

# Church to determine whether to make third offer for facility

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During a regular session of the Coke County Commissioners Court Tuesday morning, June 28, 2016, Commissioners once again rejected an offer from 4C Cowboy Church to purchase the vacant detention facility just south of Bronte.

The facility ceased operations as a prison in the fall of 2007 and has been vacant since that time. In December of 2012, Geo Group gave the facility back to Coke County. At the time it appeared to be a gift, but later proved to be an annual loss of approximately \$65,000 in tax revenue based on its value as an operating prison of \$3.2 million.

An offer of \$200,000 was made by Garrison General Contractors, the company to which the county leased the facility in the spring of 2013. At that time, Judge Blair stated they couldn't sell the property below its appraised value without getting a new appraisal and listing it with an MLS broker. The lease with Garrisons was short-lived and the county received an appraisal on the facility of just over \$685,000. In the years since, the property has remained vacant.

The Commissioners first listed the property with a local MLS broker, Jerrod Pitcock of Pitcock Properties, and later listed it with Tom Niblo of Senter Realtors in Abilene.

The first offer from the church in Bronte, presented at the June 14, 2016, Commissioners Court meeting was for \$100,000 and was rejected with no counter. The newest offer was for \$210,000. The Commissioners countered this offer with a price of \$350,000. They also stated the property would be sold "as is" and included several other

changes to the original offer. All commissioners expressed concern that if sold to the church, the property would not be on the tax roll.

4C Pastor James Brunson provided the members of the court with a statement (included in the box below) detailing the intentions of the church. He told the commissioners he would meet with his congregation to discuss their counter offer and requested to be added to the agenda at the regular meeting set for July 12, 2016.

Pastor Brunson also dispelled rumors which arose after the first meeting. He made clear that there was absolutely no possibility of the facility being used to house foreign refugees if 4C Cowboy Church purchased the property. He added later that there is possibly a much better chance of that happening with it remaining a government owned property. He also wanted to make sure all Commissioners realized that the county was not being asked to finance this venture and, if a deal is reached, the county would receive the total amount decided upon at closing and funding of the transaction.

Citizens in favor of 4C Cowboy Church being able to purchase the old prison may sign letters of support at numerous businesses in both Bronte and Robert Lee. The businesses in Bronte include Main Street Market, Bronte Grocery, Shear Heaven, Bronte City Hall, Addona's, Glenn-Bivins Insurance, Tom's Tire, Bronte Hardware, Larry's Automotive and Shirley's Place. Businesses in Robert Lee are Surety Title (formerly Coke County Abstract), Askins Propane, This 'N That, Designs By Toni, Cindy's Grocery, The Observer/Enterprise and Floyd C. Pettitt Insurance.



Old Coke County Detention Center

## Special Events Sunday, July 17, 2016

### Chicken Spaghetti Dinner \$8

*Dine In or Take Out*



Chicken Spaghetti, Salad, Garlic Toast & Cobbler

## SILENT AUCTION

### Ground Breaking Service & Reception 2:00 PM

New 48" TV  
Pulsar Watch  
Artwork, Jewelry  
Variety of Price Ranges  
Items for Men, Women & Children



All Donations Will Go To The New Family Life Center.

First United Methodist Church  
For More Information,  
call Inga Elliott at (830) 305-3071.

## 4C COWBOY CHURCH

*Coke County Cowboy Church*

PO Drawer R  
Bronte, Texas 76933  
Pastor James Brunson, (469) 834-3932

As members of the body of Christ, we each have been commissioned to serve Him by serving others. The members of Christ's body who belong to 4C Cowboy Church believe the former detention facility and the land upon which it sits will enable us to fulfill God's purpose for this growing congregation.

The facility will provide a permanent place in which to worship for the 4C family, the center's staff and those who will be served by them on this property.

The youth of Coke County will benefit greatly with this venture. The future will see upon this property a childcare facility offering both daycare and after school care. There will be areas for students who currently have no place to keep show livestock to house their animals. Youth who need a place to keep a horse will be welcome to the facilities. There will be an arena in which to hold events and clinics. Also included will be a full service trade shop in which to teach young people needed skills.

In addition to the above services provided, the property will be used for youth camps, equine therapy for veterans and special needs individuals, and as an event center hosting clinics, seminars, and equine events of all kinds. Walk to Emmaus has expressed interest in using the facility.

We hope the members of this Commissioners Court will allow us to serve Coke County by utilizing this property.