

MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE CITY COUNCIL

On the 23rd day of January 2024, the City Council of Taft, Texas, convened for a regular meeting at 230 Green Avenue, Taft, Texas, Taft City Hall at 6:30 P.M.

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

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

2. CALL ROLL AND ESTABLISH A QUORUM IS PRESENT

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

Others Present: Andrea Gomez, Kandi Hubert, John Landreth

3. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mayor Vasquez led the Pledge of Allegiance.

4. PRAYER

Rev. Steve Boettcher led the prayer.

5. CITIZEN COMMENTS

Robbin McCarty spoke on agenda item #15. Mrs. McCarty stated she lives in ward 2 and as someone who lives in ward 2 if someone was voted out from that seat and the council voted them back in she personally would be upset. The voters spoke their peace and made their vote.

The second item she requested to discuss was not on the agenda regarding TQIC. TQIC needs help and support from City Council, Chamber of Commerce and the EDC to start working together to get on the same page. The EDC also needs support, everyone has been separated for too long. TQIC has been working with Public Works lately and will continue to work with them.

6. CONSENT AGENDA

A. POLICE REPORT

Chief Landreth reported, man power continues to be the challenge. Animal control and Code enforcement have both continued to enforce the Ordinances.

B. CITY SECRETARY REPORT

Approval of Minutes for Regular meeting of 12/14/2023 and Regular meeting of 01/09/2024.

Councilman Molina motioned to approve minutes for 12/14/2023 and 01/09/2024, seconded by Councilman Garza.

The following Votes were polled:

Councilman Molina for against abstain absent
Councilman Garza for against abstain absent
Mayor Pro-tem Kenney for against abstain absent
Mayor Vasquez for against abstain absent

The motion carried.

Andrea Gomez also informed the council that the Library Donation Box has been placed outside of Taft PD until completion of the New Library.

C. PUBLIC WORKS REPORT

Andrea Gomez informed the council that Jessie Rodriguez had been working on a leak from 11:30 pm till about 4:30 am and would not make the meeting and Timothy Williams was out sick. However, Rodriguez did type out a report for council and it was handed to each council member. Andrea Gomez also informed the council that David Frazer is back at work.

7. DISCUSS, CONSIDER AND NECESSARY ACTION TO APPROVE DENA GONZALES TO VOLUNTARILY RUN THE SENIOR CENTER (ALVARADO CENTER)

Dena Gonzales stated she plans to have the Alvarado Senior Center open at least twice a month on the first and third Wednesday of each month between 10:00 am and 1:00 pm. There are currently volunteers willing to help out. If meals are able to be provided one volunteer does have a health permit. Some activities that will take place at the Center will be bingo games with prizes, dominoes, board games, arts and crafts and possibly safety classes or training. All prizes, games and arts and crafts items will all be donated. A sign-up sheet will be provided for better calculation of attendees. The age group for this Center will be for about 60 years and up. Ms. Gonzales stated she would also like to start a scrapbook of all individuals who attend.

Councilman Molina motioned to allow Dena Gonzales voluntarily run the Senior Citizen Center, seconded by Councilman Keeney.

The following Votes were polled:

Councilman Molina for against abstain absent
Councilman Garza for against abstain absent
Mayor Pro-tem Keeney for against abstain absent
Mayor Vasquez for against abstain absent

The motion carried.

8. DISCUSS, CONSIDER AND NECESSARY ACTION REGARDING RUDY MIRABAL'S WATER BILL

Attorney Andrew Quittner suggested to take this matter into Executive Session after allowing any speakers. Rudy Mirabal stated he was placed on the agenda due to wanting to open a water account and finding that he owed money. Mr. Mirabal also stated that he and William Linn had a meeting and an agreement, and now has an attorney to show how his past bills were satisfied. Ronnie Rodriguez, stated he attended the meeting with William Linn as a City Councilman and witnessed the agreement.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: City Council will meet in closed session pursuant to the provisions of Chapter 551 of the Texas Government Code, in accordance with the authority contained in:

➤ Section 551.074 (Personnel Matters)

- Rudy Mirabal's water bill

Councilman Keeney moved to go into Executive session to discuss this item further, seconded by Councilman Garza.

The following Votes were polled:

Councilman Molina	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> for	<input type="checkbox"/> against	<input type="checkbox"/> abstain	<input type="checkbox"/> absent
Councilman Garza	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> for	<input type="checkbox"/> against	<input type="checkbox"/> abstain	<input type="checkbox"/> absent
Mayor Pro-tem Keeney	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> for	<input type="checkbox"/> against	<input type="checkbox"/> abstain	<input type="checkbox"/> absent
Mayor Vasquez	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> for	<input type="checkbox"/> against	<input type="checkbox"/> abstain	<input type="checkbox"/> absent

The motion carried.

