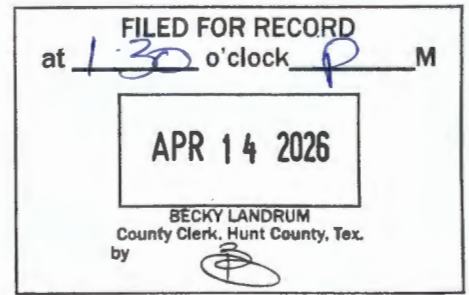


20028

MEMORANDUM



TO: Tammy Himes, Hunt County Purchasing Agent
FROM: Daniel Ray, Hunt County General Counsel
DATE: February 9, 2026
RE: Conflict of Interest Review – IT Infrastructure Vendor (Greg Speir)

I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This memo addresses the proposed vendor relationship between Hunt County and Greg Speir (Vendor), who is the uncle of Brandon Brand (IT Director). Based on Texas Local Government Code Chapter 176 and relevant Texas Attorney General opinions, the relationship constitutes a "family relationship" that requires specific statutory filings and a total recusal of the IT Director from all phases of the procurement process.

II. STATUTORY ANALYSIS

1. Applicability of Chapter 176 (Conflict of Interest)

- Local Government Officer (LGO) Status: Under Tex. Loc. Gov't Code § 176.001(4)(c), an LGO includes an "agent" of a local governmental entity who "exercises discretion in the planning, recommending, selecting, or contracting with a vendor". As the IT Director responsible for vendor selection and quotes, Brandon Brand qualifies as an LGO under this chapter.
Family Relationship: A "family relationship" is defined as a relationship within the third degree by consanguinity (blood). An uncle and nephew are related in the third degree. This relationship triggers mandatory disclosure if the County is considering a contract with the relative.

What is the 1st, 2nd or 3rd Degree of Consanguinity (blood)?

- 1st degree: mother, father, son, daughter
2nd degree: brothers, sisters, grandparents, grandchildren
3rd degree: aunts, uncles, nieces, nephews

Adopted children and half brothers/sisters are considered full blooded under consanguinity.

Step brothers/sisters are not.

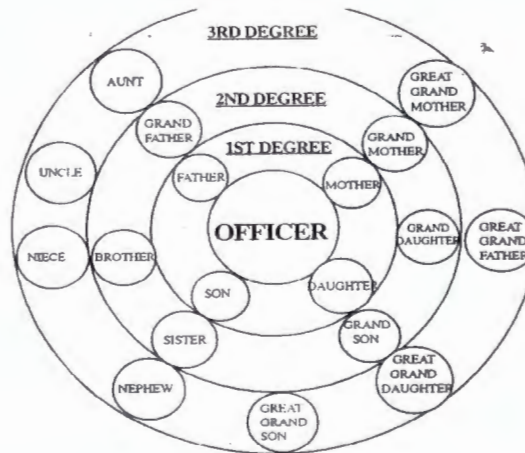


Figure 1: Consanguinity Chart per Tex. Gov't Code § 573.023. Note that 'Uncle' is located in the 3rd Degree, triggering the mandatory disclosure and participation restrictions under Tex. Loc. Gov't Code § 176.003.

2. Sufficiency of Disclosure Documentation

- **Vendor CIQ Form:** The provided Form CIQ (Conflict of Interest Questionnaire) signed by Greg Speir is legally required and appears sufficient to satisfy the vendor's duty under § 176.006.
- **Employee CIS Form:** While Brandon Brand signed an internal "Disclosure & Recusal Form," Chapter 176 requires the officer to file a specific Form CIS (Local Government Officer Conflicts Disclosure Statement) with the county records administrator (County Clerk). **Action Item:** Brandon must file the official Texas Ethics Commission Form CIS within seven business days of becoming aware of the potential contract. I have not spoken with Mr. Brand about this, so any 7-day count will start after that conversation.

III. PERMISSIBLE PARTICIPATION AND SAFEGUARDS

1. **The "Partial Recusal" Risk:** The IT Department's indication that Brandon "cannot be fully recused from all aspects of the process" is a significant legal concern.

- a. **Criminal Liability:** A local government officer commits a Class C misdemeanor (or higher depending on contract value) if they knowingly violate the disclosure and participation requirements of Chapter 176.
- b. **AG Guidance:** Texas AG Opinion KP-0376 (2021) emphasizes that to comply with conflict laws, an official must "abstain from participating in relevant decisions" and delegate authority to a "senior attorney [or employee] who has no connections" to the conflict.

