



PRESS RELEASE

July 24, 2026

County Judge issues statement regarding announcement at July 23 commissioners court meeting

Caldwell County Judge Hoppy Haden today issued a statement following an announcement at the July 23 Commissioners Court regular meeting pertaining to pre-sale agreements involving individual landowners and a land acquisition company for potential data centers.

The county judge's announcement included a statement by the judge that he and his neighbor, a former assistant attorney who represented the county on civil matters, had signed pre-sale agreements along with multiple other landowners to sell their personal land to a private company.

The assistant district attorney, Richard Sitton, is no longer employed by the county. Assistant district attorneys report to District Attorney Fred Weber.

Following the meeting, the county judge released the following statement:

A circulating report that Mr. Sitton was acting as my attorney on the transaction is false. I did not confer with any county staff prior to signing this pre-sale agreement, nor did I seek counsel from Mr. Sitton.

Here are the facts.

On July 21, Mr. Sitton and I each signed a pre-sales agreement as individual property owners with a land acquisition company for potential data centers. The following day, on July 22, I filed my affidavit of disclosure at the Caldwell County Clerk's Office pursuant to Texas Local Government Code 171. I resubmitted it on July 23 after forgetting to fill in one blank on the affidavit.

I legally fulfilled what is required of elected officials by filing the disclosure immediately after signing the pre-sale agreement. I will abstain from any future discussions, votes or debates regarding any future development on this land or the company that is offering to purchase the land.

Mr. Weber learned of the pre-sale agreement on Tuesday afternoon when Mr. Sitton informed his boss that the sale of his land was a possibility and that he would be unable to represent the county on any future civil matters related to that land. He said he would train another assistant DA to handle that task. Mr. Sitton was terminated the next day.

The pre-sale agreement is a preliminary step in a potential land sale. It gives the developer a chance to do their due diligence to make sure the land they want to buy is viable for their project. It also gives a private seller a chance to deny the sale at any point in the process.

Caldwell County has never had any conversations in any capacity with the company that entered into a pre-sale agreement with Mr. Sitton and myself.

There will be items on the agenda for the Aug. 13 regular meeting to discuss the future of my office and filling the vacancy in the assistant district attorney's office. I have no plans to resign.