

MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE CITY COUNCIL

On the 26th 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 Pro-Tem Keeney 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

Ricardo Medina led the Pledge of Allegiance.

4. PRAYER

Rev. Steve Boettcher led the prayer.

5. CITIZEN COMMENTS

- 1) Glen Searcy stated when a new City Manager is hired, he hopes we will know how we are financially and he believes people must be held accountable.
- 2) Anita Adams stated that she would like the Council to begin talking to the citizens and asking what it is that they want. Ms. Adams also believes that the salaries in Taft are higher than what they should be.
- 3) Marcus Adams stated that item #23 on the agenda is illegal.

6. CONSENT AGENDA

A. CITY SECRETARY REPORT

Approval of Minutes for 3/12/2024 Regular council meeting.
Approval of Minutes for 3/13/2024 Special council meeting.

Councilman Molina motioned to approve minutes for 03/12/2024 and 03/13/2024, 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. PUBLIC WORKS REPORT

Jessie Rodriguez reported that the major sewer issue on Fetick and McIntyre was completed. The crew will no longer have to go out to the site every two hours to manually pump the line. No major or minor leaks have been reported. Major sewer problems are what is taking place at this time due to old clay lines possibly collapsing.

7. DISCUSS, CONSIDER AND NECESSARY ACTION TO APPROVE THE RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE AWARD OF PROFESSIONAL SERVICE PROVIDER CONTRACTS FOR THE TEXAS COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION/MAIN STREET PROGRAM(S) (PROFESSIONAL ENGINEERING).

Kandi Hubert stated that three proposals for engineering services were ranked. The one chosen was Ardurra, our current engineers.

Councilman Garza motioned to approve Ardurra for the Texas Community Development Block Grant Downtown revitalization program, 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.

8. DISCUSS, CONSIDER AND NECESSARY ACTION TO APPROVE THE RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE AWARD OF PROFESSIONAL SERVICE PROVIDER CONTRACTS FOR THE TEXAS COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION/MAIN STREET PROGRAM(S) (ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES).

Kandi Hubert stated that Grant Works is out of Corpus Christi and has direct access to the City. This option would allow accessibility and prove to be cost and time effective.

Councilman Garza motioned to authorize Grant Works for the Texas Community Development Block Grant Downtown revitalization program, 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 REGARDING VEHICLES BEING PARKED IN THE FRONT YARD.

Councilman Keeney stated that vehicles being parked in the front yard is a code compliance issue. There is a code stating that there is a fine and the Ordinance should be enforced.

No Action was taken on item number 9.

10. DISCUSS, CONSIDER AND NECESSARY ACTION TO ACCEPT THE RESIGNATION OF ALONZO MOLINA REGARDING PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION AND TO APPOINT THE PLANNING AND ZONING NOMINATIONS: BOBBY MENDEZ AND ARNULFO BANDA.

Councilman Garza motioned to accept the resignation of Alonzo Molina and appoint Bobby Mendez and Arnulfo Banda to the Planning and Zoning board, seconded by Councilman Keeney.

The following Votes were polled:

Councilman Molina	<input type="checkbox"/> for	<input type="checkbox"/> against	<input checked="" 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 HIRE A TEMP WORKER TO HELP FILE AND/OR DIGITIZE FILES.

Kandi Hubert informed the Council that files are still in multiple areas of the building. This project is time consuming and is causing overtime. Recently, it has taken three people to search for one piece of paper and it took hour and a half. This will be a temporary position to catch up.

Councilman Keeney motioned to approve the City Manager to hire a temporary worker to help file and/or digitize files for an initial period of three months and the Council will re-evaluate before the end of that time frame, 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.

12. DISCUSS, CONSIDER AND NECESSARY ACTION TO EXTEND THE HOURS OF THE PUBLIC LIBRARY.

Kelly Bregoon Chairman of the Taft Library board would like to extend the hours of the library, the proposal would add an eight hour time frame. A meeting of the library board will be held on the second Thursday of the April and after that meeting is held a better idea will be provided of the times to be requested.

