

## MINUTES OF REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING

On the 23<sup>rd</sup> day of March, 2021, 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:

Pedro "Pete" Lopez Mayor  
Lolo Hernandez Mayor Pro-tem  
Rolando Rodriguez  
JoAdrian Vara  
Leonard Vasquez

Others present: Mary Alice Sandoval, Finance Director and Jennifer Pineda, City Secretary.

**#1.** There being a quorum, the meeting was called to order at 6:32 p.m.

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

Councilman Hernandez led the Pledge of Allegiance and gave the invocation.

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

Diane Garcia, Davis and Verbina, addressed the council and wanted them to consider looking into the fire department and make some changes.

Felipe Rodriguez, 519 Victoria, read a statement to the council that stated that he has sent emails with numerous concerns and has not received any feedback from the council.

### **#4. Executive Session: Convene into executive session pursuant to Section 551.071 of the Texas Open Meetings Act to meet with its Attorney to seek legal advice on a matter in which the duty of the attorney to the City Council under the Texas Disciplinary Rules of Professional Conduct of the State Bar of Texas clearly conflicts with the Texas Open Meetings Act regarding:**

1. **Frankie Castro vs. City of Taft, Texas, Civil Action No. 2:20-CV-165 in the United States District Court for the Southern District of Texas, Corpus Christi Division.**

Councilman Rodriguez made a motion to enter into executive session. The motion was seconded by Councilman Hernandez.

The following votes were polled:

Ayes: Vara, Rodriguez, Mayor, Vasquez, Hernandez

Nays: None

The motion carried.

### **#5. Reconvene into Regular Session and consider, discuss, or take action, if necessary, on any item(s) discussed in Executive Session.**

Councilman Rodriguez made a motion to take no action. The motion was seconded by Councilman Vara.

The following votes were polled:

Ayes: Vara, Rodriguez, Mayor, Vasquez, Hernandez

Nays: None

The motion carried.

### **#6. Consider, discuss and take action to approve a Master Agreement for Mutual Aid with the Coastal Bend Council of Governments.**

Councilman Rodriguez made a motion to approve a Master Agreement for Mutual Aid with the Coastal Bend Council of Governments. The motion was seconded by Councilman Hernandez.

The following votes were polled:

Ayes: Vara, Rodriguez, Mayor, Vasquez, Hernandez

Nays: None

The motion carried.

**#7. Consider, discuss, and take action to approve Resolution No. 645, a resolution by the City of Taft, Texas suspending the May 3, 2021 effective date of the proposal by Centerpoint Energy Resources Corp., d/b/a Centerpoint Energy Entex and Centerpoint Energy Texas Gas-South Texas Division to implement interim grip rate adjustments for gas utility investment in 2020 and requiring delivery of this resolution to the company and legal counsel.**

Councilman Vara made a motion to approve Resolution No. 645, a resolution by the City of Taft, Texas suspending the May 3, 2021 effective date of the proposal by Centerpoint Energy Resources Corp., d/b/a Centerpoint Energy Entex and Centerpoint Energy Texas Gas-South Texas Division to implement interim grip rate adjustments for gas utility investment in 2020 and requiring delivery of this resolution to the company and legal counsel. The motion was seconded by Councilman Rodriguez.

The following votes were polled:

Ayes: Vara, Rodriguez, Mayor, Vasquez, Hernandez

Nays: None

The motion carried.

**#8. Consider, discuss and take action on approving the road rehabilitation of Retama Ave. and Reynolds Ave. from Gregory St. to Harding St. and if funding allows Lerdo St., Juarez St., Allende St., Escobedo St., Railroad St., and Cottage St.**

Councilman Rodriguez made a motion to approve the road rehabilitation of Retama Ave. and Reynolds Ave. from Gregory St. to Harding St. and if funding allows Lerdo St., Juarez St., Allende St., Escobedo St., Railroad St., and Cottage St. The motion was seconded by Councilman Vara.

The following votes were polled:

Ayes: Vara, Rodriguez, Mayor, Hernandez

Nays: None

Abstain: Vasquez

The motion carried.

**#9. Discussion with Santos McBain on the disaster plan, any possible grants, and personal protective equipment reports. (Councilman Vasquez)**

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

The following votes were polled:

Ayes: Vara, Rodriguez, Mayor, Vasquez, Hernandez

Nays: None

The motion carried.

**#10. Consider, discuss, and take action to approve having the Taft Police Department Officers perform the duties of code enforcement and eliminate the Code Enforcement position.**

Councilman Rodriguez made a motion to approve having the Taft Police Department Officers perform the duties of code enforcement and eliminate the Code Enforcement position for the duration of six months and to include documentation. The motion was seconded by Councilman Hernandez.

The following votes were polled:

Ayes: Vara, Rodriguez, Mayor, Vasquez, Hernandez

Nays: None

The motion carried.

