



MINUTES

City of Taft City Council Regular Meeting
Tuesday May 12, 2026, at 6:30 p.m.
Taft City Hall
230 Green Avenue, Taft, TX 78390

1. Call to order was at 6:30 p.m.
2. The roll call was called and all Council members were present and have a certified quorum.
3. Pledge of allegiance and Texas pledge was done
4. Invocation was given by Councilwoman Lopez
5. Proclamations, presentations and council and staff announcements:

1. Mayoral Declaration of A Local State of Disaster – Mayor Castillo

Mayor Castillo stated that we have the continuation of the Mayoral Declaration of local state of disaster. This area has been under drought restrictions since 2022. The City of Corpus Christi is getting ready to declare an emergency drought crisis level one next month or in September. We need to make sure that our citizens are protected. We have the Declaration of Disaster online. This will be discussed further under item 9.6.

2. Recognition of Alex Martinez for placing 2nd place at the Nationals for Power lifting - Mayor Castillo, at this time Mayor Castillo stated that they would recognize Mr. Martinez at the next council meeting.

Councilwoman Lopez stated that she wanted to commend Mayor Castillo for going over and beyond in trying to get this community together. You are putting on a lot of hard work in the background. Mayor Pro-Tem Molina is doing a tremendous job in putting committees and events together to clean up and beautify our community. I want to say thank you and I commend the both of you.

Mayor Pro-Tem Cruz-Molina stated that she had met with EMS the day before and we had not introduced ourselves nor have we gotten to know what is going on with them. The EMS building is not in good condition. That is not acceptable. There is an a/c is not working. She does want to apologize to the EMS for that. There is a volunteer clean up committee on May 16, 2026; it is to focus on the ally ways that the public works can't get into, so that the new meters can be installed. They will be partnering with the Sheriff's office and Constable's office, prescient 8 and prescient 1.

Councilwoman Moreno stated that she would like to thank everybody for continuing to support all the council members. They are aware of the water issues and the billing issues. That is something that is an ongoing investigation, and for that reason there are no penalties and no disconnections at this time. If there is an issue, it needs to be brought to city hall; otherwise, they can't take care of it if they don't know about it. Please be patience, everyone at city hall is working very hard to resolve this issue.

Councilman Molina stated that he would like to thank the governmental body and all the employees that we have working. I appreciate everybody.

6. Citizens Communication:

1. Tammy Delaplain – stated that she had received her \$2,000.00 water bill again. She thought this had been resolved. She found out that whoever was going to take care of this was on vacation. She has gotten all her receipts together as far back as 2022. The

city needs to get these meters fixed. She feels that she should be paid back for the past bills that were not correct.

2. Glen Searcy – stated that there is a patrol unit that leaves the city limits everyday. If he gets in an accident the city will lose a vehicle. The vehicles need to stay inside the city. The cost of fuel is expensive currently. If they are going to be taking equipment out of here, then let them pay for the insurance, fuel, and maintenance.

3. Beverly Gilbreath – stated that their website should be completed by July. They have 16 members as of today. They have monthly market days the 2nd Saturday of each month. The next one will be on June 13 from noon till 5 p.m. The next event will be Independence celebration on September 5, 2026, from 10 am till 10 pm. The Christmas Festival and Parade will be on December 12, 2026, from 10 am till 6 pm with the night parade. The Chamber meetings are on the 2nd Monday of each month, and everyone is invited. The visitor's center (old library) the a/c does not work, most of the lights are out. Mayor Pro-Tem Cruz-Molina attended their meeting. Library items need to be removed from the building; however, they are waiting on the city employees to move all the library items to the library. The sign needs to be repaired. They want to request that the ordinance for carnivals be changed. They would like to have a carnival at the Independence Celebration in September. As always, the Taft Chamber of Commerce is here for our community and we strive for unity and community involvement with our wonderful town of Taft.

