

**ORDINANCE NO. O-20-14**

**AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF MISSOURI CITY, TEXAS, AS AUTHORIZED BY THE GOVERNOR OF THE STATE OF TEXAS POSTPONING THE SPECIAL ELECTION SCHEDULED ON MAY 2, 2020, TO NOVEMBER 3, 2020, FOR THE PURPOSE OF SUBMITTING TO THE QUALIFIED VOTERS OF THE CITY OF MISSOURI CITY A PROPOSITION PROVIDING FOR OR AGAINST THE ADOPTION OF THE FIRE FIGHTERS' AND POLICE OFFICERS' CIVIL SERVICE LAW; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY; AND CONTAINING OTHER PROVISIONS RELATING TO THE SUBJECT.**

\* \* \* \* \*

WHEREAS, Section 143.004 of the Texas Local Government Code requires the governing body of a municipality to order an election submitting to the voters the question of whether Chapter 143 of the Texas Local Government Code, the firefighter' and police officers' civil service law ("Chapter 143"), should be adopted if the governing body of the municipality receives a petition on said matter that is signed by at least 10 percent of the qualified voters who voted in the most recent municipal election; and

WHEREAS, on or about January 21, 2020, the City Secretary of the City of Missouri City ("City Secretary") received a petition requesting the adoption of Chapter 143 (the "Petition"); and

WHEREAS, on or about January 28, 2020, the City Secretary notified the petitioner as to the sufficiency of the Petition in accordance with Section 277.0023 of the Texas Election Code; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to Chapter 143, the Petition has been signed by at least 10 percent of the qualified voters who voted in the most recent municipal election; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to Chapter 143, the City Council of the City of Missouri City, Texas (the "City") is required to hold an election in the City on a uniform election date for the purpose of submitting to the qualified voters of the City a proposition providing for or against the adoption of Chapter 143; and

WHEREAS, on or about February 3, 2020, the City adopted Ordinance No. O-20-03 ordering a special election on the next uniform election date, May 2, 2020, as required by Chapter 143; and

WHEREAS, on or about March 13, 2020, the Governor of the State of Texas certified that the novel coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) poses an imminent threat of disaster and, under the authority vested in the Governor by Section 418.014 of the

Texas Government Code, declared a state of disaster in every county in the State of Texas; and

WHEREAS, on or about March 18, 2020, the Governor issued a proclamation suspending certain sections of the Texas Election Code and authorized political subdivisions that would otherwise hold elections on May 2, 2020, to move their general and special elections to the next uniform election date, November 3, 2020 (the "Proclamation"); and

WHEREAS, on or about March 18, 2020, pursuant to Texas Election Code Section 31.004, the Texas Secretary of State issued Election Advisory No. 2020-12, which contains guidelines for entities that choose to exercise the authority provided by the Proclamation; and

WHEREAS, the City of Missouri City, Texas, is a home-rule municipality and political subdivision of the State of Texas; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to the Governor's March 13, 2020 disaster declaration and the Proclamation, the City Council finds that it is in the best interest of public health and safety to postpone the City's special election from Saturday, May 2, 2020, to Tuesday, November 3, 2020; now, therefore,

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF MISSOURI CITY, TEXAS:

Section 1. The facts and recitations contained in the preamble of this Ordinance are hereby found and declared to be true and correct.

Section 2. *Election postponed.* The special election scheduled for May 2, 2020, at which a proposition for or against the adoption of the fire fighters' and police officers' civil service law was to be submitted to the qualified voters of the City of Missouri City, Texas, for their action thereon, is hereby postponed until Tuesday, November 3, 2020, pursuant to the March 13, 2020 disaster declaration and the March 18, 2020 proclamation of the Governor of the State of Texas, attached hereto as Exhibit "A" and incorporated herein for reference purposes. Such November 3, 2020 election is hereby ordered. Said election shall be held in accordance with the Texas Election Code. Polling locations and precincts shall be set forth by ordinance by August 17, 2020.

Section 3. *Authority.* Pursuant to Election Advisory No. 2020-12, issued by the Texas Secretary of State's Office on or about March 18, 2020, attached hereto as Exhibit "B" and incorporated herein for reference purposes, this Ordinance makes the following findings, and incorporates them by reference into this Ordinance: (1) the petition verified on or about January 28, 2020, remains valid and sufficient to require an election for or against the adoption of the fire fighters' and police officers' civil service

law; (2) all applications for a ballot by mail for voters who are voting by mail due to being over the age of 65 or due to disability will remain valid for the postponed election; (3) all applications for a ballot by mail based upon a voter's expected absence from the applicable county will not be valid for the postponed election; and (4) the major relevant dates for the November 3, 2020, general election are as follows: (a) October 5, 2020, the voter registration deadline; (b) October 23, 2020, the deadline to submit an application for a ballot by mail; and (c) October 19, 2020, through October 30, 2020, early voting period.

