

MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING

On the 25th day of July 2023, the City Council of Taft, Texas, convened in a regular meeting at 230 Green Avenue, Taft, Texas, at 6:30 p.m. with the following members present:

1. CALL REGULAR CITY COUNCIL MEETING TO ORDER

There being a quorum, Mayor Powell called the meeting to order at 6:30 P.M.

2. CALL ROLL AND ESTABLISH A QUORUM IS PRESENT

Councilman Vasquez	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> present	<input type="checkbox"/> absent
Councilman Keeney	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> present	<input type="checkbox"/> absent
Mayor Pro-tem Rodriguez	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> present	<input type="checkbox"/> absent
Councilman Molina	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> present	<input type="checkbox"/> absent
Mayor Powell	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> present	<input type="checkbox"/> absent

Others Present: Molly Topper, Finance Director/City Secretary; Christie Watkins, Accountant; John Landreth, Chief of Police (see attached list for additional guests)

3. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Councilman Rodriguez led Pledge of Allegiance

4. PRAYER

Councilman Rodriguez led the prayer.

5. CITIZEN COMMENT

Imani Aguirre, 201 Field Ave. – comments and support for Elvia Hernandez for Municipal Court Judge
Sandra Meza, -- comments and support for Elvia Hernandez for Municipal Court Judge
Janie Banda, 707 Retama Ave -- comments and support for Elvia Hernandez for Municipal Court Judge
Norma Fuentes, 515 Victoria Ave -- comments and support for Elvia Hernandez for Municipal Court Judge
Bryanne Hamilton, 413 McIntyre Ave -- comments and support for Elvia Hernandez for Municipal Court Judge
Elvia Hernandez – asked Council for consideration for the position of Municipal Court Judge

6. DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS

Public Works Report:

Water/Wastewater: Wesley Childers, Consultant, reported to the Council on the conditions of the wastewater treatment plant, of TCEQ inspections and violations, and of corrective actions taken on behalf of the City to remedy the conditions.

City Manager Report:

Operations:

- TML Annual Conference will be held at the Kay Bailey Hutchinson Convention Center, on Oct. 4-6, 2023;
- proposed budget will be filed with the City Secretary by August 2nd;
- our tafttx.gov domain has been approved and all emails are being converted to @tafttx.gov;

- SAVVY Citizen App is live and currently utilized;
- GLO Harvey MOD grant – have engineer and grant administrator on board
- GLO has granted 60-day extension to prepare the scope of work and engineer's estimate of probable costs and submit the application
- TxDOT Alternative Transportation – Phase 3 will be under way soon; Phase 4 has not kicked off yet
- TWDB – will be looking for projects eligible for TWDB loan/grant
- FEMA TDEM – DR-4705 will begin looking at City's eligibility 75/25 match; applications due no later than November 3rd; eligible projects: flood risk reduction, infrastructure, mitigation reconstruction
- DR-4332-126: reviewing original application to determine if we need the City procured GA and Engineer or if we need to complete those steps currently; generators will be installed at City Hall, PD, Kiva Hut and water storage pump site

Projects:

- Water Tank Repair: materials still being fabricated with a scheduled delivery date of 9/18 and repairs to begin thereafter
- Street Replacement Projects: Juarez, Allende, Bravo & Murray will be placed out for bid soon; Dirt Boys, Inc. to begin work on Retama & Gregory Streets on Monday

Other

- Reached out to TxDOT and they do not street sweep anymore – that is outlined in the MMA; TxDOT will consider whether they are willing to undertake another traffic survey this year on CR 631 from HWY 181 to Rincon; working with an organization that will bring faster internet to Taft residents, provide them a second option for internet, and reduce City operations expenses.

Current Operations and/or Future Operations

- Mayor Powell would like to look into restoring a fire truck and installation of sprinkler systems throughout the parks

Presentation of Financials

- Mr. Linn provided the financials for Council to review

8. CONSENT AGENDA

A. No Minutes for consideration

B. Consideration and approval of Financials

Councilman Keeney motioned, seconded by Councilman Rodriguez, to postpone this item for the next meeting.

The following votes were polled:

Councilman Vasquez	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> for	<input type="checkbox"/> against	<input type="checkbox"/> abstain	<input type="checkbox"/> absent
Councilman Keeney	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> for	<input type="checkbox"/> against	<input type="checkbox"/> abstain	<input type="checkbox"/> absent
Councilman Rodriguez	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> for	<input type="checkbox"/> against	<input type="checkbox"/> abstain	<input type="checkbox"/> absent
Councilman Molina	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> for	<input type="checkbox"/> against	<input type="checkbox"/> abstain	<input type="checkbox"/> absent
Mayor Powell	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> for	<input type="checkbox"/> against	<input type="checkbox"/> abstain	<input type="checkbox"/> absent

The motion carried.

