	Are recruitment/retention trends improving?
Citizen participation	Are volunteer pathways visible?	Did working groups produce deliverables and sunset?	Did participation and turnout improve?

Sources

Victim advocacy

- Freestone County District Attorney public-information response supplied September 1, 2026: Victim Impact Statement sample; sample victim letter; Crime Victims' Compensation application and brochure; 2024, 2025, and 2026 budget materials; Victim Assistance Coordinator job description; and TDCJ's “It's Your Voice” material.

ALPR / Flock

- Freestone County Flock/ALPR Statement and Policy Recommendations v2; public statement by County Judge Lloyd Lane concerning County ownership and operation of Flock cameras and cameras along I-45.
- Texas Department of Public Safety ALPR guidance; International Association of Chiefs of Police ALPR guidance; Brazoria County, Texas, LPR Citizen Privacy Safeguards; Texarkana, Texas, Police Directive 7.40.1; Wasatch County Sheriff Policy 427; and Sutter County Sheriff Automated License Plate Reader Program.

Transparency

- Freestone County Commissioners Court Information and Commissioners Court Dates pages; Freestone County Clerk page.
- Texas Attorney General, Public Information Act Handbook; Texas Government Code Chapter 552.

Healthcare

- Freestone Medical Center official pages: About, Emergency Department, District Information, District Election, and published district minutes.
- Heart of Texas Council of Governments records concerning Freestone County Dispatch Center equipment and first-responder communications funding.
- Texas Comptroller Property Tax Assistance materials; Texas Constitution Article IX; Special District Local Laws Code Chapters 1015 and 1104; and Texas Health and Safety Code Chapter 282.
- Texas Legislature Online, S.B. 1811 (77th Legislature), authorizing the Comanche County Consolidated Hospital District; Comanche Chief, June 6, 2002, public explanation by the Comanche-DeLeon Consolidation Coordinating Committee.
- Texas Legislature and Legislative Reference Library materials for H.B. 3132 (77th Legislature) and S.B. 2517 (81st Legislature); current Cooke and Runnels county appraisal-district taxing-unit records, confirming the Gainesville/Muenster and Ballinger/North Runnels districts remain separate.
- Freestone County Elections Department, official November 5, 2024 precinct-by-precinct totals; Freestone County Times county vote summary, including the 7,800-vote total reported for Sheriff Jeremy Shipley.

Turnout

- Freestone County 2026 General Election Turnout Brief, based on the Texas Secretary of State's August 28, 2026 ballot certification; Texas Secretary of State, March 2026 Voter Registration Figures; and Texas Secretary of State, Freestone County Voter Registration Figures (1988-2022). Certified write-in and final-ballot publications remain separate official records.

Compensation

- Freestone County and comparator-county compensation records requests, together with any County salary surveys or compensation studies produced in response. The comparator analysis remains pending.