

MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING

On the 10th day of January 2023, the City Council of Taft, Texas, convened in a regular meeting at 402 Park Street, Kiva Hut, at 6:30 p.m. with the following members present:

1. CALL TO ORDER AND QUORUM CHECK

Randy Powell Mayor
Rolando Rodriguez Mayor Pro-Tem
Leonard Vasquez
Chris Keeney
Alonso Molina

There being a quorum, the meeting was called to order by Mayor Powell.

Others Present: Sid Arismendez, Interim City Manager; Molly Topper, Finance Director/City Secretary/HR Director; Bernie Saenz, PW Director; Mariah Moreno, Municipal Court Clerk; Ruby Gonzalez, AP/PY/Billing Clerk, (see attached list for guests present)

2. INVOCATION AND PLEDGE

Councilman Rodriguez led the Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance.

3. VISITORS

Donnie Riojas, Cottonview Terrace Apartments, addressed Council to invite them to the Grand Opening ceremony of the apartments.

David Trevino addressed the Council to inform of his opening a restaurant in town and working on required permits.

4. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

Councilman Rodriguez motioned, seconded by Councilman Keeney, to approve the Minutes of December 13, 2022, with changes, and the Special Meeting of December 19, 2022.

The following votes were polled:

Ayes: Vasquez, Keeney, Powell, Rodriguez, Molina
Noes: None
Absent: None
The motion carried

5. CITY MANAGER PROJECT UPDATES

Interim City Manager Sid Arismendez reported on the following projects:

David Road street lights
AEP street lights throughout the City;
Lighting around the Taft Recreational Park has been complete;
Hidalgo Community Center renovation;
Fire Station construction;
Splash Pad update;
Little League grounds, buildings and structures;
Water Meters;

6. DISCUSS, CONSIDER AND ACT ON SELECTION OF ENGINEERING FIRM TO WORK ON THE GLO PROJECTS

Mr. Arismendez reported bids were submitted by Hanson Engineering and Ardurra Engineering. Councilman Rodriguez motioned, seconded by Councilman Vasquez, to appoint Ardurra Engineering for the GLO projects.

The following votes were polled:

Ayes: Vasquez, Keeney, Powell, Rodriguez, Molina

Noes: None

Absent: None

The motion carried

7. DISCUSS, CONSIDER AND ACT ON EXECUTING CONTRACT WITH THE SAN PATRICIO COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT FOR THE INSPECTION OF LOCAL BUSINESSES

Gabriel Arroyo, Health Department, explained the agreement for inspections is for three years beginning 2023, \$0.00 the first year, \$750.00 the second year and \$1500.00 the third year. Councilman Keeney motioned, seconded by Councilman Rodriguez, to execute the contract with the San Patricio County Health Department for inspection of food establishments.

The following votes were polled:

Ayes: Vasquez, Keeney, Powell, Rodriguez, Molina

Noes: None

Absent: none

The motion carried

8. DISCUSS, CONSIDER AND ACT ON SAN PATRICIO COUNTY DRAINAGE DISTRICT CITY PROJECT TO BE FUNDED BY COUNTY

Mayor Powell reported meeting with officials of the Drainage District and their intent to address drainage issues within the City as a result of receiving GLO funds for flooding projects. Councilman Vasquez motioned, seconded by Councilman Kenney, to approve the City projects to be funded by the Drainage District, specifically the Packinghouse Road project, in the amount of \$1.7 million.

The following votes were polled:

Ayes: Vasquez, Keeney, Powell, Rodriguez, Molina

Noes: None

Absent: None

The motion carried

9. DISCUSS, CONSIDER, AND ACT ON SAN PATRICIO COUNTY WATER SUPPLY DISTRICT PROPOSED PIPELINES

Mr. Arismendez reported to Council the intent of the Water District to replace an existing water line with a 30" line. After further discussion, Mayor Powell motioned, seconded by Councilman Keeney, to table this item for further discussion.

The following votes were polled:

Ayes: Vasquez, Keeney, Powell, Rodriguez, Molina

Noes: None

Absent: None

The motion carried

10. DISCUSS, CONSIDER AND ACT ON LITTLE LEAGUE CONTRACT FOR THE 2023 BASEBALL/SOFTBALL SEASON

Mr. Arismendez reported on the existing agreement. After further discussion, Councilman Vasquez motioned, seconded by Mayor Powell, to table this item for a future meeting.