Councilman Keeney motion to table this item to a later date, 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. The item was Tabled.

13. DISCUSS, CONSIDER AND NECESSARY ACTION TO AUTHORIZE AN ENTERPRISE FUND ACCOUNT.

Kandi Hubert stated the enterprise fund account is the account were the water, sewer and sanitation funds are to be kept for the city. Currently there is not a separate account for utilities and the monies are combined in a cash account. Ms. Hubert would like to designate the enterprise account for the water, sewer and sanitation and have these funds kept seperately. LeeAnn Goben stated with the combined account it is a little messy and she would prefer to be able to have and create a paper trail with the separated enterprise account.

Councilman Molina motioned to authorize an enterprise fund account, 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 ADOPT ORDINANCE #03-22-24-01 – REGARDING MULTIPLE OPEN RECORDS REQUESTS.

Councilman Keeney read aloud the proposed Ordinance. LeeAnn Goben stated as employees we are aware that it is our responsibility to accommodate the open records requests that are received but it is a timely process. Ms. Goben has heard comments of “if I want to give City hall a hard time I will have someone submit an open records request” and lately that has been the case. It has been a lesson learning experience due to the mixing of files and documents that are not properly in order or alphabetized, there has to be something that is put in place to help the staff even the slightest bit. Marcus Adams stated he acknowledges that he is one of the one who puts in requests. The requests he makes are due to him “seeing” things and he stated it is not his fault that things are not in order.

Councilman Keeney motioned to adopt Ordinance #03-22-24-01, 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 TO ADOPT ORDINANCE #03-22-24-02 – REGARDING ADMINISTRATION

Attorney Andrew Quittner stated this was promised back when the last City Manager left prior to appointing a City Secretary. This Ordinance adds two other items seen as a problem. It sets out the difference of supervision between the City Manager and Council, it also limits the number of employees to what it proposed in the budget. Many other cities set the number of employees by what the budget states. Councilman Keeney read aloud the proposed Ordinance.

Councilman Garza motioned to approve Ordinance #03-22-24-02, 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 for against abstain absent

Mayor Vasquez for against abstain absent

The motion carried.

16. DISCUSS, CONSIDER AND NECESSARY ACTION TO AMEND RESOLUTION #666 PURCHASING POLICY AND ADOPT RESOLUTION #03-22-24-03.

Kandi Hubert stated the only change in the Ordinance that has already been adopted is the Emergency Provision, which mirrors state law. The state law is being brought back into the local Ordinance to give the City Manager authority in case of a public emergency to be able to satisfy emergency needs.

Councilman Keeney motioned to amend Resolution #666 and adopt Resolution #03-22-24-03, 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.

17. DISCUSS, CONSIDER AND NECESSARY ACTION REGARDING TQIC FUNDS.

Kandi Hubert stated, there is an audit coming up and it would be beneficial to bring the book back into City Hall.

Councilman Keeney motioned allow the finance manager access to TQIC's books and have two signatures on each check for TQIC, 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.

18. DISCUSS, CONSIDER AND NECESSARY ACTION TO RETAIN ANDREW QUITTNER ON A PROJECT TO PROJECT BASIS.

Andrew Quittner stated the firm he works for has been short handed. The city attorney will not need to be at City Council meetings unless he is requested. Mr. Quittner stated the City of Taft can also obtain another attorney if needed.

Councilman Keeney motioned to retain Andrew Quittner on a project to project basis, 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.

19. DISCUSS, CONSIDER AND NECESSARY ACTION TO CONSIDER A LEASE REGARDING A RENTAL PROPERTY FOR THE POLICE DEPARTMENT EMPLOYEES ALONG WITH ALL NECESSARY REQUIREMENTS TO ADD THIS AS A CITY FACILITY.

Chief Landreth reported that two of the six officers he has employed, drive into town from out of town areas, they need a place to stay. Mr. Landreth mentioned he does not want to take the money out of his budget, he has spoken with people for donations and sponsor of furniture and half of the rent.

