

MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE CITY COUNCIL

On the 16th day of July 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: Ryan Smith, Andrea Gomez, others present listed on sign in sheet

3. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Councilman Garza led the Pledge of Allegiance and the Texas Pledge.

4. PRAYER

Rev. Steve Boetcher led the prayer.

5. CITIZEN COMMENTS

- 1) Elida Castillo expressed to the council as a resident of ward one (1), that she would like to address item number seven (7). She had previously submitted her name in November as an interested party for the vacant seat and still has interest in filling the position.

6. CONSENT AGENDA

This section shall provide for items that require action by the Council, but where little or no discussion is anticipated. By a single motion, second and affirmation majority vote. Items under this section are approved without further discussion or action.

A. CITY SECRETARY REPORT

- Approval of Minutes from Regular Council Meeting on 06/11/2024.
- Approval of Minutes from Special Council Meeting on 6/17/2024.
- Approval of Minutes from Regular Council Meeting on 6/25/2024.

Councilman Garza moved to approve the minutes for meeting dates of 6/11/2024, 6/14/2024, and 6/25/2024, 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.

The Mayor requested to move to item number 19 Executive Session regarding Texas Government Code 551.071 consultation with attorney on matters involving pending or contemplated litigation or other matter in which the duty of the attorney to the governmental body under Texas Disciplinary Rules of Professional Conduct of the State Bar of Texas clearly conflicts with the Texas Open Meetings Act. Thomas A. Gwosdz, City Attorney.

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

19. CLOSED 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 551.071* consultation with attorney on matters involving pending or contemplated litigation or other matter in which the duty of the attorney to the governmental body under Texas Disciplinary Rules of Professional Conduct of the State Bar of Texas clearly conflicts with the Texas Open Meetings Act. Thomas A. Gwosdz, City Attorney.

No motions were made.

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 6:36 pm.

20. Open Session: The City Council will reconvene in Open Session at which time action on the matter(s) discussed in Closed Session may be considered.

- *Section 551.071* consultation with attorney on matters involving pending or contemplated litigation or other matter in which the duty of the attorney to the governmental body under Texas Disciplinary Rules of Professional Conduct of the State Bar of Texas clearly conflicts with the Texas Open Meetings Act. Thomas A. Gwosdz, City Attorney.

The Council Reconvened Session at 7:59 p.m. Mayor Vasquez moved to item number seven (7) on the agenda.

7. DISCUSS, CONSIDER AND NECESSARY ACTION TO APPOINT AN ALDERMAN FOR THE VACANT SEAT IN WARD 1 AND SWEARING IN OF NEW ALDERMAN.

Attorney Thomas A. Gwosdz provided a presentation for the Council and residents explaining the clarification of the 1989 lawsuit: Garcia VS The City of Taft. Mr. Gwosdz stated the City is following state law except if the order says different. Section two (2) set out the duties of the Mayor. Section six (6) vacancies states the Mayor is excluded from voting in the event of a vacancy. The Mayor may vote on the appointment only in the event of a tie.

Adam Babcock appeared before Council to express his interest in the vacant seat. Mr. Babcock has been a resident of Taft for 14 years, is an army veteran and would like the opportunity to serve the community.

Elida Castillo had given her speech during the Citizen comment section regarding this item.

Rolando Rodriguez also appeared before Council. Mr. Rodriguez stated he had already been appointed by the Council previously for the vacant seat.

Councilman Keeney moved to appoint Rolando Rodriguez for position of Alderman of the vacant seat, 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 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 type="checkbox"/> against	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> abstain	<input type="checkbox"/> absent

The motion carried.

Councilman Rodriguez was appointed and the Oath of Office was administered. Councilman Rodriguez then took his seat.

8. DISCUSS, CONSIDER AND NECESSARY ACTION TO APPOINT MEMBERS TO THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES FOR THE TML INTERGOVERNMENTAL RISK POOL.

Councilman Garza motioned to Table item number eight (8), 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. The item was tabled.

9. DISCUSS, CONSIDER AND NECESSARY ACTION REGARDING ORDINANCE NUMBER 735 IN REFERENCE TO PARKING ON UNIMPROVED SURFACES.

Councilman Keeney motioned to Table item number nine (9), 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
Councilman Rodriguez	<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 CREATE A COMMITTEE FOR THE DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION PROJECT.

No Action was taken.

11. DISCUSS, CONSIDER AND NECESSARY ACTION REGARDING APPOINTMENTS TO THE CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS COMMITTEE.

Councilman Molina informed Ryan Smith that Irma Jaure would like to be a part of this committee.

Councilman Garza moved to table item number eleven (11), 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
Councilman Rodriguez	<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.

12. DISCUSS, CONSIDER AND NECESSARY ACTION TO ALLOW THE INTERIM CITY MANAGER TO ENTER INTO A CONTRACT FOR CONSULTANT SERVICES WITH DAVE FURZER IN REFERENCE TO SEWER PLANT MAINTENANCE AND OPERATION.

Ryan Smith stated that attorney Thomas Gwodszyk has drafted a contract for the consultant, it was given to the Council for review. David Furzer would be the replacement for Timothy Williams.

Councilman Keeney moved to allow the interim City Manager enter into a contract with consultant Dave Furzer for the sewer plant maintenance and operation, 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
Councilman Rodriguez	<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 APPROVE A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING CITY REPRESENTATIVES IN MATTERS PERTAINING TO THE CITY’S PARTICIPATION IN THE TEXAS COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT PROGRAM.