**#11. Discussion and possible action on Ordinance No. 1056, an ordinance of the city council of the City of Taft Extending a declaration of local disaster. (Councilman Vara)**

Councilman Vara made a motion to take action on Ordinance No. 1056, an ordinance of the city council of the City of Taft Extending a declaration of local disaster. The motion was seconded by Councilman Rodriguez.

The following votes were polled:

Ayes: Vara, Rodriguez, Mayor, Vasquez, Hernandez

Nays: None

The motion carried.

**#12. Discussion on the possibility of training for the zoning committee. (Councilman Vara)**

Council discussed this item and directed Jennifer to send all information to the P&Z committee to see if they would like to attend the class.

**#13. Discussion on the contract with the Taft Volunteer Fire Department. (Councilman Vara)**

Council discussed this item with the Taft Volunteer Fire Department attorney Bryan Keeney.

**#14. Discussion on the truck used by Fire Chief Dan Gibson. (Councilman Vara)**

Council discussed this item and the truck is listed under the TML insurance but registered to the Taft Volunteer Fire Department.

**#15. Discuss, consider and act to approve \$10,000 support for the Fireworks Extravaganza sponsorship for the Fourth of July event. (Councilmember Vasquez)**

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

The following votes were polled:

Ayes: Vara, Rodriguez, Mayor, Vasquez, Hernandez

Nays: None

The motion carried.

**#16. Discussion and possible action on amending the retention time for audio recordings from 90 days after the minutes are approved to 1 year after the minutes are approved. (Councilman Rodriguez)**

Councilman Rodriguez made a motion to amend the retention time for audio recordings from 90 days after the minutes are approved to 1 year after the minutes are approved. The motion was seconded by Councilman Vara.

The following votes were polled:

Ayes: Vara, Rodriguez, Mayor, Vasquez, Hernandez

Nays: None

The motion carried.

**#17. Discussion and possible action on Ordinance No. 1033, an ordinance of the City of Taft rescinding City Ordinance No. 970, an ordinance adopting a new city nuisance abatement ordinance to protect the public's health, safety, and welfare. (Mayor Lopez)**

There was no action taken on this item.

Councilman Vasquez left the meeting at 9:21 p.m.

**#18. Consider, discuss and act on operational and logistical measures related to the City's preparedness and response to the State and City's local state of emergency declaration due to public health and safety emergency known as severe winter weather.**

Mayor updated the council and stated that no one has applied to the advertisement for a FEMA public assistant.

**#19. Discuss, consider and act on the operational and logistical measures related to the City's preparedness and response to the federal, state, and city's local state of emergency declarations due to a public health emergency known as Covid-19 pandemic.**

Councilman Vara made a motion to move back the city manager authority from \$20,000.00 to \$5,000.00 for Covid 19 purchases. The motion was seconded by Councilman Hernandez.

The following votes were polled:

Ayes: Vara, Rodriguez, Mayor, Hernandez

Nays: None

Absent: Vasquez

The motion carried.

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

Councilman Rodriguez would like to discuss the old street markers.

Councilman Hernandez would like to discuss the street lights.

Councilman Vara would like to discuss with the Police Chief the impound lot details and any proposals.

**#21. Executive Session: Convene into executive session pursuant to Section 551.071 of the Texas Open Meetings Act to meet with its attorney to seek legal advice on a matter in which the duty of the attorney to the City Council under the Texas Disciplinary Rules of Professional Conduct of the State Bar of Texas clearly conflicts with the Texas Open Meetings Act regarding:**

1. **Fire truck**
2. **Past, present, and threatened litigation; and**
3. **Attorney-client privileges**

Councilman Hernandez made a motion to enter into executive session. The motion was seconded by Councilman Rodriguez.

The following votes were polled:

Ayes: Vara, Rodriguez, Mayor, Hernandez

Nays: None

Absent: Vasquez

The motion carried.

**#22. Reconvene into Regular Session and consider, discuss, or take action, if necessary, on any item(s) discussed in Executive Session.**

Councilman Rodriguez made a motion to take no action on items discussed. The motion was seconded by Councilman Hernandez.

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

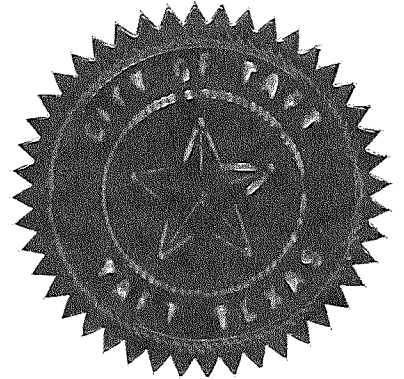
**#23. Adjournment.**

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

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

**CITY OF TAFT**

Randy Powell  
Randy Powell Mayor



**ATTEST:**

Jennifer Pineda  
Jennifer Pineda City Secretary