Section 4. *Open meeting.* It is further found and determined that a sufficient written notice of the date, hour, place and subject of this meeting of the City Council was posted at a place convenient to the public at the City Hall of the City for the time required by law preceding this meeting, as required by the Open Meetings Act, Chapter 551, Texas Government Code, and that this meeting has been open to the public as required by law at all times during which this Ordinance and the subject matter thereof has been discussed, considered and formally acted upon. The City Council further ratifies, approves and confirms such written notice and the contents and posting thereof.

Section 5. *Severability.* That if any section, subsection, sentence, clause, or phrase of this ordinance, or the application of same to a particular set of persons or circumstances, should for any reason be held to be invalid or adjudged unconstitutional by a court of competent jurisdiction, such invalidity shall not affect the remaining portions of this ordinance, and to such end the various portions and provisions of this ordinance are declared to be severable; and the City Council of the City of Missouri City, Texas, declares it would have passed each and every part of the same notwithstanding the omission of any such part thus declared to be invalid or unconstitutional, or whether there be one or more parts.

PASSED, APPROVED, AND ADOPTED on first and final reading this 6th day of April, 2020.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Yolanda Ford, Mayor

ATTEST:

Approved as to form:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Maria Jackson, City Secretary

\_\_\_\_\_  
E. Joyce Iyamu, City Attorney



**ORDER NO. O-20-01**

**PROCLAMATION DECLARING A LOCAL DISASTER**

\* \* \* \* \*

WHEREAS, in December, 2019, a novel coronavirus, Coronavirus Disease 2019, now designated "COVID-19," was detected in China, and has since spread throughout the world; and

WHEREAS, symptoms of COVID-19 include fever, cough, and shortness of breath; and

WHEREAS, in some cases, COVID 19 has led to death; and

WHEREAS, on March 11, 2020, the World Health Organization characterized COVID-19 as a pandemic; and

WHEREAS, according to the Center for Disease Control, to date, 1,629 cases and 41 deaths have been reported by 46 states and the District of Columbia in the United States of America; and

WHEREAS, according to the Texas Department of State Health Services, as of March 12, 2020, Fort Bend County had 6 cases of COVID-19 and Harris County had 8 cases of COVID-19, which constitutes over half of the reported cases of COVID-19 in Texas; and

WHEREAS, Missouri City is located in both Fort Bend County and Harris County; and

WHEREAS, the City of Missouri City, Texas, on this day, Friday, the 13th day of March, 2020, is in imminent threat of widespread or severe damage, injury, or loss of life or property resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to Section 418.108(a) of the Texas Government Code, the mayor of the City of Missouri City, Texas, has determined that extraordinary measures must be taken to contain COVID-19 and prevent its spread throughout Missouri City, Texas; and

WHEREAS, such measures may include closing certain venues, the cancellation of certain events and, pursuant to Chapter 122 of the Texas Health and Safety Code, the quarantine of individuals and the compelling of individuals to undergo certain health measures that prevent or control the spread of the disease; now, therefore,



BE IT PROCLAIMED BY THE MAYOR OF THE CITY OF MISSOURI CITY, TEXAS:

Section 1. A local state of disaster is declared in Missouri City, Texas.

Section 2. Pursuant to Section 418.108(d) of the Texas Government Code, the City of Missouri City Emergency Management Plan is hereby implemented.

Section 3. Pursuant to Section 122.006 of the Texas Health and Safety Code, the City of Missouri City may adopt rules to protect the health of persons in the city, including quarantine rules to protect residents against communicable diseases and to provide for the establishment of quarantine stations and emergency hospitals.

Section 4. Pursuant to this Order and the Missouri City Charter, the officers and employees of the City of Missouri City are hereby authorized and directed to execute such instruments and take such actions as are consistent with the provisions of this Order.

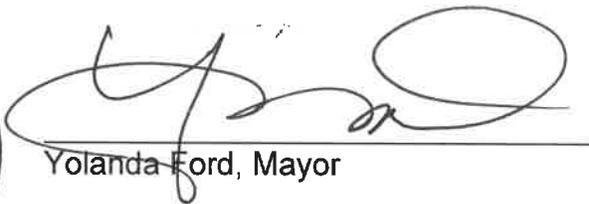
Section 5. Pursuant to Section 418.108(b) of the Texas Government Code, this Order shall continue for a period of not more than seven (7) days from the date hereof, unless the same is continued by consent of the City Council of the City of Missouri City, Texas.

