



Titus County Commissioners' Court
Mt. Pleasant, Texas

October 23, 2014

Mr. Rick Valdes
Texas Board of Professional Engineers
1917 S. Interstate 35
Austin, TX 78741-3702

Dear Mr. Valdes,

Titus County has just completed a construction project to house the Adult Probation Department. Other construction projects are under consideration. We appreciate your guidance as to the requirements of the Texas Engineering Practice Act and how it affects our County construction projects.

With your help, and in cooperation with local architect Chris Basham, the Commissioners' Court is very aware of the requirement that the County employ the services of Architects and Engineers on public projects such as ours.

The Commissioners' Court recognizes our legal obligation to comply with the laws of this state, and we hereby agree to those obligations where engineering and architectural services are required.

Agreed and accepted this _____ day of _____, 2014.

County Judge, Titus County, Texas

Commissioner, Precinct 1

Commissioner, Precinct 2

Commissioner, Precinct 3

Commissioner, Precinct 4

WHEN THE BUILDING ON THE NORTH SIDE OF THE SQUARE WAS BEING REMODELED, IT WAS DISCOVERED THAT THERE WAS SOME PROBLEMS WITH THE SUPPORTING STRUCTURE. I BECAME CONCERNED WITH THE REMODEL BY THE COUNTY OF THE ANNEX BUILDINGS ON THE SOUTH SIDE OF THE SQUARE, WHICH ARE OF SIMILAR AGE. THE BUILDINGS ARE MORE THAN A HUNDRED YEARS OLD. ARE THESE STRUCTURES STRONG ENOUGH? WE NEED TO BE VERY CAREFUL TO PROTECT THE PUBLIC AND ELIMINATE ANY LIABILITY ISSUES.

AT THAT TIME I ASKED CHRIS BASHAM IF I COULD SEE THE PLANS. I WANTED TO SEE IF HE HAD AN ENGINEER STAMP ON THE PLANS, AND IF IT HAD BEEN APPROVED BY A PROFESSIONAL ENGINEER. CHRIS SAID THE PLANS WERE AT HIS HOME AND HE WOULD GET THEM. A WEEK LATER, AFTER NOT HEARING FROM CHRIS, I E-MAILED THE CITY MANAGER TO ASK WHERE THE CITY KEPT A COPY OF CONSTRUCTION PLANS AND WHO WAS ISSUED A BUILDING PERMIT.

THE CITY MANAGER DIRECTED ME TO MR. EDDIE PERRITT. MR PERRITT E-MAILED TO INFORM ME THAT THE CITY DID NOT KEEP A COPY OF THE PLANS ON FILE. I AGAIN ASKED CHRIS IF I COULD SEE THE PLANS. HE CAME BY MY OFFICE WITH A COPY OF ALL THE SAME "HAND" DRAWINGS THAT HE HAD PREVIOUSLY GIVEN TO THE COMMISSIONERS COURT.

TEXAS GOVERNMENT CODE REQUIRES THAT ANY PUBLIC BUILDING BE APPROVED BY A PROFESSIONAL ENGINEER. CHRIS BASHAM IS A LICENSED ARCHITECT AND HE SHOULD KNOW THE LAWS AND RULES.

WHEN THE OFFICE OF "TEXAS BOARD OF PROFESSIONAL ENGINEERS" INQUIRED, THE COUNTY JUDGE WROTE A LETTER INDICATING COMPLIANCE BY THE COUNTY, WITHOUT GOING THROUGH THE "COMMISSIONERS COURT". THE COUNTY JUDGE SHOULD KNOW THIS TYPE OF AGREEMENT REQUIRES THE APPROVAL OF THE COMMISSIONERS COURT.

THE THRESHOLD REQUIRING A PROFESSIONAL ENGINEER'S STAMP OF APPROVAL IS \$8,000.00 FOR MECHANICAL AND ELECTRIC AND \$20,000.00 FOR CONSTRUCTION. THE COUNTY HAS EXCEEDED THESE MINIMUMS ON THE "RIDDLE STREET BUILDING, THE CADELL BUILDING, AND THE ADULT PROBATION BUILDING". THE COUNTY DID NOT GET AN "ENGINEERS STAMP" ON ANY OF THESE PROJECTS. THE TOTAL AMOUNT OF TAX PAYER MONEY SPENT SO FAR IS MORE THAN \$350,000.00.

THE COMMISSIONERS COURT MADE A MISTAKE WHEN WE HIRED SOMEONE'S FRIEND TO BE IN CHARGE OF THIS LARGE AMOUNT OF MONEY. LEGALLY THESE PROJECTS SHOULD HAVE BEEN BID OUT.

JUST TO PROTECT THE COUNTY, ALL OF THESE PROJECTS MUST BE CHECKED AND SIGNED OFF BY A "PROFESSIONAL ENGINEER" WHO HAS BEEN SELECTED AND APPROVED BY THE COURT.