

MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE CITY COUNCIL

On the 23rd day of April 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 Garza led the Pledge of Allegiance.

4. PRAYER

Rev. Steve Boettcher led the prayer.

5. CITIZEN COMMENTS

- 1) Manuel Espinosa expressed to the Council that there was a misunderstanding and would like the resignation from the TQIC board members be rescinded.
- 2) Glen Searcy expressed to the Council that he would like to remain on the TQIC committee.
- 3) Felipe Rodriguez wanted to thank Mayor Vasquez and Rikki Medina for attending the grand opening of his new business.
- 4) Shanda Hartnett wanted to introduce herself. Ms. Hartnett is the general manager for Sparklight.

6. PUBLIC HEARING: The City Council and 4B Economic Development Corporation (EDC) Board invite the public to comment on a proposed expenditure of \$50,000.00 (Fifty thousand dollars) to secure a Downtown revitalization grant. This grant will be utilized to enhance the infrastructure of downtown, including improvements to roads, sidewalks, and other essential projects aimed at revitalizing our community’s core.

THE MAYOR OPENDED THE PUBLIC HEARING: Time: 6:37 pm

David Smith stated the purpose of this hearing is to provide information and answer any questions the Council might have. Mr. Smith presented a visual aid to help the Council and residents understand the idea of the improvements for the Downtown Revitalization Grant. Mr. Smith also explained the process of what is to take place regarding the expenditures proposed to assist the City in obtaining the Grant. There are no comments for or against the item of the public hearing.

THE MAYOR CLOSED THE PUBLIC HEARING: Time: 6:55 pm

7. CONSENT AGENDA

A. CITY SECRETARY REPORT

Approval of Minutes for 04/09/2024 Regular council meeting.

Councilman Keeney moved to approve the minutes for the 04/09/2024 Regular council meeting, the motion was seconded.

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

Public Works Director David Furzer reported that he and the Public Works department have been working with the Code Enforcement officer to assist in clean up. Mr. Furzer also stated there is currently 150 non - working meters.

C. LIBRARY REPORT

Kelly Bregoon stated the new hours of the Library will go into effect as of June 1, 2024. The new schedule will show a 40 hour work week to include Saturday. There will not be any changes in the structure of hours per day for Monday and Wednesday. The library will be closed 1 hour for lunch daily. Changes will occur for the days of Tuesday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday. Once an assistant librarian is hired, then the schedule will be adjusted.

D. TQIC YEARLY REPORT

Brooke Banda presented the council with a paper report explaining the funds, expenses and board members currently on the TQIC committee. This report reflected the year 2023.

E. CITY MANAGER REPORT

Kandi Hubert informed the Council of the Community Clean up taking place on April 26th from 8 am to 3 pm and April 27th from 8 am to 12 pm. Ms. Hubert also reminded the Council and residents of the EDC workshop on May 16th for both type A and type B. Ms. Hubert explained that the audit will be coming to the facility at the end of the month. Ms. Hubert also stated that an has also been placed in the paper for the City Manager Position as she had previously informed the Council that she would remain in the position until the audit has been completed this ad will run for 1 month.

Ryan Smith assistant City Manager reported that the Fire Department has been issued a gear grant. The grant will assist in 90% of the funds for the gear of new and past members. Mr. Smith also informed the Council that the City will soon be switching the phone systems to assist in saving city funds. Lastly, Mr. Smith stated that the water bills will possibly be switched over to a paper format in the future.

8. DISCUSS, CONSIDER AND NECESSARY ACTION REGARDING THE PROCESS OF CITATIONS FROM TAFT PD TO CITY HALL.

Councilman Molina inquired on what the procedures for citations are, and asked if it was common practice to send the citations to the Justice of the Peace instead of the Municipal Court at City Hall.

Mayor Vasquez spoke on the Chief's behalf and stated that due to certain situations taking place at City Hall Chief Landreth would provide Ordinance Citations to City Hall but would send the traffic citations to the Justice of the Peace.

Councilman Molina and Councilman Keeney both stated that the citations issued within the city limits should be taken to City Hall. Councilman Keeney stated Chief Landreth has stripped them away from the City for not a very good reason.

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

No Action taken.

9. DISCUSS, CONSIDER AND NECESSARY ACTION REGARDING THE AMBULANCE COVERING GREGORY AND LEAVING TAFT.

Ryan Smith informed the Council that the Taft ambulance has been assisting in covering for the Gregory location although there is a Portland ambulance/station. In the past Portland has covered the Gregory calls. Mr. Smith stated he did contact the Portland department prior to the meeting to inquire of any recent events that have taken place. Councilman Keeney asked Mr. Smith to look into this matter further.

Councilman Garza moved to table item number 9, the motion was seconded.