Section 6. That this proclamation shall take effect immediately from and after its issuance.

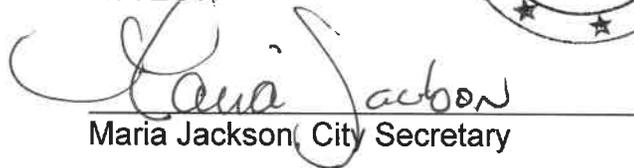
ORDERED this 13th day of March, 2020.

Time: 1:03 p.m.

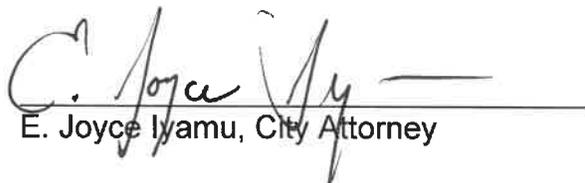


  
Yolanda Ford, Mayor

ATTEST:

  
Maria Jackson, City Secretary

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

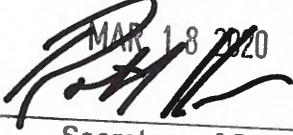
  
E. Joyce Iyamu, City Attorney



GOVERNOR GREG ABBOTT

March 18, 2020

The Honorable Ruth R. Hughs  
Secretary of State  
State Capitol Room 1E.8  
Austin, Texas 78701

FILED IN THE OFFICE OF THE  
SECRETARY OF STATE  
10:00 AM 'CLOCK  
MAR 18 2020  
  
Secretary of State

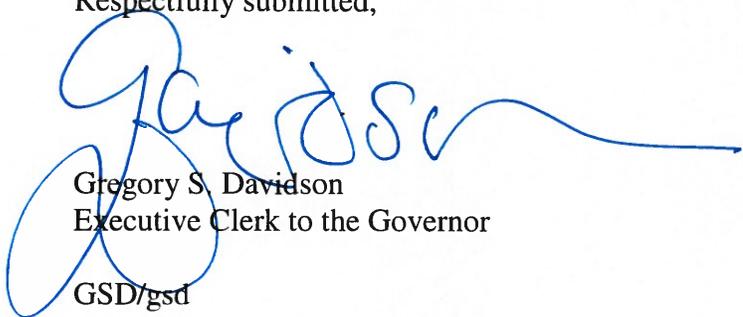
Dear Secretary Hughs:

Pursuant to his powers as Governor of the State of Texas, Greg Abbott has issued the following:

A proclamation suspending Sections 41.0052(a) and (b) of the Texas Election Code and Section 49.103 of the Texas Water Code to the extent necessary to allow political subdivisions that would otherwise hold elections on May 2, 2020, to move their general and special elections for 2020 only to the next uniform election date, occurring on November 3, 2020, without otherwise adjusting the term of office, and suspending Sections 31.093 and 42.0621(c) of the Texas Election Code to the extent necessary to require all county election officers, if requested by an affected political subdivision, to enter into a contract to furnish election services with any political subdivision who postponed their election to November 3, 2020, under the authority of this proclamation.

The original of this proclamation is attached to this letter of transmittal.

Respectfully submitted,

  
Gregory S. Davidson  
Executive Clerk to the Governor  
GSD/gsd

Attachment

# PROCLAMATION

BY THE

## Governor of the State of Texas

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**TO ALL TO WHOM THESE PRESENTS SHALL COME:**

WHEREAS, Section 41.001(a)(2) of the Texas Election Code provides that a general or special election in this state shall be held on a uniform election date, and the next uniform election date is occurring on May 2, 2020; and

WHEREAS, Section 49.103 of the Texas Water Code provides that certain districts governed by this provision are required to hold director elections in May of each even-numbered year; and

WHEREAS, Section 41.0052 of the Texas Election Code prescribes a procedure for a political subdivision to change a general election date, but the time for making such a change has expired; and

WHEREAS, Section 31.093 of the Texas Election Code requires a county elections administrator to enter into a contract to furnish election services upon request of a political subdivision; and

WHEREAS, Section 42.0621(c) of the Texas Election Code does not require a political subdivision to enter into a contract with a county or hold a joint election with a county on the November uniform election date; and

