

trees on his New York estate and longed to retire to that life after the presidency (a fact detailed at length in the great Douglas Brinkley conservation book, "Rightful Heritage"). His cousin Theodore was similarly privileged, but TR reoriented much of his persona around the time he spent as a cowboy in the Dakota Territory.

What about Thomas Jefferson? In a letter to George Washington, Jefferson famously wrote "agriculture is our wisest pursuit because it will in the end contribute most to real wealth, good morals and happiness."

The first essay in this series quoted Jefferson on the peril of centralizing power, so Jefferson's ideas play a pivotal role in my line of thought on this topic. Jefferson was one of America's great experimental farmers, pioneering new crops and cultivation methods on his Monticello property. Of course, Jefferson was not doing the

manual labor himself. He owned enslaved people and that cannot be separated from his story as a farmer.

Yet, despite his deep moral failings in his personal life, Jefferson held great and important ideals that are worth pursuing. I view Jefferson's relationship with agriculture with the same eye that I view his relationship with the concept of liberty. His high-minded ideals were correct, even if he did not have the personal moral fortitude to act on them with his own time, talent, and treasure.

Next week, Jefferson's yeoman farmer: 18th century relic or 21st century hope?

*James Decker is the Mayor of Stamford, Texas and the creator of the West of 98 website and the Rural Church and State and West of 98 podcasts. Contact James and subscribe to these essays at westof98.substack.com and subscribe to him wherever podcasts are found.*



**Meet the Candidates!** The Coke County Republican Party hosted a Meet the Candidates event on Tuesday, February 20, at the Vision with a Purpose headquarters in downtown Robert Lee. Local candidates in attendance included Shonda Folsom, Cody McCabe, Russell Ash, Ticha Lindsey, Gina Williams, Kizzie Waggoner, Charles Yorke, Jennifer Burdett, Billy Williams, and Marty Boyd. Incumbent State Representative Drew Darby, as well as his opponent, Stormy Bradley were also in attendance.

to approve the financial report as presented and to approve the bills presented by Robin Allen.

She was seconded by Cole Bosworth and all were for. David O'Dell gave the high

school report of 118 students enrolled and a 94.89% ADA.

(Continued on page 7)

## RLISD board meeting minutes told

The Robert Lee ISD Board of Trustees met in regular session on Wednesday, January 17, 2024, at 6 pm in the conference room.

Those in attendance included board members Wes Washam, Jeffie Roberts, Beverly Sinclair, Linda Burns, Cole Bosworth, and Erin Oleksiuk. Board member Jose Morales was absent.

The meeting was called to order at 6 pm by President Washam with a quorum of members present.

The invocation and pledge were led by Beverly Sinclair.

Linda Burns made a motion to approve the minutes of December 18, 2023, and was seconded by Jeffie Roberts. All were for.

Erin Oleksiuk made a motion

*Re-Elect*

# MARTY BOYD

## Coke County Constable

*I would appreciate your vote of confidence and support. I promise to continue putting Coke County first, as I have since my first election in 2005.*

Pd. Pol. Adv. by Marty Boyd

Please  
exercise  
your right to

# VOTE!

## Dear Residents and Voters of Coke County:

My name is Cody McCabe and I am a 35 year old attorney and sixth-generation Coke County rancher. I am a graduate of Robert Lee High School Class of 2007, and Texas Tech University Class of 2011, where I studied business. Since graduating from St. Mary's Law in 2014, I have been practicing law in West Texas, handling commercial and general litigation, energy leasing and disputes, real estate, probate, and criminal defense.

I have lived in Coke County for the last three years and have put my roots down here to stay. I have worked with County Attorneys from Lubbock to San Antonio, and if elected, I will treat each party in each matter with the same fairness and respect that I have been treated with throughout Texas, while applying Texas law and common sense.

I would greatly appreciate your vote in the March 2024 Republican Primary Election.

Thanks for your time,

## Cody McCabe

### Candidate for Coke County Attorney

Pd. Pol. Adv. by Cody McCabe