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. Item is tabled.

10. DISCUSS, CONSIDER AND NECESSARY ACTION TO ACCEPT THE NOMINATION OF MARCUS ADAMS, FELIPE RODRIGUEZ AND ISAIAH GARZA FOR THE TAFT QUALITY IMPROVEMENT CORPORTATION (TQIC).

Councilman Garza stated he would not like to be a part of the TQIC committee at this time. Councilman Molina requested to be able to look further into this item due to the previous individuals who were on the board not wanting to resign.

Councilman Keeney motioned to table item number 10, the motion was seconded.

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. Item is tabled.

11. DISCUSS, CONSIDER AND NECESSARY ACTION TO POST AN AD FOR A CITY ATTORNEY ON TML.

Councilman Molina stated it would be beneficial to hire a local attorney.

Councilman Molina moved to post an ad for a City Attorney on TML, the motion was seconded.

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 REGARDING AN UPDATE ON RETAMA BRIDGE.

Hector Castaneda with Ardurra stated that the structural engineer has informed him the bridge is usable. It no longer needs to be barricaded, the only damage on the bridge is cosmetic. The bridge is safe to drive over.

Councilman Keeney moved to instruct the City Manager to instruct the public works to open up Retama Bridge, the motion was seconded.

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 REGARDING THE ABANDONED ALLEYWAYS AND ACTIVE ALLEYWAYS.

Mayor Vasquez stated residents have asked questions about certain alleyways. Kandi Hubert stated there is an easement in place. Residents are responsible for maintaining the alleyways, any alley's not in compliance or not drivable should be subject to a citation or a bill if the city ends up cleaning it up. Councilman Keeney expressed that would be a job to be looked at by the Code Enforcement.

Mayor Vasquez stated

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

No action taken.

14. DISCUSS, CONSIDER AND NECESSARY ACTION REGARDING A RESOLUTION REQUESTING COASTAL BEND COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENT TO HOLD AN AFFIRMATIVELY FURTHERING FAIR HOUSING TRAINING.

Ryan Smith stated this is one of the Resolutions needed to be able to obtain a grant.

Councilman Keeney moved to request the Coastal Bend Council of Government to hold a fair housing training, the motion was seconded.

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 TO REMOVE MICHAEL VASQUEZ FROM THE FIREMANS PENSION AND REPLACE HIM WITH JOSE MORENO.

Ryan Smith stated that Michael Vasquez has taken another position at work which has caused him to not be available for meetings. Mr. Vasquez has requested to be removed, the fire department voted to have Mr. Moreno take his place.

Councilman Garza moved to remove Michael Vasquez from the Fireman pension and replace him with Jose Moreno, the motion was seconded.

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.

16. DISCUSS, CONSIDER AND NECESSARY ACTION REGARDING A \$50,000 EXPENDITURE BY THE (EDC) ECONOMIC, DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION) (2ND VOTE)

David Smith stated this is the second meeting requesting the expenditure by the EDC and would like to request the Council move forward with the motion.

Councilman Keeney moved to approve the motion, the motion was seconded.

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

Andrea Gomez informed the Council that the Budget Workshop for April 24th has been cancelled. There will not be enough members for a quorum.

Councilman Molina - Trash Cans sitting out longer than the day of pick up seems to be an issue.

Councilman Garza – Asked Ryan Smith to contact grant writers to see if there may be more grants the city can utilize.

Councilman Keeney – Would like Ryan Smith to check on the reclaimed material for the Recycle area.

18. ITEMS TO CONSIDER FOR PLACEMENT ON FUTURE AGENDAS

Councilman Keeney – Would like to look at the contract between the City and the Little League

19. ANNOUNCEMENTS OF COMMUNITY INTEREST AND/OR UPCOMING EVENTS

Councilman Garza – Announced to get educated regarding the bond election for the school as it is a great thing for the students and the community.

Andrea Gomez – Reminded the Council and Public of the Community Clean up taking place April 26th and April 27th.

20. ADJOURN – TIME 7:58 P.M.

Councilman Keeney motioned to Adjourn, the motion was seconded.

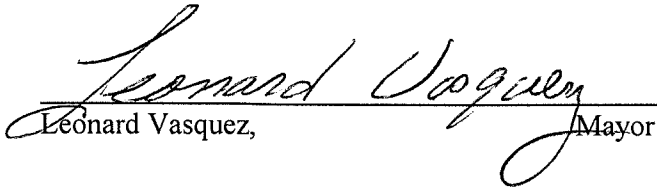
The following Votes were polled:

- 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.

Passed and Approved this 14th day of May, 2024.

CITY OF TAFT


Leonard Vasquez, Mayor

ATTEST:


Andrea Gomez, City Secretary