9. CONSIDERATION AND POSSIBLE ACTION REGARDING REMOVING TQIC MEMBERS; SUMMER GARCIA (CONFLICT OF INTEREST), JAYSON MILLER (AVAILABILITY CHANGE) AND MANUEL BANDA (EXCESSIVE ABSENCES)

Councilman Vasquez motioned, seconded by Councilman Keeney, to remove Summer Garcia, Jayson Miller and Manuel Banda from TQIC.

The following votes were polled:

Councilman Vasquez	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> for	<input type="checkbox"/> against	<input type="checkbox"/> abstain	<input type="checkbox"/> absent
Councilman Keeney	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> for	<input type="checkbox"/> against	<input type="checkbox"/> abstain	<input type="checkbox"/> absent
Councilman Rodriguez	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> for	<input type="checkbox"/> against	<input type="checkbox"/> abstain	<input type="checkbox"/> absent
Councilman Molina	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> for	<input type="checkbox"/> against	<input type="checkbox"/> abstain	<input type="checkbox"/> absent
Mayor Powell	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> for	<input type="checkbox"/> against	<input type="checkbox"/> abstain	<input type="checkbox"/> absent

The motion carried.

10. CONSIDERATION AND POSSIBLE ACTION REGARDING APPROVING A TAFT ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION (EDC) ANNUAL EXPENDITURE OF \$36,000.00 (PAYABLE IN TWELVE EQUAL INSTALLMENTS) FOR THE PURPOSE OF HIRING AN EDC DIRECTOR AND PAYING THE CITY OF TAFT FOR ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES; AND MAKING THE PAYMENTS(S) RETROACTIVE TO JULY 1, 2023.

Councilman Rodriguez reported that the City would provide administrative services and Mr. David Smith would be the Director. Councilman Keeney motioned, seconded by Councilman Rodriguez, to approve the Taft Economic Development Corporation annual expenditure of \$36,000.00 (payable in 12 equal installments) for the purpose of hiring Mr. David Smith as the EDC Director and paying the City of Taft for administrative services and making the payment(s) retroactive to July 1, 2023.

The following votes were polled:

Councilman Vasquez	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> for	<input type="checkbox"/> against	<input type="checkbox"/> abstain	<input type="checkbox"/> absent
Councilman Keeney	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> for	<input type="checkbox"/> against	<input type="checkbox"/> abstain	<input type="checkbox"/> absent
Councilman Rodriguez	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> for	<input type="checkbox"/> against	<input type="checkbox"/> abstain	<input type="checkbox"/> absent
Councilman Molina	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> for	<input type="checkbox"/> against	<input type="checkbox"/> abstain	<input type="checkbox"/> absent
Mayor Powell	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> for	<input type="checkbox"/> against	<input type="checkbox"/> abstain	<input type="checkbox"/> absent

The motion carried.

11. CONSIDERATION AND POSSIBLE ACTION REGARDING AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER TO ENTER INTO AN AGREEMENT WITH ACCURATE METER & SUPPLY FOR THE PURCHASE AND INSTALLATION OF NEW CELLULAR WATER METERS; AND FURTHER AUTHORIZE THE CITY MANAGER TO EXPEND THE PREVIOUSLY DEDICATED ARPA FUNDS AT THE JUNE 23, 2023, REGULAR CITY COUNCIL MEETING.

12. CONSIDERATION AND POSSIBLE ACTION REGARDING RESOLUTION 23-04 ESTABLISHING, ADOPTING AND IMPLEMENTING THE CITY OF TAFT SOCIAL MEDIA AND COMMUNICATIONS POLICY; PROVIDING A REPEALING CLAUSE; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY; AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

Due to Mr. Linn's absence, Mayor Powell motioned, seconded by Councilman Vasquez, to table Items 11 & 12 for a future Council meeting.

The following votes were polled:

Councilman Vasquez	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> for	<input type="checkbox"/> against	<input type="checkbox"/> abstain	<input type="checkbox"/> absent
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Councilman Keeney	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> for	<input type="checkbox"/> against	<input type="checkbox"/> abstain	<input type="checkbox"/> absent
Councilman Rodriguez	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> for	<input type="checkbox"/> against	<input type="checkbox"/> abstain	<input type="checkbox"/> absent
Councilman Molina	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> for	<input type="checkbox"/> against	<input type="checkbox"/> abstain	<input type="checkbox"/> absent
Mayor Powell	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> for	<input type="checkbox"/> against	<input type="checkbox"/> abstain	<input type="checkbox"/> absent

The motion carried.

13. CLOSE REGULAR MEETING

At this time, 7:30 p.m., Councilman Molina motioned, seconded by Councilman Vasquez, to close the regular meeting to enter into closed session to discuss the following:

Section 551.071 (Consultation with Attorney) A governmental body may conduct a private consultation with its attorney when the governmental body seeks the advice of its attorney about pending or contemplated litigation.

**Joe Ellen Perez v City of Taft
Marcus Adams v City of Taft, et al**

Section 771.073 (Prospective Gift or Donation) A governmental body may conduct a closed meeting to deliberate a negotiated contract for a prospective gift or donation to the state or the governmental body if deliberation in an open meeting would have a detrimental effect on the position of the governmental body in negotiations with a third person.