Councilman Garza motioned to approve the lease for the PD for the next six months, 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.

20. DISCUSS, CONSIDER AND NECESSARY ACTION REGARDING MEMORIAL PARK.

Ryan Smith stated that during his internship he was able to look at Memorial park on Green Ave. The equipment there is damaged and it is in his opinion that it is not safe. Councilman Garza agreed it is not safe. Councilman Keeney suggested to contact the school to see if there are any organizations who would be able to create a project to work on fixing the park. Councilman Molina stated that he also agrees to remove the damaged equipment due to safety.

Councilman Garza motioned to allow the city to assess memorial park and to remove any damaged items that may exist, 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.

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

21. CLOSED SESSION: City Council will meet in closed session pursuant to the provisions of Chapter 551.074 of the Texas Government Code, in accordance with the authority contained in:

- *Section 551.074 (a)(1)(2) (Personnel Matters) and Section 551.071 (Advice of Counsel):*
 - i. Personnel Matters
 - Evaluation of the City Secretary
 - Discussion with staff
 - Duties of the Chief of Police
 - Public Works Director

Councilman Molina motioned to move into closed session, 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 7:51 pm.

22. 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 551.074 (a)(1)(2) (Personnel Matters) and Section 551.071 (Advice of Counsel):*

- i. Personnel Matters
 - Evaluation of the City Secretary
 - Discussion with staff
 - Duties of the Chief of Police
 - Public Works Director

Mayor Vasquez motioned to reconvene, 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 Reconvened Session at 10:55 pm.

➤ *Section 551.074 (a)(1)(2) (Personnel Matters) and Section 551.071 (Advice of Counsel):*

- i. Personnel Matters
 - Evaluation of the City Secretary: Councilman Garza motioned to appoint Andrea Gomez as the City Secretary, seconded by Councilman Molina.
 - Discussion with staff: No action Taken
 - Duties of the Chief of Police: No action Taken
 - Public Works Director: No action Taken

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

Chief Landreth stated he would like copies of complaints given to the Council. Mr. Quittner stated there has been no disciplinary action taken, it was a discussion.

Councilman Keeney stated in terms of the Ordinance of parking on the lawns it would be helpful to the residents to have the Police Chief inform the public of actions to be taken. Councilman Keeney did not advocate ticketing but would like the public to be informed.

Councilman Molina stated that the Council of Governments has had several resolutions passed. The Honorable Judge Krebs was there and it was very informative. Councilman Molina will be passing the information to everyone.

24. ITEMS TO CONSIDER FOR PLACEMENT ON FUTURE AGENDAS

None at this time

25. ANNOUNCEMENTS OF COMMUNITY INTEREST AND/OR UPCOMING EVENTS

Andrea Gomez reminded the Council that on April 20th is the Friends of the Library Event in Portland.

Kandi Hubert reminded the Council the Solar Eclipse will be on April the 8th.

Mayor Vasquez informed the Council that Little League Opening Ceremonies is this Saturday.

26. ADJOURN – TIME 11:01 P.M.

Councilman Garza motioned to Adjourn, Seconded by Councilman Molina.

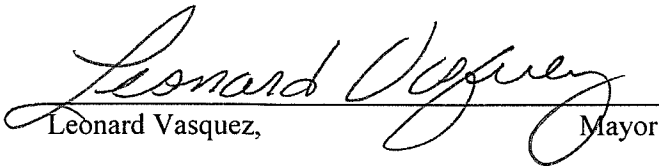
The following Votes were polled:

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

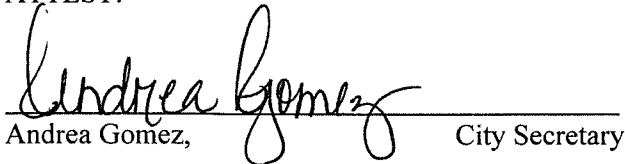
The motion carried.

Passed and Approved this 9th day of April, 2024.

CITY OF TAFT


Leonard Vasquez, Mayor

ATTEST:


Andrea Gomez, City Secretary