The Council moved into Executive Session at 6:55 pm.

OPEN SESSION: At this time 7:31 p.m., Councilman Keeney motioned to reconvene, seconded by Councilman Garza at which time action on the matter(s) discussed in Closed Session be considered.

The following Votes were polled:

Councilman Molina	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> for	<input type="checkbox"/> against	<input type="checkbox"/> abstain	<input type="checkbox"/> absent
Councilman Garza	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> for	<input type="checkbox"/> against	<input type="checkbox"/> abstain	<input type="checkbox"/> absent
Mayor Pro-tem Keeney	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> for	<input type="checkbox"/> against	<input type="checkbox"/> abstain	<input type="checkbox"/> absent
Mayor Vasquez	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> for	<input type="checkbox"/> against	<input type="checkbox"/> abstain	<input type="checkbox"/> absent

The motion carried.

Councilman Keeney motioned to table item number 8 for a later time and allow the finance clerk LeeAnn Goben to research this situation further.

The following Votes were polled:

Councilman Molina	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> for	<input type="checkbox"/> against	<input type="checkbox"/> abstain	<input type="checkbox"/> absent
Councilman Garza	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> for	<input type="checkbox"/> against	<input type="checkbox"/> abstain	<input type="checkbox"/> absent
Mayor Pro-tem Keeney	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> for	<input type="checkbox"/> against	<input type="checkbox"/> abstain	<input type="checkbox"/> absent
Mayor Vasquez	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> for	<input type="checkbox"/> against	<input type="checkbox"/> abstain	<input type="checkbox"/> absent

The motion carried. The item is tabled.

9. DISCUSS, CONSIDER AND NECESSARY ACTION TO APPOINT A CITY EMPLOYEE (DEPARTMENT HEAD) AS ACTING CITY MANAGER WHEN THE CITY MANAGER IS NOT AVAILABLE

Kandu Hubert recommended the Police Chief John Landreth as her replacement when she was not present. Landreth has had the most experience, has been in Taft and worked in Taft the longest and is more susceptible to know what is going on throughout town. Mayor Vasquez agreed and stated that most cities have the acting Police Chief as administrator when the City Manager is gone. Kandi Hubert stated this is just in case of an emergency.

Councilman Garza motioned to allow a City Employee / Police Chief as acting City Manager when the City Manager is not available, seconded by Mayor Vasquez.

The following Votes were polled:

Councilman Molina	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> for	<input type="checkbox"/> against	<input type="checkbox"/> abstain	<input type="checkbox"/> absent
Councilman Garza	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> for	<input type="checkbox"/> against	<input type="checkbox"/> abstain	<input type="checkbox"/> absent
Mayor Pro-tem Keeney	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> for	<input type="checkbox"/> against	<input type="checkbox"/> abstain	<input type="checkbox"/> absent
Mayor Vasquez	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> for	<input type="checkbox"/> against	<input type="checkbox"/> abstain	<input type="checkbox"/> absent

The motion carried.

10. DISCUSS, CONSIDER AND NECESSARY ACTION TO ADD ISAIAH GARZA AS A SIGNATORY TO THE PROSPERITY BANK CITY OF TAFT ACCOUNT(S)

Councilman Keeney motioned to add Isaiah Garza as a signatory to the Prosperity Bank City of Taft accounts, seconded by Councilman Molina.

The following Votes were polled:

Councilman Molina	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> for	<input type="checkbox"/> against	<input type="checkbox"/> abstain	<input type="checkbox"/> absent
Councilman Garza	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> for	<input type="checkbox"/> against	<input type="checkbox"/> abstain	<input type="checkbox"/> absent
Mayor Pro-tem Keeney	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> for	<input type="checkbox"/> against	<input type="checkbox"/> abstain	<input type="checkbox"/> absent
Mayor Vasquez	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> for	<input type="checkbox"/> against	<input type="checkbox"/> abstain	<input type="checkbox"/> absent

The motion carried.

