

## MINUTES OF REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING

On the 9<sup>th</sup> day of April, 2019, 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
Leonard Vasquez	Mayor Pro-tem
Felipe Rodriguez, III	
Donnie Riojas	
Lolo Hernandez	Absent

Others present: Mary Alice, 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.**

Councilwoman Riojas led the Pledge of Allegiance and gave the invocation.

**#3. Visitors.**

There were no visitors.

Council moved to item #12.

**#12. Discussion and project updates from the Taft Economic Development Corporation, Taft Quality Improvement Corporation, Pride of Taft, Taft Volunteer Fire Department, and Chamber of Commerce. (Councilman Rodriguez)**

Hailey Satterwhite with Santos McBain Management & Planning updated the council on both Taft EDC and TQIC. She stated that the EDC is currently working on a TX Dot grant and would be applying for 3 different grants in the next 3 months. Hailey also stated that the TQIC has made the third payment on the zipper and is in its fourth year for road rehabs.

Council went back to item #4.

**#4. Consider and discuss update regarding the city's financial condition as it relates to bonded debt, past dues, recurring payments, revenues and expenditures.**

Mary Alice updated the council on the city's financial condition. She stated that the TQIC account was at \$66,964.02 and the streets account was at 121,913.46. The collection of taxes for the city were 85.98% and for the deannexed are was at 68.36%.

**#5. Presentation and discussion of four AXON pricing options for equipment for the Taft Police Department.**

Dean Luce with Axon presented the options that Axon has available for body cameras.

**#6. Consider, discuss and take action to approve switching the Taft Police Department report writing system from Eforce to COPsync.**

Councilwoman Riojas made a motion to table item #6. The motion was seconded by Councilman Vasquez.

The following votes were polled:

Ayes: Rodriguez, Vasquez, Mayor, Riojas

Nays: None

Absent: Hernandez

The motion carried.

**#7. Consider, discuss and take action on authorizing the creation and submission of a**

**grant application through the Texas Department of Transportation's Transportation Alternatives Set Aside and Safe Routes to Schools Programs for funding of a sidewalk project that will provide safe accessibility and transportation to public facilities.**

Ray de los Santos with SMMP addressed the council on this item. He gave an option to the council to switch from applying for the East side of Green Ave from Park to Hwy 181 to applying for a sidewalk on Kirkpatrick from Green Ave to Victoria, 100 block of Victoria, and then on Ave C from Hwy 181 to E Escobedo.

Councilwoman Riojas made a motion to approve authorizing the creation and submission of a grant application through the Texas Department of Transportation's Transportation Alternatives Set Aside and Safe Routes to Schools Programs for funding of a sidewalk project as it was presented. The motion was seconded by Councilman Vasquez.

The following votes were polled:

Ayes: Rodriguez, Vasquez, Mayor, Riojas

Nays: None

Absent: Hernandez

The motion carried.

**#8. Consider, discuss, and take action to approve Resolution 618, a resolution of the City of Taft, Texas suspending the May 27, 2019 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 2018 and requiring delivery of this resolution to the company and legal counsel.**

Councilwoman Riojas made a motion to approve Resolution 618. The motion was seconded by Councilman Vasquez.

The following votes were polled:

Ayes: Rodriguez, Vasquez, Mayor, Riojas

Nays: None

Absent: Hernandez

The motion carried.

**#9. Consider, discuss and take action on naming a five (5) member advisory board for the Hidalgo Community Center operations.**

Councilman Vasquez made a motion to nominate Albert Flores and LB Garcia. The motion was seconded by Councilman Rodriguez.

The following votes were polled:

Ayes: Rodriguez, Vasquez, Mayor, Riojas

Nays: None

Absent: Hernandez

The motion carried.

**#10. Consider, discuss and take action to appoint JoEllen Perez to the Library Board.**

Councilwoman Riojas made a motion to appoint JoEllen Perez to the Library Board. The motion was seconded by Councilman Vasquez.

