

## MINUTES OF REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING

On the 8<sup>th</sup> day of March, 2022, the City Council of Taft, Texas, convened in a regular session at 402 Park St., at the Kiva Hut, at 6:30 p.m. with the following members present:

Randy Powell	Mayor
Rolando Rodriguez	Mayor Pro-tem
Lolo Hernandez	
JoAdrian Vara	
Leonard Vasquez	Absent

Others present: Melissa Gonzales, City Manager, David Aken, City Attorney, Mary Alice Sandoval, Finance Director and Jennifer Pineda, City Secretary.

**#1.** There being a quorum, the meeting was called to order at 6:31 p.m.

### **#2. Invocation & Pledge of Allegiance.**

Mayor Powell led the Pledge of Allegiance and Councilman Rodriguez gave the invocation.

### **#3. Visitors.**

Marcus Adams, 614 San Patricio, stated that the city is giving money away with the car allowance. He also addressed the council in regards to cars parked on the sidewalk on San Patricio.

Bryanne Hamilton, 413 McIntyre, stated that there was a sexual predator that was arrested in town but that the office did not get off at the house that the original call came from. She did say that the office did apologize for being understaffed. Her suggestion to the council is to find money to fund the officers.

### **#4. Consider, discuss, and take action to approve the February 9, 2021 regular meeting minutes, February 18, 2021 special emergency meeting minutes, February 19, 2021 special emergency meeting minutes, and February 23, 2021 regular meeting minutes. (city staff)**

Councilman Rodriguez made a motion to approve the February 9, 2021 regular meeting minutes, February 18, 2021 special emergency meeting minutes, February 19, 2021 special emergency meeting minutes, and February 23, 2021 regular meeting minutes. The motion was seconded by Councilman Hernandez.

The following votes were polled:

Ayes: Vara, Rodriguez, Hernandez

Nays: none

Abstain: Mayor

Absent: Vasquez

The motion carried.

### **#5. Update by the Taft Economic Development Corporation. (Councilman Vara)**

Councilman Vara explained that he just wants to be informed on where we are at with economic development. EDC President David Smith gave a brief presentation on the different projects the EDC has been working on.

### **#6. Consider, discuss, and take action on request for proposals for auditing services for FYE 2021. (city staff)**

Mrs. Gonzalez informed the council that she only received one proposal.

Councilman Rodriguez made a motion to accept a proposal from Armstrong, Vaughan & Associates, P.C. at the cost of \$26,750 for the FYE 2021. The motion was seconded by Councilman Hernandez.

The following votes were polled:  
Ayes: Vara, Rodriguez, Hernandez, Mayor  
Nays: none  
Absent: Vasquez  
The motion carried.

**#7. Consider, discuss, and take action on Resolution No. 654, a resolution regarding a finance contract for the purpose of procuring a “Hydro Cleaner”. (city staff)**

Councilman Vara made a motion to take action on Resolution No. 654, a resolution regarding a finance contract for the purpose of procuring a “Hydro Cleaner”. The motion was seconded by Councilman Hernandez.

The following votes were polled:  
Ayes: Vara, Rodriguez, Hernandez, Mayor  
Nays: none  
Absent: Vasquez  
The motion carried.

**#8. Consider, discuss, and take action on Resolution 655, a resolution accepting Gulf Coast Growth Ventures engage Gray Planning Studio to develop and facilitate adoption of a Downtown Revitalization Plan and a Comprehensive short term work plan. (city staff)**

Councilman Hernandez made a motion to take action on Resolution 655, a resolution accepting Gulf Coast Growth Ventures engage Gray Planning Studio to develop and facilitate adoption of a Downtown Revitalization Plan and a Comprehensive short term work plan. The motion was seconded by Councilman Rodriguez.

The following votes were polled:  
Ayes: Vara, Rodriguez, Hernandez, Mayor  
Nays: none  
Absent: Vasquez  
The motion carried.

**#9. Consider, discuss, and take action on approving the purchase of a generator. (city staff)**

Councilman Rodriguez made a motion to table this item. The motion was seconded by Councilman Vara.

The following votes were polled:  
Ayes: Vara, Rodriguez, Hernandez, Mayor  
Nays: none  
Absent: Vasquez  
The motion carried.

**#10. Consider, discuss, and take action on authorizing the closure of City Hall at lunch for an hour and a half on March 29, 2022 to have a retirement luncheon for Larry Copeland. (city staff)**

Councilman Hernandez made a motion to authorize the closure of City Hall at lunch for an hour and a half on March 29, 2022 to have a retirement luncheon for Larry Copeland. The motion was seconded by Councilman Rodriguez.

The following votes were polled:  
Ayes: Vara, Rodriguez, Hernandez, Mayor  
Nays: none  
Absent: Vasquez

The motion carried.

**#11. Consider, discuss and take action on approving Ordinance No. 1090, an ordinance repealing and replacing Ordinance No. 1089, prescribing rules, regulations, rates and fees and application process for water, sewer and garbage service. (staff)**

Councilman Rodriguez made a motion to approve Ordinance No. 1090, an ordinance repealing and replacing Ordinance No. 1089, prescribing rules, regulations, rates and fees and application process for water, sewer and garbage service. The motion was seconded by Councilman Vara.