11. DISCUSS, CONSIDER AND NECESSARY ACTION TO NAME THE CITY MANAGER AS THE AUTHORIZED ADMINISTRATOR TO MAKE ALL CHANGES TO THE CITY AND INDIVIDUAL ACCOUNTS AND APPROVING THE ISSUANCE OF CREDIT CARDS TO ANDREA GOMEZ, LEEANN GOBEN, JOHN LANDRETH AND GEORGINA SILVAS

Kandi Hubert stated that this is a requirement that the bank is requesting for the issuance of the credit cards. Andrea Gomez stated all other documents are ready the bank and they just needed the updated minutes.

Councilman Keeney motioned that the City Manager is named as the authorized administrator as stated in line item 11, seconded by Councilman Molina.

The following Votes were polled:

Councilman Molina	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> for	<input type="checkbox"/> against	<input type="checkbox"/> abstain	<input type="checkbox"/> absent
Councilman Garza	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> for	<input type="checkbox"/> against	<input type="checkbox"/> abstain	<input type="checkbox"/> absent
Mayor Pro-tem Keeney	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> for	<input type="checkbox"/> against	<input type="checkbox"/> abstain	<input type="checkbox"/> absent
Mayor Vasquez	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> for	<input type="checkbox"/> against	<input type="checkbox"/> abstain	<input type="checkbox"/> absent

The motion carried.

12. DISCUSS, CONSIDER AND NECESSARY ACTION TO HAVE ALL BUILDING RELATED MATTERS (INSPECTIONS/PERMITS) COMPLETED BY CODE ENFORCEMENT

Kandi Hubert stated that Code Enforcement is known for going around town and checking on permits. Since we are shorthanded, this is the most cost effective and efficient way to allow code enforcement to issue the permits. This will help minimize the work load at City Hall and maximize the work load that we receive.

Councilman Molina motioned to have all building related matters, inspections/permits to be completed by code enforcement, seconded by Councilman Keeney.

The following Votes were polled:

Councilman Molina	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> for	<input type="checkbox"/> against	<input type="checkbox"/> abstain	<input type="checkbox"/> absent
Councilman Garza	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> for	<input type="checkbox"/> against	<input type="checkbox"/> abstain	<input type="checkbox"/> absent
Mayor Pro-tem Keeney	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> for	<input type="checkbox"/> against	<input type="checkbox"/> abstain	<input type="checkbox"/> absent
Mayor Vasquez	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> for	<input type="checkbox"/> against	<input type="checkbox"/> abstain	<input type="checkbox"/> absent

The motion carried.

13. DISCUSS, CONSIDER AND NECESSARY ACTION TO ENTER INTO AN AGREEMENT WITH ICT INFINITY COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGIES

Kandi Hubert stated that the internet and phone service has been worked on recently and we now have working internet and phones. The fees being charged are \$22,000 a year oppose to the \$36,000 for 3 months as charged by the previously contracted I.T. representative. This fee will cover all of the Cities Buildings except for the PD.

Councilman Keeney motioned to move into an agreement with ICT INFINITY COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGIES, seconded by Councilman Garza.

The following Votes were polled:

Councilman Molina	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> for	<input type="checkbox"/> against	<input type="checkbox"/> abstain	<input type="checkbox"/> absent
Councilman Garza	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> for	<input type="checkbox"/> against	<input type="checkbox"/> abstain	<input type="checkbox"/> absent
Mayor Pro-tem Keeney	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> for	<input type="checkbox"/> against	<input type="checkbox"/> abstain	<input type="checkbox"/> absent
Mayor Vasquez	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> for	<input type="checkbox"/> against	<input type="checkbox"/> abstain	<input type="checkbox"/> absent

The motion carried.

14. DISCUSS, CONSIDER AND NECESSARY ACTION TO APPROVE THE FIREWORKS EXTRAVAGANZA ON JUNE 29TH

Mayor Vasquez stated that this is just a request for a specific date. It will be a one-day event at the little league park, he will come back with more details at a later time.

Councilman Keeney motioned to approve the date for the July 4th extravaganza to be June 29th 2024, seconded by Councilman Garza.

The following Votes were polled:

Councilman Molina	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> for	<input type="checkbox"/> against	<input type="checkbox"/> abstain	<input type="checkbox"/> absent
Councilman Garza	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> for	<input type="checkbox"/> against	<input type="checkbox"/> abstain	<input type="checkbox"/> absent
Mayor Pro-tem Keeney	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> for	<input type="checkbox"/> against	<input type="checkbox"/> abstain	<input type="checkbox"/> absent
Mayor Vasquez	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> for	<input type="checkbox"/> against	<input type="checkbox"/> abstain	<input type="checkbox"/> absent

The motion carried.