Ritchie Library Donation

Section 551.074 (Personnel Matters) to deliberate the appointment, employment, evaluation, reassignment, duties, discipline, or dismissal of a public officer or employee.

Municipal Court Judge

The following votes were polled:

Councilman Vasquez	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> for	<input type="checkbox"/> against	<input type="checkbox"/> abstain	<input type="checkbox"/> absent
Councilman Keeney	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> for	<input type="checkbox"/> against	<input type="checkbox"/> abstain	<input type="checkbox"/> absent
Councilman Rodriguez	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> for	<input type="checkbox"/> against	<input type="checkbox"/> abstain	<input type="checkbox"/> absent
Councilman Molina	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> for	<input type="checkbox"/> against	<input type="checkbox"/> abstain	<input type="checkbox"/> absent
Mayor Powell	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> for	<input type="checkbox"/> against	<input type="checkbox"/> abstain	<input type="checkbox"/> absent

The motion carried.

14. OPEN SESSION

At this time, 7:58 p.m. Councilman Rodriguez motioned, seconded by Councilman Keeney, to return to open session.

The following votes were polled:

Councilman Vasquez	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> for	<input type="checkbox"/> against	<input type="checkbox"/> abstain	<input type="checkbox"/> absent
Councilman Keeney	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> for	<input type="checkbox"/> against	<input type="checkbox"/> abstain	<input type="checkbox"/> absent
Councilman Rodriguez	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> for	<input type="checkbox"/> against	<input type="checkbox"/> abstain	<input type="checkbox"/> absent
Councilman Molina	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> for	<input type="checkbox"/> against	<input type="checkbox"/> abstain	<input type="checkbox"/> absent
Mayor Powell	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> for	<input type="checkbox"/> against	<input type="checkbox"/> abstain	<input type="checkbox"/> absent

The motion carried.

Section 551.071 (Consultation with Attorney) A governmental body may conduct a private consultation with its attorney when the governmental body seeks the advice of its attorney about pending or contemplated litigation.

**Joe Ellen Perez v City of Taft
Marcus Adams v City of Taft, et al**

No action was taken on this matter.

Section 771.073 (Prospective Gift or Donation) A governmental body may conduct a closed meeting to deliberate a negotiated contract for a prospective gift or donation to the state or the governmental body if deliberation in an open meeting would have a detrimental effect on the position of the governmental body in negotiations with a third person.

Ritchie Library Donation

Mayor Powell announced that no action would be taken on this matter. This contract has not been signed.

Section 551.074 (Personnel Matters) to deliberate the appointment, employment, evaluation, reassignment, duties, discipline, or dismissal of a public officer or employee.

Municipal Court Judge

Mayor Powell announced that no action would be taken on this matter. He called for a special meeting to be held on July 31, 2023, at 6:30 p.m., in order to consult with the City Manager and City Attorney.

15. CONSIDERATION, DISCUSSION, AND POSSIBLE ACTION IN REGARD TO NON-HUMAN RELATION CITY MATTERS WITH THE CITY MANAGER.

Vasquez – none

Keeney – none

Rodriguez – Toland Road and Second Street need improvement

Molina – sidewalk at Retama Avenue and Gregory Street needs to be completed

Powell – none

16. ITEMS TO CONSIDER FOR PLACEMENT ON FUTURE AGENDAS.

Vasquez – none

Keeney – none

Rodriguez – would like a report from Chief Smith in regards to the property on Toland Road close to the cemetery

Molina – concerned with the business on HWY 181 next to Brisket Joes's with the portable toilets

Powell – update on Hurricane Preparedness Plan; update on the fire station; update on sprinkler systems at Garcia Park, Gibson Park, Memorial Park and Little League Fields; signs at splashpad

17. ANNOUNCEMENTS OF COMMUNITY INTEREST AND/OR UPCOMING EVENTS

Vasquez – none

Keeney – none

Rodriguez – none

Molina – none

Powell – none

City Manager – none

City Secretary -- none

18. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further discussion, Councilman Rodriguez motioned, seconded by Councilman Vasquez, to adjourn the meeting at 8:05 pm.

The following votes were polled:

Councilman Vasquez	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> for	<input type="checkbox"/> against	<input type="checkbox"/> abstain	<input type="checkbox"/> absent
Councilman Keeney	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> for	<input type="checkbox"/> against	<input type="checkbox"/> abstain	<input type="checkbox"/> absent
Councilman Rodriguez	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> for	<input type="checkbox"/> against	<input type="checkbox"/> abstain	<input type="checkbox"/> absent
Councilman Molina	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> for	<input type="checkbox"/> against	<input type="checkbox"/> abstain	<input type="checkbox"/> absent
Mayor Powell	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> for	<input type="checkbox"/> against	<input type="checkbox"/> abstain	<input type="checkbox"/> absent

The motion carried.

CITY OF TAFT

Randy Powell, Mayor

ATTEST:

Molly Topper, City Secretary