The following votes were polled:

Ayes: Vasquez, Keeney, Powell, Rodriguez, Molina

Noes: None

Absent: None

The motion carried

11. DISCUSS AND CONSIDER AND ACT ON AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER TO ENGAGE INTO NEGOTIATIONS WITH RIDGELINE TELECOM AND/OR FRONTIER COMMUNICATIONS FOR EASEMENTS AND RIGHT-OF-WAYS FOR BOTH BURIAL AND AERIAL FIBER OPTIC TELECOMMUNICATION LINES

Bernie Saenz reported that Ridgeline Telecom would like to meet with City officials to discuss the easement or right-of-ways needed for burial or aerial fiber optic internet and telephone lines. Council suggested that they be invited to the next meeting for a presentation of their project. Councilman Keeney motioned, seconded by Councilman Molina, to authorize

the City Manager to engage into negotiations with Ridgeline Telecom and/or Frontier Communication for easements and right-of-ways for both burial and aerial fiber optic telecommunication lines.

The following votes were polled:

Ayes: Vasquez, Keeney, Powell, Rodriguez, Molina

Noes: None

Absent: None

The motion carried

12. DISCUSS, CONSIDER AND ACT ON AUTHORIZING MAYOR POWELL TO EXECUTE ALL DOCUMENTS NECESSARY TO ENTER INTO A DONATION AGREEMENT WITH THE RITCHIE FOUNDATION, INC. FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE MARIETTA RITCHIE MUNICIPAL LIBRARY

After review and discussion of the proposed agreement between the City of Taft and The Ritchie Foundation, Councilman Molina motioned, seconded by Councilman Rodriguez, to authorize Mayor Powell to execute all documents necessary to enter into a donation agreement with The Ritchie Foundation, Inc. for the construction of the Marietta Ritchie Municipal Library.

The following votes were polled:

Ayes: Vasquez, Keeney, Powell, Rodriguez, Molina

Noes: None

Absent: None

The motion carried

13. EXECUTIVE SESSION:

1. Convene into Executive Session pursuant to Section 551.074 Personnel Matters to discuss the qualifications of prospective City Manager applications;

2. Convene into Executive Session pursuant to Section 551.074 Personnel Matters involving the appointment, employment, evaluation, reassignment, duties, discipline, or dismissal of a public officer or employee, to-wit: City Attorney;

AT THIS TIME, 8:17, COUNCILMAN KEENEY MOTIONED, SECONDED BY COUNCILMAN MOLINA, TO ENTER INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION

14. RECONVENE IN REGULAR SESSION

At this time, 8:57 p.m., Councilman Rodriguez motioned, seconded by Councilman Vasquez, to reconvene in regular session.

The following votes were polled:

Ayes: Vasquez, Keeney, Powell, Rodriguez, Molina

Noes: None

Absent: None

The motion carried

Action taken following the Executive Session:

1. Mayor Powell motioned, seconded by Councilman Keeney, to extend for 30 days, the application window through TML.

The following votes were polled:

Ayes: Vasquez, Keeney, Powell, Rodriguez, Molina

Noes: None

Absent: None

The motion carried

2. Appointment, employment, evaluation, reassignment, duties, discipline or dismissal of a public officer or employee, to-wit: city attorney.

Mayor Powell motioned for notice to dismiss Denton-Navarro pursuant to compliance to City ordinance residence requirement. Motion died for lack of a second.

Councilman Kenney motioned, to terminate Denton-Navarro from employment relationship with the City of Taft and the City Attorney, seconded by Councilman Rodriguez.

The following votes were polled:

Ayes: Vasquez, Keeney, Powell, Rodriguez, Molina
Noes: None
Absent: None
The motion carried

Mayor Powell motioned, seconded by Councilman Keeney, to appoint Epimenio Ysassi Interim City Attorney for the City of Taft.

The following votes were polled:

Ayes: Vasquez, Keeney, Powell, Rodriguez, Molina
Noes: None
Absent: None
The motion carried

Mayor Powell motioned, seconded by Councilman Keeney, to advertise for and accept Requests for Qualifications for City Attorney.

The following votes were polled:

Ayes: Vasquez, Keeney, Powell, Rodriguez, Molina
Noes: None
Absent: None
The motion carried

17. CITY COUNCIL AGENDA ITEM REQUESTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Councilman Vasquez – rename Hidalgo Center the Julia Alvarado Senior Center
- Councilman Keeney – annexation process options
- Councilman Rodriguez – rename Hidalgo Park after Miguel “Mike” Garcia; RFPs for trash removal
- Councilman Molina – street infrastructure; condemnation of sub-standard buildings
- Mayor Powell – Ordinance No. 968 for special meeting on January 17th; advertise in TML for city manager resumes for 30 days after Ordinance revision

18. ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Powell motioned, seconded by Councilman Rodriguez, to adjourn the meeting at 9:10 pm.

The following votes were polled:

Ayes: Vasquez, Keeney, Powell, Rodriguez, Molina
Noes: None
Absent: None
The motion carried

CITY OF TAFT

Randy Powell, Mayor

ATTEST:

Molly Topper, City Secretary