

I love Orange County and I want growth and prosperity for it, both long term and short term. I believe that Orange County has a lot to offer, so much so that I don't think we have to relegate ourselves to a passive position in economic development matters.

But, as I was saying, I do love Orange County and I want it to prosper and I do want the Chevron project to come to here. I am certainly willing to support a deal to help make that happen and, as many of you are already aware, I even suggested a 10 year 100% abatement with PILOT payments for this very deal on Jan. 25th to the EDC. Of course, I believe that a deal with Chevron that directly helps our community is a good thing. I also believe strongly in the principals of transparency, less government, and free enterprise. Moreover, I do not believe that these things are mutually exclusive from these deals. As long as there is room for questions, compromise, and negotiation, I believe we can come to a fair deal for **both sides if we try**. We can look out for the needs of our community and our citizens while the company can get a good deal that will save them a lot of money help us both grow together.

Unfortunately, it seems like there is little desire to entertain tough questions or to come to a compromise at this time in Orange County. But more importantly, no matter who is right or wrong, in my opinion Orange County can survive whatever deals are struck or external challenges that may come up. After all, we were tough enough to take on Harvey, Rita, and Ike and we are still standing. What I do not believe we can survive, is internal strife and attacks on each other. This doesn't mean we can't disagree and debate, in fact questioning ourselves should be part of what makes us strong. But when that debate becomes argumentative and ugly, when that discussion becomes motivated by anything other than the good of Orange County, it threatens to tear us apart. I have done my best to keep this discussion about the policy through workshops and hearings along with data over the past several months. It has still become argumentative and ugly. No matter who said what or why, the fault for that is mine because, in the end, I am the County Judge.

I would never stand in the way of progress for Orange County nor do anything that might be perceived that way. Therefore, in order to stop this internal fighting so that we may insure the proper representation of the people, and do what seems best for Orange County, I will resign my position as Orange County Judge effective on March 19, 2019, during the next scheduled session of this court, when it is accepted by that court per that agenda item. Because I am resigning, I do not feel that it is fair or prudent that I be involved in guiding county business or participating in votes. We will therefore take a brief recess so the notes for this meeting can be passed over and reviewed if necessary. Agenda item number one is not closed and when the court resumes, I am sure everyone who wishes to speak may still do so. I want to thank the great people of Orange County for allowing me the opportunity to serve you. We stand in recess and the court will reconvene at _____ am.

Dean T. Crooks

Orange County Judge

March 13, 2019