7. Consent Agenda – None

8. Staff reports and other discussion items:

a. City Manager Updates: Wendy, Interim City Manager, had the employees do a one hour video training on the Public Information Act. The phones are now on rollover, anyone in city hall can answer them. There shouldn't be a long hold time, like we have been having. The question was asked if the phones have the option of leaving a voicemail message. That will have to be looked into; it is believed that you can leave a message. There are two auditors on the agenda at this time. The wastewater plant lights have been ordered. The streetlights are going to be ordered. Ardurra is ready to put an alternative plan for wells. It was stated that the city is waiving late fees and there is no turn off at this time due to the issues with the billing. This needs to be put on the website. The question was asked if the City Manager has access to the City of Taft face book page. City Manager stated that when she needs to put something on face book, she contacts the design people, and they put it on there. There was a question concerning the remote access to the cameras to city hall. They want the City Manager to look into why there are still nonadministrative people that have remote access to the cameras.

b. Departmental Updates:

1. Financial Report – Sandra Garcia was not present. The mayor stated that the city will be getting reimbursed \$183,000 for the generators. They are still working on trying to get documentation on the fire department, concession stand and the water park.

2. Library Report – There were no questions concerning their report. Anyone can go online and look at all the events that the library has. They have a lot of different events for kids, for the community too.

3. Police Department: Chief Massey stated that for the month of April, there were a total of 104 citations. The shelter is full at this time. He provided the City Manager with a list of what is needed to get the shelter back up. They are looking at getting help from the San Patricio County. The code enforcer is out every day working in a different zone. Violators will be given notice of the violation, and they have between 7 to 10 days to take care of the problem. After that they do a follow up to see that the violations are taken care of. Some of the ordinances are out of date, that needs to be looked at sometime. The question was asked if he thought that the combining of the two roles, animal control and code enforcer, was going to be too much for one person. Chief Massey stated that it is a lot of work. There is community workers that come out and help, also the police officers volunteer their time when they are off and come and help clean out the kennels.

4. Fire Department: Chief Vasquez stated that there were 9 calls for March 8 calls for April and as for May, at this time there were 3 calls. Some of the calls were grass fires out in the county. In May there was a reoccurrence in an apartment complex. He is going to contact the San Patricio Fire Marshall to do further investigation. They have an equipment grant from Forestry Service for \$25,000.00. They are going to ask for an extension, so that they can finalize the equipment order. There is a tanker grant for \$300,000.00, unfortunately, water tankers cost a lot more than \$300,000.00. They have come across a truck that is not an actual water tanker, but it provides everything that they need. That truck comes within the grant amount that they are allotted, between \$250,000 - \$275,000. They are looking for truck companies to donate a brush truck, but at this time companies don't want to give discounts or donate it at all. The cost for a brush truck would cost between \$20,000 to \$40,000.00. There is no burn ban at this time, however, the fire department needs to be contacted and the fire must be put out by no later than 6:30 p.m It was stated that the city has a lot of brush at the wastewater treatment plant and perhaps the Public Works workers could coordinate with the volunteer fire department. In the past the fire department would park a fire truck out there and show the workers how to use it, in case something got out of hand. It would be better if the brush was separated into smaller piles. It was suggested that if the city has a chipper that perhaps the brush could be chipped for mulch.

5. Public Works Department: Jozua Garcia stated that there was a total of 82 service orders. There were 4 sewer backups/collapses, 4 service line water leaks and 5 after hour call out. The water storage tank pump was approved to be purchased with Odessa Pumps. It was ordered in January 2026. There is a 14-16 week lead time. Odessa Pumps sent credit application for account renewal on April 28, 2026. This application was forwarded to the City AP. We are waiting for Odessa Pumps repair quotes for Wastewater Chlorine Contact Chamber pumps. There is no bulk reclaim water sales until pumps are fixed. Got quotes on vehicles for Public Works. He is working on street sign replacement project with Safety First Traffic Solutions in Portland, Texas. The vendor will put together a quote for sign material, sign design, fixtures, fittings and bulk ordering. Some of the poles are rotting and need to be replaced. They do have some new poles, and they will be replacing the poles at the time that they put up the new street signs.