WHEREAS, on March 13, 2020, the Governor of Texas certified that the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) poses an imminent threat of disaster and, under the authority vested in the Governor by Section 418.014 of the Texas Government Code, declared a state of disaster for all counties in Texas; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to Section 418.016 of the Texas Government Code, the Governor has the express authority to suspend the provisions of any regulatory statute prescribing the procedures for conduct of state business or the orders or rules of a state agency if strict compliance with the provisions, orders, or rules would in any way prevent, hinder, or delay necessary action in coping with a disaster.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, GREG ABBOTT, Governor of Texas, under the authority vested in me by the Constitution and Laws of the State of Texas, do hereby suspend Sections 41.0052(a) and (b) of the Texas Election Code and Section 49.103 of the Texas Water Code to the extent necessary to allow political subdivisions that would otherwise hold elections on May 2, 2020, to move their general and special elections for 2020 only to the next uniform election date, occurring on November 3, 2020, without otherwise adjusting the term of office. I further suspend Sections 31.093 and 42.0621(c) of the Texas Election Code to the extent necessary to require all county election officers, if requested by an affected political subdivision, to enter into a contract to furnish election services with any political subdivision who postponed their election to November 3, 2020, under the authority of this proclamation.

The authority ordering the election under Section 3.004 of the Texas Election Code is the authority authorized to make the decision to postpone its election in accordance with this proclamation.

Current office holders will hold over to the extent authorized by Article XVI, Section 17 of the Texas Constitution.

FILED IN THE OFFICE OF THE  
SECRETARY OF STATE  
10:00AM O'CLOCK

MAR 18 2020

**Governor Greg Abbott**  
March 18, 2020

**Proclamation**  
Page 2



IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, I have hereto signed my name and have officially caused the Seal of State to be affixed at my office in the City of Austin, Texas, this the 18th day of March, 2020.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Greg Abbott".

GREG ABBOTT  
Governor of Texas

ATTESTED BY:

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ruth R. Hughs".

RUTH R. HUGHS  
Secretary of State

FILED IN THE OFFICE OF THE  
SECRETARY OF STATE  
10:00AM O'CLOCK

MAR 18 2020

# The State of Texas

Elections Division  
P.O. Box 12060  
Austin, Texas 78711-2060  
www.sos.texas.gov



Phone: 512-463-5650  
Fax: 512-475-2811  
Dial 7-1-1 For Relay Services  
(800) 252-VOTE (8683)

Ruth R. Hughs  
Secretary of State

## ELECTION ADVISORY

### NO. 2020-12

TO: Election Officials

FROM: Keith Ingram, Director of Elections 

DATE: March 18, 2020

RE: Actions for May 2, 2020 Uniform Election Date

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The purpose of this advisory is to provide guidance to local political subdivisions regarding their options for any general or special elections that have been ordered for the May 2, 2020 uniform election date. Pursuant to Section 418.016 of the Texas Government Code, the Governor has issued a proclamation suspending certain provisions of the Texas Election Code and the Texas Water Code to allow all local political subdivisions that are utilizing the May 2, 2020 uniform election date to postpone their election to the November 3, 2020 uniform election date. Pursuant to Texas Election Code 31.003 and 31.004, our office has issued the following guidelines for entities that choose to exercise this authority and postpone their election to the November uniform election date.

### **Effect of Postponement of Election**

- **Candidate Filings:** By postponing their election date, the political subdivision is preserving all candidate filings and ballot order actions that have already been taken. The postponement does **not** have the effect of reopening candidate filings.
  - **Deadlines related to Candidate Filings, Declarations of Ineligibility, Withdrawals or Death:** The deadlines that apply to the November 3, 2020 election would apply to all candidates who are currently on the ballot for the May 2, 2020 election.
- **Ballot By Mail Requests:** All applications for a ballot by mail (ABBM) that were filed for the May 2, 2020 election that are marked annual would apply for the November 3, 2020 election. All single use ABBMs that were submitted for reasons of age or disability would still be valid for the November 3, 2020 election. If a single use ABBM was submitted and indicated the reason for voting by mail was due to absence from the county, this ABBM would not be valid as the applicable election date has changed. However, we would recommend that the political subdivision send a letter to these voters along with a new ABBM in case the circumstances

surrounding their absence from the county are still valid or the voter is otherwise eligible to vote by mail.