The following votes were polled:

Ayes: Rodriguez, Vasquez, Mayor, Riojas

Nays: None

Absent: Hernandez

The motion carried.

**#11. Discussion on extending the roadway from Retama to Murray St and add parking for the soccer/tennis court areas. (Councilman Rodriguez)**

Mayor read a letter from Ryan Trevino with the Friends from the Taft Parks.

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

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

**#13. Discussion on streets and pot holes progress.**

Public Works Director Jose Sandoval presented a map to the council of the work that has been completed. He also informed the council of his work plan to continue filling pot holes.

**#14. Discussion on brush/bulk pick up progress for City of Taft and Absolute Waste Management.**

Public Works Director Jose Sandoval presented a map to the council of the brush and bulk schedule. Mr. Bill Davis of Absolute Waste addressed the council on the bulk pick up schedule.

**#15. Discussion of personnel policy chain of command.**

Mayor stated that this is a reminder to make sure everyone is following the chain of command.

**#16. Discussion of grievances policy.**

Mayor stated to make sure everyone is following the chain of command with the grievance policy.

**#17. Discussion on Mayor's and City Council authority as elected officials.**

Mayor stated that this is just a refresher to understand what everyone's roles are.

**#18. Discussion on ordinances which are vague and not clear for our citizens and office personnel understanding.**

Mayor stated that he would like the city manager to handle ordinances that are vague.

**#19. Discussion on rejecting citizens from unloading any clean up at the City of Taft collection station.**

Mayor would like to review the ordinance and have it as an action item on the next agenda.

**#20. Discussion on existing addresses needing bulk, brush, and debris pick up.**

Mayor would like to see what can be done on abandoned property not being picked up.

**#21. Discussion for a Team Building date with all City employees, organization, and volunteers.**

Mayor would like to have a team building exercise for the staff.

**#22. Discussion on voluntary annexation update.**

Mayor gave an update on the letters that were sent to the land owners right outside of the ETJ.

**#23. Discussion on Mayor update or concerns for City of Taft, Texas.**

Mayor read the first section of the chlorine conversion letter sent to the residents and had Joe explain what the process would involve.

**#24. EXECUTIVE SESSION: The City Council will convene in closed session pursuant to Texas Government Code Section 551.074, Personnel Matters, to deliberate the appointment, employment, evaluation, reassignment, duties, discipline, or dismissal of a public officer or employee or to hear a complaint or charge against an officer or employee, to wit: City Manager Denise Hitt.**

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

The following votes were polled:

Ayes: Rodriguez, Vasquez, Mayor, Riojas

Nays: None

Absent: Hernandez

The motion carried.

The council entered into executive session at 8:27 p.m.

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

The council reconvened at 9:20 p.m.

Mayor Lopez made a motion to reinstate city manager Mrs. Denise Hitt effective immediately. The motion was seconded by Councilman Rodriguez.

The following votes were polled:

Ayes: Rodriguez, Vasquez, Mayor, Riojas

Nays: None

Absent: Hernandez

The motion carried.

Mrs. Hitt wanted to get it on the record exactly what she was suspended for and why and why she was reinstated.

Mayor stated that Mrs. Hitt was reinstated because of Item F on the findings the legal advice and no illegal money was spent pending the final auditors audit.

**#26. Adjournment.**

There being no further business, a motion was made by Councilman Vasquez to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Councilwoman Riojas.

The following votes were polled:


Ayes: Rodriguez, Vasquez, Mayor, Riojas

Nays: None

Absent: Hernandez

The motion carried.

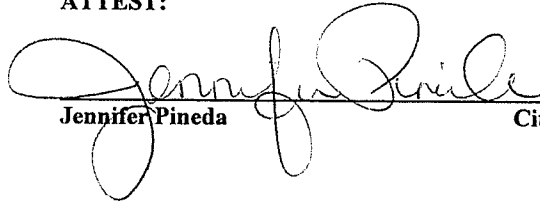
CITY OF TAFT



**Pedro Lopez**

**Mayor**

**ATTEST:**

  
Jennifer Pineda City Secretary