2. **Recommended Approval Structure:** To proceed with this vendor, Hunt County must implement a "firewall" to eliminate the IT Director's influence over his uncle's contracts:

- a. **Delegation of Authority:** Brandon Brand must formally delegate all decision-making, quote evaluation, and final approval for any work involving Greg Speir to a different department head or a committee not under his direct supervision (e.g., the Purchasing Agent or County Auditor).
- b. **Independent Review:** All IT infrastructure quotes involving Greg Speir should be reviewed and approved by the Purchasing Department or the Commissioners Court directly, without any "recommendation" from the IT Director.

IV. CONCLUSION

There is no statutory bar that *prevents* moving forward with Greg Speir, especially given his long-standing history with the County prior to the IT Director's tenure. However, the "danger"

lies in the IT Director's involvement. If Brandon Brand participates in any step of the "selection and final approval" of his uncle, the contract could be declared void, and the Director could face misdemeanor charges.

V. RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Ensure Brandon Brand files the official TEC Form CIS with the County Clerk immediately.
2. Modify the "Employee Conflict of Interest" form to strike any language suggesting "partial" participation.
3. Transfer all "final approval" and "vendor selection" authority for cabling infrastructure projects to the Purchasing Agent for the duration of this vendor's engagement.



EMPLOYEE CONFLICT OF INTEREST - DISCLOSURE & RECUSAL FORM

Employee Name: Brandon Brand Date: 03/30/2026

Title: I.T. Director Department: Info Sys.

Vendor Name: Greg Spair

Relationship to Vendor: Family Member Other: _____

Disclosure:

I disclose the above relationship and understand it constitutes a reportable conflict under Texas Local Government Code Chapter 176 and Hunt County policy.

STATUTORY FILING (Initial): _____ I will file Texas Ethics Commission Form CIS with the County Clerk within the required deadline.

Full Recusal (Initial all):

BB No participation in vendor selection, specs, quotes, evaluation, scoring, negotiation, recommendation, approval, contracting, or award.

BB No direct or indirect input, technical guidance, advice, or influence regarding this vendor.

BB No supervision, performance review, invoice approval, payment approval, payment authorization, or contract administration.

BB No communications intended to influence any decision involving this vendor.

DELEGATION / FIREWALL: Authority delegated to Tammy Himes (Title Purchasing Agent).

BB I acknowledge all decisions occur outside my supervision or control.

Certification:

I certify this disclosure is complete and I will maintain full recusal in compliance with Chapter 176.

Employee Signature: [Signature] Date: 03/30/2026

Printed Name: Brandon Brand

Purchasing Department Acknowledgment: [Signature] Date: 03/30/2026 Form
CIS Filed: Yes Pending N/A Date: _____

LOCAL GOVERNMENT OFFICER CONFLICTS DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

FORM CIS

(Instructions for completing and filing this form are provided on the next page.)

This questionnaire reflects changes made to the law by H.B. 23, 84th Leg., Regular Session.

This is the notice to the appropriate local governmental entity that the following local government officer has become aware of facts that require the officer to file this statement in accordance with Chapter 176, Local Government Code.

OFFICE USE ONLY

Date Received

1 Name of Local Government Officer

Brandon Brand

2 Office Held

I. T. Director

3 Name of vendor described by Sections 176.001(7) and 176.003(a), Local Government Code

Greg Speir

4 Description of the nature and extent of each employment or other business relationship and each family relationship with vendor named in item 3.

Voice and Data Services - Greg Speir (uncle)

5 List gifts accepted by the local government officer and any family member, if aggregate value of the gifts accepted from vendor named in item 3 exceeds \$100 during the 12-month period described by Section 176.003(a)(2)(B).

Date Gift Accepted _____ Description of Gift _____

Date Gift Accepted _____ Description of Gift _____

Date Gift Accepted _____ Description of Gift _____

(attach additional forms as necessary)

6 SIGNATURE

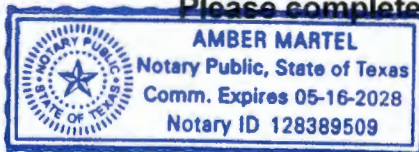
I swear under penalty of perjury that the above statement is true and correct. I acknowledge that the disclosure applies to each family member (as defined by Section 176.001(2), Local Government Code) of this local government officer. I also acknowledge that this statement covers the 12-month period described by Section 176.003(a)(2)(B), Local Government Code.