The following votes were polled:

Ayes: Vara, Rodriguez, Hernandez, Mayor

Nays: none

Absent: Vasquez

The motion carried.

**#12. Consider, discuss and take action on the updated City of Taft 2022 Holiday Schedule. (city staff)**

Councilman Vara made a motion to approve the updated City of Taft 2022 Holiday Schedule. The motion was seconded by Councilman Rodriguez.

The following votes were polled:

Ayes: Vara, Rodriguez, Hernandez, Mayor

Nays: none

Absent: Vasquez

The motion carried.

**#13. Consider, discuss and take action on approving Ordinance No. 1091, an ordinance adopting a new city nuisance abatement ordinance to protect the public's health, safety and welfare. (city staff)**

Mayor Powell made a motion to approve Ordinance No. 1091, an ordinance adopting a new city nuisance abatement ordinance to protect the public's health, safety and welfare to reflect revisions to the hours in Section 8.2 and changing 8.6 A from 2 to 4, B to 4, C 3 to 5, D 4 to 6, and E 4 to 6. The motion was seconded by Councilman Rodriguez.

The following votes were polled:

Ayes: Vara, Rodriguez, Hernandez, Mayor

Nays: none

Absent: Vasquez

The motion carried.

**#14. Discussion on new employee added in the capacity to serve as the Public Works secretary presently. (Councilman Rodriguez)**

Councilman Rodriguez wanted to know how long this position has been in the budget and when was it approved. Mrs. Gonzalez and Joe Sandoval gave the history of this position and when it was placed in the budge.

**#15. Consider, discuss, and take action on the car allowance benefit. (Councilman Vara)**

Councilman Vara made a motion to revert back for the city manager to get car allowance and remove from the finance director and city secretary. The motion was seconded by Councilman Rodriguez.

The following votes were polled:

Ayes: Vara, Rodriguez, Hernandez, Mayor  
Nays: none  
Absent: Vasquez  
The motion carried.

**#16. Update from the Taft Police Department on the status of cases involving the juveniles that did destruction. (Councilman Hernandez)**

Councilman Hernandez stated that he wants to have an update on this item. Captain Soliz explained the process to the council and that it takes a little longer to get a warrant on juveniles. He did inform the council that he will email them with any future updates.

**#17. Discussion and possible action on Ordinance No. 1054, an ordinance establishing juvenile nighttime and daytime curfew hours within the City of Taft. (Mayor Powell)**

Mayor Powell made a motion to change Section 2 of Ordinance 1054 for juveniles to 11 p.m. to 6 a.m. curfew Sunday through Saturday. The motion was seconded by Councilman Vara.

The following votes were polled:  
Ayes: Vara, Rodriguez, Hernandez, Mayor  
Nays: none  
Absent: Vasquez  
The motion carried.

**#18. Discussion and possible action on ordinances pertaining to alcoholic beverages. (Councilman Vasquez)**

This item was tabled.

**#19. Consider, discuss and take action on forwarding all complaints against Sgt. Reynaldo Cortez, Chief Ponce Trevino, and City Manager Melissa Gonzales to a third party to investigate. (Councilman Vasquez)**

There was no action on this item and was tabled.

**#20. Consider, discuss, and take action on Ordinance 1083, an ordinance of the City of Taft to designate that the Chief of Police be a municipal officer appointed, hired and removed by the City Council. (Mayor Powell)**

There was no action on this item and was tabled.

**#21. Consider, discuss, and take action on the speed limit on FM 631 by Taft Little League fields. (Mayor Powell)**

Councilman Rodriguez made a motion to propose to TxDot that the speed limit change to 35 mph north and south on FM 631. The motion was seconded by Councilman Hernandez.

The following votes were polled:  
Ayes: Vara, Rodriguez, Hernandez, Mayor  
Nays: none  
Absent: Vasquez  
The motion carried.

**#22. Discuss and consider update regarding the city's financial condition as it relates to bonded debt, past dues, recurring payments, revenues and expenditures. (city staff)**

Mary Alice updated the council on the city's financial condition for the month of February.

**#23. Discuss monthly reports for municipal court, police department, animal control, code enforcement, public works, and fire department. (city staff)**

Judge Diaz spoke to the council on the municipal court report and how the court has been functioning since covid.

Captain Soliz went over the reports for police department, animal control and code enforcement. Joe Sandoval went over the public works report.

The fire department was called out on a fire call and was not available to present.

Mrs. Gonzalez gave updates to the council in regards to the lights installed at Hidalgo Park and the new pharmacy that has opened up. She also informed the council of the new code enforcement officer that was hired.

**#24. City Council Requests and Announcements.**

Councilman Vara would like to include water outages on the Facebook page if possible.

Councilman Hernandez would like to review the hourly rate for police officers.

Mayor Powell would like the city website updated to reflect the current mayor and would like to update the animal control ordinance to include feral cats.

**#25. Adjournment.**

There being no further business, a motion was made by Councilman Rodriguez to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Councilman Hernandez.

The following votes were polled:

Ayes: Vara, Rodriguez, Hernandez, Mayor

Nays: none

Absent: Vasquez

The motion carried.

CITY OF TAFT

Randy Powell  
Randy Powell Mayor

ATTEST:

Jennifer Pineda  
Jennifer Pineda City Secretary