- **Ballots by Mail:** If a political subdivision has already sent out mail ballots, those mail ballots that are returned would still be valid for the November 3, 2020 postponed election date.
- **Election Records:** All records, including candidate filings, applications to vote by mail, ballot proofs, and printed ballots shall be retained and preserved.
  - **Printed Ballots:** If your ballots have already been printed up, you may be able to reuse them for November. However, if you must change your ballot to reflect any corrections or changes that occur between now and November, you would treat the original ballots as you would in a traditional ballot correction and those ballots should be destroyed in accordance with Section 52.0064 of the Texas Election Code.
- **Requirement to use County Election Precincts in November 2020:** Per Section 42.002 of the Texas Election Code, county election precincts are required for all elections occurring in November 2020. You will need to work with your county election officer to determine whether you need to make any modifications to your ballot in light of this requirement.
- **Requirement for County Election Officer to contract with Local Political Subdivisions:** All county election officers are required to contract with local political subdivisions that postponed their May 2, 2020 election and that request a contract for election services or a joint election agreement with their county election officer pursuant to the Governor's suspension of certain Texas Election Code provisions.
- **Office Hours:** The relevant dates for maintaining office hours for election purposes will be based on the November uniform election date rather than the May election date. Under Section 31.122 of the Texas Election Code, those office hours will need to be maintained for at least three hours each day, during regular office hours, on regular business days between September 14, 2020 and December 13, 2020. However, these entities should post contact information for individuals to contact their office about election-related issues during the timeframe that those offices may be closed over the coming months.
- **Holdovers in Public Office:** Under Art. XVI, Sec. 17 of the Texas Constitution, the individuals who currently hold public offices that are scheduled to be on the ballot on the May uniform election date will continue to exercise the duties of those offices until the new officers take their oaths of office, following the November uniform election date.
- **Campaign Finance Filings:** Please contact the Texas Ethics Commission for further guidance on how these modified timelines will affect any campaign finance reporting requirements. Their office can be reached at (512) 463-5800.
- **Candidates on the ballot in both May and November:** For candidates that may be running for two offices (one normally occurring in May and one normally occurring in November), these candidates will not be removed from the ballot as they are separate elections that are normally not occurring on the same date.

### **Required Action by Governing Body to Move Election Date**

In order to utilize this move, the governing body of the political subdivisions holding the elections must **order** the postponement of their election to the November 3, 2020 uniform election date. The order for this official action should contain the following items:

1. A reference to the proclamation that authorizes the entity to postpone their election date, and the fact that the political subdivision is exercising this authority.
2. Confirmation that the candidate filings for the election will remain valid for the election held on the November date and that the filing period will not be re-opened for the November election date.
3. Confirmation that all ABBMs for voters that are voting by mail due to being over the age of 65 or due to disability will still be valid for the postponed election, and that ABBMs for voters who submitted ABBMs based on expected absence from the county would not be valid for the postponed election.
4. The major relevant dates for the November election, including the voter registration deadline (October 5, 2020), the deadline to submit an ABBM (October 23, 2020), and the dates for early voting (October 19, 2020 – October 30, 2020).

### **Necessary Revisions to Order of Election**

In addition, the entity will need to meet by August 17, 2020 to make any necessary revisions to the entity's original order of election. Those revisions may include:

1. The change to the date of the election;
2. Any change in location of the main early voting location;
3. Any changes to early voting dates and hours, including weekend early voting;
4. Any changes to the identity of the early voting clerk and their contact information; or
5. Any changes to branch early voting locations.

If you are holding a bond election, you may need to make additional revisions to your order of election for that bond election. If this is the case, we recommend reaching out to your bond counsel for additional guidance.

### **Securing Election Records**

All election records should be stored and secured during the postponement period. This may require your entity to use preservation methods that are similar to the methods you would use during the preservation period after the election has occurred. This includes:

- Storing returned ballots by mail in locked, sealed ballot boxes.
- Securely storing any unused ballots.
- Securely retaining any relevant election records, including candidate applications and ABBMs.

### **Voting System Equipment**

If you are leasing voting system equipment from the county or directly from the vendor, then you may need to contact your vendor or your county regarding any necessary modifications to those lease agreements or to modify your procedures and timelines for receiving that equipment.

### **Open Meeting Requirements**

The Governor has suspended and modified certain open meeting requirements pursuant to his disaster declaration. These changes include allowing the entity to establish procedures for telephonic or videoconferenced meetings of governmental bodies that are accessible to the public.

These procedures must include a process for members of the public to participate and address the governmental body in those meetings, notice to the public on the means of participating remotely, and access to the public for recordings of those meetings.

For more information, please review the applicable [documentation](#) from the Governor's Office or contact the Office of the Attorney General.

### **Update Official Websites and Notify Media**

Any entities that are exercising this authority to postpone their election date must post notice on the entity's website and should alert any local media organizations regarding this change to their election date.

The entity must also provide notice to their county election officer regarding this change, as the county is required to post the entity's notice of election on the county's website no later than the 60th day before the date of the election under Election Code 4.008. If that election date will be changing due to the entity's decision to postpone the election then the entity must provide a revised notice to the county for posting on the county's website.

If you have any questions regarding this advisory, please contact the Elections Division at 1-800-252-2216.

KI:CA:CP