15. DISCUSS, CONSIDER AND NECESSARY ACTION REGARDING RONNIE RODRIGUEZ AND THE VACANT SEAT ON THE COUNCIL

Councilman Keeney stated there was an empty vacant seat for ward 1 and the vote was 2 to 2, and doesn't believe that the mayor should have the ability to vote in the matter of appointments for the Council. Councilman Keeney then read Judge Hurds decision, Section 2 and Section 6. Councilman Keeney stated a full council is needed.

Councilman Keeney motioned to appoint Ronnie Rodriguez to the vacant seat on the Council for ward 1, seconded by Councilman Molina.

The following Votes were polled:

Councilman Molina	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> for	<input type="checkbox"/> against	<input type="checkbox"/> abstain	<input type="checkbox"/> absent
Councilman Garza	<input type="checkbox"/> for	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> against	<input type="checkbox"/> abstain	<input type="checkbox"/> absent
Mayor Pro-tem Keeney	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> for	<input type="checkbox"/> against	<input type="checkbox"/> abstain	<input type="checkbox"/> absent
Mayor Vasquez	<input type="checkbox"/> for	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> against	<input type="checkbox"/> abstain	<input type="checkbox"/> absent

The motion failed.

16. COUNCIL AND STAFF COMMENTS: COMMENTS MAYBE MADE BY STAFF OR COUNCIL BUT NO ACTION WILL BE TAKEN

Councilman Molina asked about the forensic audit. Kandi Hubert stated that she has spoken to four different accountants and all have stated when asking for a forensic audit you have to focus on a certain area. Our accountant informed us that it would be between \$20,000 to \$100,000 to conduct said audit. Councilman Molina stated he thought it has already been narrowed down to certain areas. LeeAnn Goblen stated that Donald Allman who is going to be doing our financial audit next month, suggests that we do a specific account. Ms. Goblen also stated that once he is done with his financial audit, we should have a better idea of where we are or what specific area, we will need to look in from a time frame to a time frame.

Kandi Hubert also stated that we are currently going through the different accounts and invited any of the council that would like to help.

Mayor Vasquez encouraged the Council to come in and see what the staff is having to go through.

LeeAnn Goblen stated the Financial Audit should be done by the end of March.

Councilman Molina inquired on the full payment of taxes paid on the de annexation, Kandi Hubert stated that we are waiting for Marci to gather the exact dates and amounts.

Mayor Vasquez stated he will be speaking with the school to discuss planning a town hall meeting.

Andrea Gomez invited the council to come in and help go through boxes of records that are piled in the file room, vault and upstairs area. Boxes contain documents from Old City Hall that have not been properly filed or disposed of.

17. ITEMS TO CONSIDER FOR PLACEMENT ON FUTURE AGENDAS

Councilman Molina would like the TML Public Works Director job posting to inform the applicants of what requirements/licensing are needed. Councilman Molina would also like the cities financial conditions, related to bonded debt, passed dues, current payments, reoccurring payments, revenues and expenditures.

Councilman Keeney would like to see the local ordinance for parking anywhere other than the driveway or street and what fines will incur. Councilman Keeney would also like to have a general collection area for recyclables.

Mayor Vasquez would like to set up the Town Hall Meeting.

18. ANNOUNCEMENTS OF COMMUNITY INTEREST AND/OR UPCOMING EVENTS

Firework Extravaganza June 29th

19. ADJOURN – TIME 8:24 P.M.

Councilman Molina motioned to Adjourn, Seconded by Councilman Garza.

The following Votes were polled:

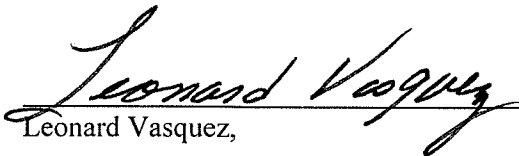
Councilman Molina	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> for	<input type="checkbox"/> against	<input type="checkbox"/> abstain	<input type="checkbox"/> absent
Councilman Garza	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> for	<input type="checkbox"/> against	<input type="checkbox"/> abstain	<input type="checkbox"/> absent
Mayor Pro-tem Keeney	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> for	<input type="checkbox"/> against	<input type="checkbox"/> abstain	<input type="checkbox"/> absent
Mayor Vasquez	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> for	<input type="checkbox"/> against	<input type="checkbox"/> abstain	<input type="checkbox"/> absent

The motion carried.


13th day of February 2024

Passed and Approved this _____ day, 2024.

CITY OF TAFT


Leonard Vasquez, _____ Mayor

ATTEST:


Andrea Gomez, _____ City Secretary