

Panola County Conservatives

Minutes of the April 2, 2026

Call to Order: Prayers and Pledges led by Butch Marsalis

President's Welcome:

Membership Drive - Reminder to renew membership.

March minutes were distributed online, minutes were approved as written.

Upcoming Elections: runoff election is scheduled for May 26.

Program

Joanne Shofner - Texas House Representative update discussed:

- Concern for the defeat of a Republican for a state senate seat
- Ivermectin Over-the-Counter Bill passed.
- TX funding for \$281 million for 5 years under a rural health program.
- SNAP benefit changes designed to reduce fraud and diabetes.
- [TrumpRx.gov](https://www.TrumpRx.gov) website to access to RXs at "favored nation" rates.
- \$16B Gas-Fired Power Plant in Anderson County projected to create ~8,000 construction jobs and ~3,000 permanent jobs. It is not known if the plant is to support community power or data centers.
- Senate hearings underway on impact and regulation of data centers,
- Texas small businesses saw \$4 billion in loans to 606,500 last year
- Joanne visited the S. border: Laredo, the largest US port. Houston, the nation's top city for sex trafficking.
- Oil refinery under construction in Brownsville, first in 50 years.
- The TX legislature saw 9000 bills filed, 1200 signed by the governor.
- Islamic Influence in Texas seen as "the western Mecca"; 350 mosques and rising, many with government/healthcare functions
- Highway 59 & DOT/Infrastructure delayed 6 years Advised public engagement, it does influence TxDOT priorities.

Dr. Brooks Mckenzie scheduled but had to cancel, they sent replacement **Jennifer Lundy (Executive Director, Texas for Judicial Accountability)** Her research revealed TX State Commission on Judicial Conduct understaffed, low rate of public reprimands and overuse of private reprimands hiding misconduct.

- Legislative Accomplishments
 - SB293 "Omnibus Bill":
 - Streamlined court technology
 - Created time documentation for judges
 - Mechanisms for mental health/substance abuse reporting

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- Eliminated private reprimands; only public reprimands now.
- Secured judicial pay increase.
- Constitutional Amendment #12 (Nov 2025): 7 citizen/6 judge members, judges had the majority before
- HB5411: Mandatory disclosure of political donations to judges; partial requirements enacted, bill will be reintroduced.
- Justice Busby Bill: Would allow legal apprentices/paralegals to sit for the bar, aimed at lowering legal costs—will be reintroduced.
- HB4193: Lifting some restrictions on courtroom video recording.
- Defeated bill that would have removed family law data from judicial statistics, maintaining public transparency.
- Worked to overturn Al Hindi case Supreme Court ruling

Priorities for Upcoming Session plus Convention Priorities

- Mandate courtroom audio/video in all proceedings, with recordings accessible to parties and SCJC.
- Mandatory immediate financial disclosure of all judicial donations; parties to cases must be notified.
- Elect the director of the SCJC, make filing of complaints easier
- Direct election of all Texas judges.
- State employment for probate judges (not county-based).
- Reform court reporter hiring and payment: require state employment for court reporters; limit transcript charges to overtime work.
- Prohibit Sharia law and Islamism influencing Texas.
- Comprehensive election reform.
- Reform education lobbying and campaign finance.
- Abolish property taxes; mandate balanced state budget.
- Texas AI Bill of Rights.
- Support for families("Make Families Great Again").
- RPT Rule 44 process

Next Meeting [May 7th](#)

Adjourn