Brand

Signature of Local Government Officer

Please complete either option below:

(1) Affidavit



NOTARY STAMP / SEAL

Sworn to and subscribed before me by *Amber Martel* this the *30th* day of *March*.

20 *26*, to certify which, witness my hand and seal of office.

Amber Martel

Amber Martel

Purchasing Ast.

Signature of officer administering oath

Printed name of officer administering oath

Title of officer administering oath

OR

(2) Unsworn Declaration

My name is _____, and my date of birth is _____.

My address is _____, _____, _____, _____, _____.
(street) (city) (state) (zip code) (country)

Executed in _____ County, State of _____, on the _____ day of _____, 20____.
(month) (year)

Signature of Local Government Officer (Declarant)

LOCAL GOVERNMENT OFFICER CONFLICTS DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

Section 176.003 of the Local Government Code requires certain local government officers to file this form. A "local government officer" is defined as a member of the governing body of a local governmental entity; a director, superintendent, administrator, president, or other person designated as the executive officer of a local governmental entity; or an agent of a local governmental entity who exercises discretion in the planning, recommending, selecting, or contracting of a vendor. This form is required to be filed with the records administrator of the local governmental entity not later than 5 p.m. on the seventh business day after the date on which the officer becomes aware of the facts that require the filing of this statement.

A local government officer commits an offense if the officer knowingly violates Section 176.003, Local Government Code. An offense under this section is a misdemeanor.

Refer to chapter 176 of the Local Government Code for detailed information regarding the requirement to file this form.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR COMPLETING THIS FORM

The following numbers correspond to the numbered boxes on the other side.

- 1. Name of Local Government Officer.** Enter the name of the local government officer filing this statement.
- 2. Office Held.** Enter the name of the office held by the local government officer filing this statement.
- 3. Name of vendor described by Sections 176.001(7) and 176.003(a), Local Government Code.** Enter the name of the vendor described by Section 176.001(7), Local Government Code, if the vendor: a) has an employment or other business relationship with the local government officer or a family member of the officer as described by Section 176.003(a)(2)(A), Local Government Code; b) has given to the local government officer or a family member of the officer one or more gifts as described by Section 176.003(a)(2)(B), Local Government Code; or c) has a family relationship with the local government officer as defined by Section 176.001(2-a), Local Government Code.
- 4. Description of the nature and extent of each employment or other business relationship and each family relationship with vendor named in item 3.** Describe the nature and extent of the employment or other business relationship the vendor has with the local government officer or a family member of the officer as described by Section 176.003(a)(2)(A), Local Government Code, and each family relationship the vendor has with the local government officer as defined by Section 176.001(2-a), Local Government Code.
- 5. List gifts accepted, if the aggregate value of the gifts accepted from vendor named in item 3 exceeds \$100.** List gifts accepted during the 12-month period (described by Section 176.003(a)(2)(B), Local Government Code) by the local government officer or family member of the officer from the vendor named in item 3 that in the aggregate exceed \$100 in value.
- 6. Signature.** Signature of local government officer. Complete this section after you finish the rest of this report. You have the option to either: (1) take the completed form to a notary public where you will sign above the first line that says "Signature of Local Government Officer" (an electronic signature is not acceptable) and your signature will be notarized, or (2) sign above both lines that say "Signature of Local Government Officer (Declarant)" (an electronic signature is not acceptable), and fill out the unsworn declaration section.

Local Government Code § 176.001(2-a): "Family relationship" means a relationship between a person and another person within the third degree by consanguinity or the second degree by affinity, as those terms are defined by Subchapter B, Chapter 573, Government Code.

Local Government Code § 176.003(a)(2)(A):

- (a) A local government officer shall file a conflicts disclosure statement with respect to a vendor if:

- (2) the vendor:

(A) has an employment or other business relationship with the local government officer or a family member of the officer that results in the officer or family member receiving taxable income, other than investment income, that exceeds \$2,500 during the 12-month period preceding the date that the officer becomes aware that:

- a contract between the local governmental entity and vendor has been executed; or
- the local governmental entity is considering entering into a contract with the vendor.