



County Executive Office

2818 S. Bus. Hwy. 281 • Edinburg, Texas 78539 • Phone: (956) 292-7025 • Fax: (956) 292-7034 • www.co.hidalgo.tx.us/budget

*To: Judge J.D. Salinas, County Judge
Precinct #1 Commissioner Sylvia S. Handy
Precinct #2 Commissioner Hector "Tito" Palacios
Precinct #3 Commissioner Joe M. Flores
Precinct #4 Commissioner Oscar Garza*

From: Valde Guerra, Commissioners' Court Executive Officer

Date: Wednesday, May 27, 2009

Re: SAFEguard Initiative Status Report

Background

In an effort to implement certain safeguards for improving accountability, transparency and efficiency in county government, the Hidalgo County Commissioners' Court created the SAFEguard Initiative and appointed committee members on April 28, 2009. The acronym "SAFE" stands for **S**ystems & **P**rocedures, **A**udits, **F**iscal Controls, and **E**fficiency. The committee consists of key precinct and departmental representatives from across the County, and is charged with:

- Examining methods to facilitate public participation in and access to County government, and
- Identifying and implementing specific internal controls to better manage County operations and funds.

Status Report

The SAFEguard committee met for the first time on Friday, May 22, 2009 at 1:00 pm in the Hidalgo County Commissioners' Courtroom. At this meeting, the committee members in attendance identified several activities that are currently in progress, and suggested others to pursue as part of the SAFEguard initiative, including:

- Employee Compensation and Classification Project (Grade & Step)
- Selected Applicant Enrollment Process
- County Strategic and Long Range Business Plan
- Administrative Management Handbook (Countywide Policies, Procedures & Forms)
- Consolidation of Information Technology positions countywide into a centralized IT department to eliminate redundancy
- Expansion of Human Resources department to conduct departmental and countywide human resource audits
- Continuation of departmental management reviews by the Commissioners' Court Executive Office
- Examining and streamlining procurement processes for County departments that are now under Executive Office (Headstart, Community Service Agency, Urban County)

Next Steps

Committee members will continue brainstorming suggestions and will submit suggestions to the committee at the next meeting. The SAFEguard Committee is scheduled to meet **in the County Judge's Conference Room on Thursday, May 28, 2009 at 9:30 am.**