

MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING

On the 25th day of October, 2022, the City Council of Taft, Texas, convened in a regular meeting at 1150 Gregory Street, at the R. L. Trevino Jr. High School Cafeteria, at 6:30 p.m. with the following members present:

Randy Powell	Mayor
Rolando Rodriguez	Mayor Pro-Tem
Lolo Hernandez	
Leonard Vasquez	absent

Others Present: Sid Arismendez, Interim City Manager; Molly Topper, City Secretary; Bernie Saenz, Director of Public Works

VISITORS:

Michael Vasquez, Taft Fire Dept	Jose G Garcia
Mayra Lozano	Josue Lozano-Cantu
Alonzo Molina	Raquel Ruvo

1. CALL TO ORDER AND QUORUM CHECK

There being a quorum, the meeting was called to order by Mayor Powell at 6:30 p.m.

2. INVOCATION AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Councilman Rodriguez led the invocation and Pledge of Allegiance.

3. VISITORS

There were no visitors requesting to address the Council.

4. DISCUSS, CONSIDER AND ACT ON SENDING OUT RFQs FOR ENGINEERING AND CONTRACTING FOR STORAGE TANK IMPROVEMENTS; WATER METER REPLACEMENT; PARK IMPROVEMENTS

Mr. Arismendez reported to Council the delay in receiving the anticipated Government Land Office (GLO) funds this year, and also reported the need to advertise and request for proposals for engineering and contract services for the elevated storage tank inspection and repairs. He reported that as a result of the delay, only the 93 non-working water meters will be replaced, instead of all 1500 of them. Bids will be solicited for the tennis and basketball court repairs, lighting and covered picnic areas at the Taft Recreational Park. Repairs to the Hidalgo Community Center and lighting at that park will be addressed, in addition to, repairs at the Kiva Hut. Councilman Rodriguez asked for consideration of a public water fountain at the Hidalgo Park and a public telephone at the Taft Recreational Park.

Mayor Powell motioned, seconded by Councilman Hernandez, to authorize the city manager to advertise for RFQs for engineering and contracting for storage tank improvements, water meter replacement and park improvements.

The following votes were polled:

Ayes: Rodriguez, Hernandez, Powell

Noes:

Absent: Vasquez

The motion carried.

5. DISCUSS, CONSIDER AND ACT ON STREET LIGHTING WITHIN THE CITY

Bernie Saenz reported to Council that there are 27 street lights along Davis Road. Of the 27, 14 are non-working, and 6 remain on all day. He has contacted AEP and a work order is being generated to repair them. Councilman Rodriguez asked about the possibility of additional lighting along Toland Avenue.

6. DISCUSS, CONSIDER AND ACT ON STREET LIGHTING AGREEMENT WITH AEP

Sid Arismendez reported that prior administration had not submitted the signed agreement and payment to AEP for the placement of lights at the Taft Recreational Park. AEP has agreed to honor the quoted price of lighting and send a new agreement for execution.

7. DISCUSS, CONSIDER AND ACT TO AUTHORIZE MAYOR RANDY POWELL AND INTERIM CITY MANAGER SID ARISMENDEZ TO AT ON BEHALF OF THE CITY FOR THE PURCHASE OF THE WELLS FARGO BANK BUILDING LOCATED AT 230 GREEN AVENUE, TAFT, TEXAS

Mr. Arismendez reported that a survey of the location has been completed and the need for City Council meeting minutes authorizing the Mayor or Interim City Manager to act on behalf of the City in order to complete the purchase process.

Councilman Rodriguez motioned, seconded by Councilman Hernandez, to authorize Mayor Randy Powell and Interim City Manager Sit Arismendez to act on behalf of the City to purchase the Wells Fargo Bank building located at 230 Green Avenue, Taft, Texas.

The following votes were polled:

Ayes: Rodriguez, Hernandez, Powell

Noes:

Absent: Vasquez

The motion carried.

8. DISCUSS, CONSIDER AND ACT TO APPROVE THE HOLIDAY SCHEDULE FOR 2023; TO APPROVE HOLIDAY LEAVE FOR CITY EMPLOYEES AND TO AUTHORIZE CLOSURE OF CITY OFFICES FOR THOSE DAYS

Councilman Hernandez motioned, seconded by Councilman Rodriguez, to approve the 2023 Holiday Schedule, as presented with the corrected date of November 17th for Veteran's Day.

The following votes were polled:

Ayes: Rodriguez, Hernandez, Powell

Noes:
Absent: Vasquez
The motion carried.

9. DISCUSS, CONSIDER AND ACT ON BUDGET AMENDMENT REQUEST FROM TAFT VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT

Michael Vasquez, assistant fire chief, reported the approved budget items for the FY 2022-2023, and gave an update of the needed fire equipment and vehicles to properly equip the Department and fire trucks and provide the needed emergency fire response to the Taft area. Mayor Powell asked if the trucks to be donated to the Department would be titled to the City or the Taft Volunteer Fire Department. The City would have to be owners in order for TML to insure the vehicles. Mr. Vasquez will confer with the Chief and report back to the City. Jose Moreno introduced himself as a recent resident of Taft and volunteer.

After much discussion, Councilman Rodriguez motioned, seconded by Councilman Hernandez, to amend the budget pending notification from the Taft Volunteer Fire Department whether they want to release the vehicles to the City of Taft's name, at the initial cost of \$34,000.

The following votes were polled:

Ayes: Rodriguez, Hernandez, Powell
Noes:
Absent: Vasquez
The motion carried.

10. CITY COUNCIL REQUESTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Councilman Rodriguez: would like to see the cement street signs replaced with metal signs; asked for consideration of a public telephone near the walking trail at the Taft Recreational Park

Councilman Hernandez: commented on the success of the Taft Volunteer Fire Department's bingo events and suggested more advertisement, perhaps place notice on the Chamber of Commerce marquee

Mayor Powel: requested an update from Ardurra on the RFQs; next meeting to be held on 11/08/2022 at the R. L. Trevino Jr. High Cafeteria

Vasquez: Absent

11. CITY MANAGER REPORT

Interim City Manager reported the following:

- A small excavator has been ordered at a cost of \$75,000 and is scheduled for delivery on Thursday
- After several attempts, he has been unable to schedule a meeting with Rey de los Santos, Santos McBain Management Planning regarding City services and projects. The city attorney is currently reviewing the contract and will report on findings
- Peacock Energy is in the final stages of the right-of-way agreement

- Met with the city auditor he indicated that will likely have the FY 2021-2022 audit completed by February 2023
- Met with the city attorney and discussed the release of liability for house demolitions, ordinance abatement/condemnation
- Met with engineers and was advised of the need for an environmental study for GLO funded projects and inspection and improvements to the elevated water storage tank
- Expected to receive the \$3,000,000 loan funds this week
- Hope to close on the Wells Fargo building soon
- Will be receiving bids for improvements at the Hidalgo and Kiva community centers
- Halloween on Green scheduled for October 29th
- The City sponsorship of fireworks show at the homecoming football game was a big success. The Taft Volunteer Fire Department was on site to monitor and set off the fireworks
- One police officer resigned today. Chief Landreth will be accepting applications to fill the position
- Finally gained access to bank financial statements and will provide update at the 2nd meeting in November
- Councilman Rodriguez asked for the number of city manager applications. He would like to review them.

17. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business Councilman Hernandez motioned, seconded by Councilman Rodriguez, to adjourn the meeting at 7:42 p.m.

CITY OF TAFT

Randy Powell

Mayor

ATTEST:

Molly Topper

City Secretary