

MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE CITY COUNCIL

On the 12th day of March 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, others present listed on sign in sheet

3. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Councilman Keeney led the Pledge of Allegiance.

4. PRAYER

Rev. Steve Boettcher led the prayer.

5. CITIZEN COMMENTS

- 1) Randy Powell President of the Chamber of Commerce spoke on agenda item number 11. Mr. Powell stated he and other members of the chamber were very instrumental in making the new library happen, he is very happy with that, and it is great for Taft. Mr. Powell suggested that the old library is turned into a building for the EDC and the Chamber, and that would solve two problems. Mr. Powell also stated, the Chamber of Commerce is for the City, to help the City.

6. CONSENT AGENDA

A. CITY SECRETARY REPORT

Approval of Minutes for 02/27/2024 regular council meeting.

Councilman Molina motioned to approve minutes for 02/27/2024, 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.

B. FINANCIAL REPORT

LeeAnn Goben was not available to give the financial report. Kandi Hubert reminded the Council that Ms. Goben had previously spoke to the council to inform them of being short staffed.

C. COURT REPORT

Ricardo Medina informed the council on the Court Report.

D. PUBLIC WORK REPORT

Andrea Gomez informed the Council that Timothy Williams was not available for the Public Works report, however, two applicants applied for the position and interviews have been scheduled for Tuesday 3/19/2024.

E. POLICE REPORT

Andrea Gomez reminded the Council that Chief Landreth sent an email informing the council that he would not be attending.

F. CITY MANAGER REPORT

Kandi Hubert shared the news of the Senior Center passed the Fire Marshall's inspection, enabling the City to obtain a "C.O". An ad for Utility Clerk has been posted on TML and is on the City's website. TML conferences have been attended. Charles Schwab The president of the Texas Economic Development Council has agreed to come talk to the EDC A & B board. Hector Castaneda with Ardurra spoke regarding the update on the GLO MOD grant. Mr. Castaneda informed the Council that the RFI questions will be coming out soon, money is already set aside, it's just part of the process to answer the questions. The grants purpose is to replace a sewer line and to replace the water main from the water tank to the elevated storage tank. Start date will hopefully be this year with a completion date in 2025.

7. DISCUSS, CONSIDER AND NECESSARY ACTION TO APPROVE RESOLUTION #2024-01 REGARDING AEP

Matthew Garrett from AEP Texas informed the Council he would like for the request for a rate increase to be denied so that it may be moved up to the Public Utility Commission for further discussion.

Councilman Keeney motioned to approve the denial of Resolution #2024-01, 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.

8. DISCUSS, CONSIDER AND NECESSARY ACTION REGARDING AN ORDINANCE #2024-3-12 FOR TXDOT TO ENFORCE A REDUCED SPEED LIMIT FOR THE CONSTRUCTION ZONE ON HIGHWAY 181

Kandi Hubert informed the Council that TX DOT would like the Council to approve their request of a 50 mile construction speed zone, beginning .12 miles west of Farm to Market 631 to the east city limits of Taft.

Councilman Keeney motioned to approve Ordinance #2024-3-12 for TX DOT to enforce the reduced speed limit, 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.

9. DISCUSS, CONSIDER AND NECESSARY ACTION TO OPEN A BANK ACCOUNT FOR THE SENIOR CENTER AND TO APPOINT DENA GONZALES AS A SIGNATORY ON THIS ACCOUNT

Kandi Hubert stated this will enable Dena Gonzales to be able to purchase supplies, be able to deposit funds and to be able to designate where the donations that she has already received are to be spent to keep things running. The City will not contribute to these funds.

Councilman Keeney motioned to table item #9, 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 item was tabled.

10. DISCUSS, CONSIDER AND NECESSARY ACTION TO REVIEW THE CODE COMPLIANCE REGARDING VEHICLES BEING PARKED IN THE FRONT YARD

Councilman Keeney stated he has asked for this to come on to the agenda a couple of times. Mr. Keeney wanted to see what was actually on the books and what kind of penalties there are. From what he sees, it is a \$100 penalty. Mr. Keeney stated he thinks the issue is in the execution. "You cannot collect or stop somebody from doing something that is not in code unless you ticket them." Mr. Keeney also stated he has not seen any tickets for this penalty, and he knows that we have this issue. The problem is execution, the city needs to emphasize this is a quality of life issue and important to the towns appearance. Kandi Hubert stated, that there may be a conflicting ordinance with the zoning.

Councilman Molina motioned to table item #10, 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 for against abstain absent

The motion carried. The item was tabled.

11. DISCUSS, CONSIDER AND NECESSARY ACTION REGARDING THE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Kandi Hubert informed the Council that the city has an inter-local agreement with the library. The Ritchie Foundation would really like the newly built library to be a library. The Chamber is able to continue to use the old city hall as they were previously using if they choose to.

Councilman Keeney motioned that the Chamber of Commerce continue meeting in the current library building, which will become the old library building once the new library building is constructed, seconded by Councilman Garza.

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.

12. DISCUSS, CONSIDER AND NECESSARY ACTION TO APPOINT A CITY EMPLOYEE (DEPARTMENT HEAD) AS ACTING CITY MANAGER WHEN THE CITY MANAGER IS NOT AVAILABLE IN PERSON OR BY PHONE.

Kandi Hubert stated, Chief Landreth is busy, they are short-staffed. If rather than Chief being the one that is called, her recommendation is Andrea Gomez. Councilman Keeney stated that he agreed with the change of the second person in command or the person that you contact when the city manager is not available. We have had some unfortunate issues that I think have availed from piling too much up on one person. Mr. Keeney thinks Andrea knows how to contact Kandi very well, and he would agree with the assessment that she's the employee to take over.

Councilman Keeney motioned to allow the city secretary to take the responsibility of second-in-command when the city manager is not present, seconded by Councilman Molina.

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.

13. DISCUSS, CONSIDER AND NECESSARY ACTION TO UPDATE AND ADOPT THE CHAIN OF COMMAND

Andrea Gomez stated, this is just an updated Chain of command, the previous one had a finance director and since we currently do not have a finance director it was suggested an update was needed.

Councilman Molina motioned to update the Chain of command, seconded by Councilman Garza.

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.

14. DISCUSS, CONSIDER AND NECESSARY ACTION REGARDING CHIEF SMITH WORKING ON HIS INTERN AT CITY HALL

Kandi Hubert stated, Chief Ryan Smith is really helpful. He's working on his master's in public administration. He's learning and she just wanted to make sure the council knew he wasn't "just hanging out." Kandi Hubert asked the council if they would all approve of him working with the staff at City Hall as doing his internship. This would be a non-paid internship.

Councilman Molina motioned to allow Chief Smith working on this intern here at City Hall, 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.

15. DISCUSS, CONSIDER AND NECESSARY ACTION REGARDING A PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR

Kandi Hubert reminded the council that Public works interviews are on Tuesday.

No action was taken on agenda item #15

16. EXECUTIVE SESSION: City Council will meet in closed session pursuant to the provisions of Chapter 551.078 of the Texas Government Code, in accordance with the authority contained in:

- *Section 1.05* (Texas Disciplinary Rules of Professional Conduct):
 - Duties of the Mayor

The Council moved into Executive Session at 7:15 pm.

17. OPEN SESSION: City Council will reconvene in open session at which time action on the matter(s) discussed in Closed Session may be considered.

- *Section 1.05* (Texas Disciplinary Rules of Professional Conduct):
 - Duties of the Mayor

The Council Reconvened Session at 8 pm.

No Action was taken on the matters discussed in Closed Session.