9. Action Items:

9.1 Motion was made by Councilwoman Lopez and second by Councilman Molina to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting held on April 14, 2026, with the corrections on item 9.1 should be 1268, not 1168 and item 9.5 it should be 69,000 gallons of water, not 300,000 gallons. Motion carried unanimously.

9.2 Fire Chief Vasquez stated that due to the age and damage sustained by hurricane Harvey, the old fire station was demolished, and a new exterior shell was erected in 2023. In 2020 the council decided to put funds aside for the fire station. Plans to finish the interior office area were discussed with previous councils/management but could never get alignment. Since then, the department has not had a working office/conference area, no working restrooms or any previously functioning accommodations prior to the demolition. Cheniere has reached out for an update on the project and has requested to champion the project turnkey. The request is that the fire department use the \$50,000.00 that they get from their budget and purchase materials. Nydia Marin, representative from Cheniere, stated that they do projects every year. This project is just perfect for them. Cheniere is such a great company that they allow 10 hrs of volunteer work a year and they would like to put in their volunteer hours helping with the fire station. They will come out and do it in phases. They will start with the framing and the electrical. They will have actual contractors on site that volunteer their time too. Chief Vasquez stated that their main concern is getting bathrooms and shower areas. The walk-through showed Cheniere what the department needs and wants for the building. They prioritized the main office area over additional wants. They need a proper SCBA storage area and PPE/equipment storage area. Ms. Marin stated that if the cost of the material was over \$50,000.00, Cheniere would cover it. It was stated that Cheniere is volunteering to do all this work at no risk to the city. Something needs to be drawn up on paper so that the city is not liable for the volunteers from Cheniere. There must be some kind of agreement drawn up between the City of Taft and Cheniere. Mayor, Castillo stated that if Cheniere could have some kind of letter for the second council meeting in June. At the next council meeting Chief Vasquez would like to update the council of the walk down and get them up to speed on the project. Would also like to have the council take action on the use of the budgeted funds - \$50,000.00 to purchase the materials needed once material list and bids are received. Also, an item to review waiving the permits needed for construction of the interior. No action was taken at this time.

9.3 Jozua Garcia stated that they are working on a plan of action for the installation of meters. There are issues that need addressing before Public Works can begin. The alley ways in the southwest are unacceptable. The alleys have not been kept up in a few years. The meters are gone and can't be located. There is over six feet tall grass. They don't know what they would be getting into. They will be getting volunteers from the county commissioner. There are six books of manual readings. There are eight meters per box. If they stay on it, they can each get two boxes done per day. Four boxes per day if they have two crew members working. 1,600 meters is a lot of footwork for four workers. The question was asked if the new meters don't have to be installed where the old meters were at. They like to keep them close to the house, where they can find them. The time to replace a meter can take between 5 to 20 minutes. It's a process. There is also the work orders that they do on a daily basis. They have hired two part-time workers. The water department has four employees at this time. The ideal number of workers in a total would be 12. It was mentioned that as a property owner, the owner is responsible for half of the alley. The city took out a loan of almost half a million dollars. Is there any way that they can start setting new meters where there isn't an issue with tall grass and other things. Most of the alleys with tall grass are on the county side. They will get with the County attorney, once the alleys are cleaned up then the county attorney can set an ordinance in place to make sure that the alley ways are maintained clean. Once they get there, then they can get with County Commissioner Ski, and Sheriff Rivera. The Public Works department is doing everything

they can with the number of staff that they currently have. After further discussion, there was no action taken on this item.

9.4 Mayor Pro-Tem Cruz-Molina stated that she wanted this reviewed because it is hard to get people to come and apply. The policy is that if an applicant applies with the City of Taft and they get tested and they don't pass the drug test, then that person cannot reapply with the city for 12 months. The city has to pay for all drug testing. After some discussion it was stated that the city does not have random drug testing at this time. They want the City Attorney to look further into this, to look at the school district and the police department to see what their procedures are. Motion was made by Mayor Castillo and second by Councilman Molina to table this item at this time to allow the City Attorney to do further research. Motion carried unanimously.