The Resolution was provided by the Grant Consultant.

Councilman Garza moved to approve the Resolution authorizing City Representatives in matters pertaining to the City’s participation in the Texas Community Development Block Grant program, 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
Councilman Rodriguez	<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 REMOTE CAPTURE FOR CHECK PROCESSINT AT CITY HALL.

No action was taken.

15. DISCUSS, CONSIDER AND NECESSARY ACTION IN REFERENCE TO PURCHASING SUPPLIES FOR DISBURSMENT DURING HURRICANES AND OTHER NATURAL DISASTERS.

Ryan Smith stated the Mayor has requested to purchase supplies to purchase items for future hurricanes.

Councilman Garza motioned to table item number fifteen (15), 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
Councilman Rodriguez	<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.

16. DISCUSS, CONSIDER AND NECESSARY ACTION TO APPOINT ALONZO MOLINA JR. TO THE EDC BOARD.

David Smith current board President of the EDC, informed the Council that it was unanimously recommended to appoint Mr. Molina to the EDC board.

Councilman Keeney moved to appoint Alonzo Molina Jr. to the EDC Board, the motion was seconded.

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
Councilman Rodriguez	<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.

17. DISCUSS, CONSIDER AND NECESSARY ACTION ON ORDERING A SPECIAL ELECTION TO REPEAL THE SALES AND USE TAX CURRENTLY DEDICATED TO THE TYPE A EDC (TOIC) AND TO INCREASE THE STREET TAX.

Ryan Smith stated if approved this would be included in the upcoming election in November.

Manuel Espinoza informed the Council due to the population being below 7500 the type A and B EDC's can be combined.

David Smith stated an Ordinance can be created by the City Council to have both type A and B EDC boards to do the same kind of work.

Councilman Molina motioned to not order a special election, 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
Councilman Rodriguez	<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.

18. DISCUSS, CONSIDER AND NECESSARY ACTION TO UPDATE THE BANK SIGNATURES AND PROVIDE BANK CARDS TO ALL DEPARTMENT HEADS AS WELL AS THE PUBLIC WORKS SECRETARY.

- BANK CARDS
 - MICHAEL VASQUEZ – FIRE CHIEF (INTERIM)
 - GABRIAL MORALES – PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR
 - JERRY PERKINS – PUBLIC WORKS SECRETARY
 - RYAN SMITH – INTERIM CITY MANAGER
- SIGNATURES ON BANK
 - ISIAH GARZA – ALDERMAN WARD 1
 - RYAN SMITH – INTERIM CITY MANAGER

Ryan Smith stated this is to update department heads due to the change of leadership and removing certain individuals that were previously on accounts. This would help alleviate and stop the disruption of City Hall employees during the day. Mr. Rodriguez will also need to be added as a signatory. Attorney Thomas A. Gwodzi recommended a resolution be made, he will create one and bring to a future meeting.

Councilman Keeney motioned to table item number eighteen (18), 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
Councilman Rodriguez	<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.

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

19. CLOSED 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) To deliberate the appointment, employment, evaluation, reassignment of duties, discipline or dismissal of a public officer or employee or to hear a complaint or charge against officer or employee.

- CITY MANAGER INTERVIEW – Shawna Burkhart

Councilman Garza motioned to move into Executive Session, 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
Councilman Rodriguez	<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 8:56 pm.

20. Open Session: The 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* (Personnel Matters) To deliberate the appointment, employment, evaluation, reassignment of duties, discipline or dismissal of a public officer or employee or to hear a complaint or charge against officer or employee.

- CITY MANAGER INTERVIEW – Shawna Burkhart

Councilman Keeney moved to reconvene in open session, 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
Councilman Rodriguez	<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 open session at 10:39 pm.

**Findings of Executive Session: City Manager Interview – Shawna Burkhart.
No action taken.**

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

Councilman Molina – loves the equipment out at the park.
Councilman Garza – reminded the public of the upcoming election in November.
Councilman Rodriguez – wanted to thank everyone for welcoming him back to the Council.
Mayor Vasquez – stated to the Council right decisions need to be made, things need to be done right.
Ryan Smith – informed the Council and public that the wifi at the library is up and running.

22. ITEMS TO CONSIDER FOR PLACEMENT ON FUTURE AGENDAS

There was none.

23. ANNOUNCEMENTS OF COMMUNITY INTEREST AND/OR UPCOMING EVENTS

There was none.

24. ADJOURN – TIME 10:44 P.M.

Councilman Garza motioned to Adjourn, the motion was seconded.

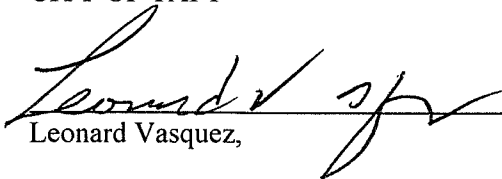
The following Votes were polled:

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
Councilman Rodriguez	<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

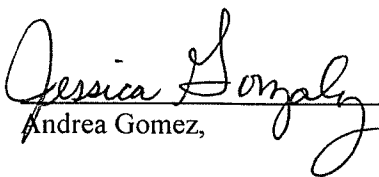
The motion carried.

Passed and Approved this 3rd day of September, 2024.

CITY OF TAFT


Leonard Vasquez, Mayor

ATTEST:

 for Andrea Gomez
Andrea Gomez, City Secretary