9.5 Jozua Garcia stated that he had two proposals for the box truck for the Public Works Department. The first proposal was for a Chevrolet Silverado 2500 HD. This truck comes with the toolboxes already installed. The cost of that truck is \$68,326.67. The second proposal was for a Dodge Ram. This does not come with any toolboxes. The cost of that truck is \$51,793.70. They currently have four trucks, but one of them is about to go out on them. Mayor Castillo stated that there is insurance money that can be used toward the purchase of a new truck. After some discussion motion was made by Councilwoman Lopez and second by Mayor Castillo to table this item at this time until they can get more information from other bids and Buy board and the City Manager is to get the exact amount of the insurance money. Motion carried unanimously.

9.6 Motion was made by Councilman Molina and second by Councilwoman Moreno to extend the Mayoral Declaration of Local State of Disaster for another 30 days. Motion carried unanimously.

9.7 Mayor Castillo stated that they were having a change coming from the City of Corpus Christi, The Drought Contingency Plan needs to be looked and make sure that the Public Works workers, the Police Department, and the Code Enforcer are out there looking to see who is not following the restrictions, because there are people that are still using their sprinkler systems and people power washing, when they shouldn't. The Drought Contingency Plan cannot be amended at this time, as the city has to follow the rules as set by the City of Corpus Christi and make sure the Police Department has the proper codes from the Drought Contingency Plan so that they can start enforcing the fines. After some discussion there was no action taken on this item.

9.8 Mayor Castillo stated that the Texas Water Development Board (TWDB) is meeting the next day, perhaps there will be some items that we can consider within the 30 days declaration and perhaps we can apply for some of these emergency projects. At this time Engineer, Robert Viera, with Ardurra stated that they are getting ready to process two water wells in the City of Mathis. They are going to place the two water wells adjacent to the water plant. They are going to blend the water from the wells to the water plant. There is another grant that is coming out. Mayor Castillo stated that they had extended this for 30 days then it can be extended to another 30 days, then another 30 days. They want Ardurra to start working on a plan to bring it back to the council. After some discussion there was no action taken at this time on this item.

9.9 Mr. Searcy stated that if anyone was interested in putting in a community garden. It could be put in the park, or anywhere else that the city has land. It was suggested that the community garden could be put behind the Fire Department. There is enough space there. After some discussion motion was made by Councilman Molina and second by Councilwoman Lopez on the creation of the community garden space and placement of a

small storage shed on city property to be led by Mr. Glen Searcy. Motion carried unanimously.

9.10 Mayor Castillo stated that on the Texas Sludge, the city is locked in for a few more years. This is something that needs to be looked into at least having them fulfill the terms of this contract. The City Manager is going to get with the wastewater department to see what the issues are that are not being fulfilled by the terms of this contract at this time. There was no action taken at this time, it was for discussion only.

9.11 Wendy Pullin, Interim City Manager, stated that she had provided the council with two proposals. The first proposal was from Donald Allman, CPA in the amount of \$20,000.00. The second proposal was from Armstrong, Vaughan and Associates in the amount of \$24,000.00 plus an additional \$4,500.00 for fees. A single audit has within it a financial statement audit. That one audit is for multiple purposes. After some discussion motion was made by Councilwoman Lopez and second by Councilman Molina to accept the proposal from Armstrong, Vaughan and Associates to conduct the audit from October 1, 2023 thru September 30, 2024. Motion carried unanimously.

9.12 Wendy Pullin, Interim City Manager, stated that the in the procurement procedures is in reference to the purchase card (P-Card). The P-Card is a general use purchase card for purchases up to established limits. The P-Card will have a daily limit of \$1,000.00 per day and a monthly limit of up to \$3,000.00 per month. There are several disallowed purchases. All receipts must be submitted, either directly from the purchaser or through the reconciliation process. As determined by the Mayor and/or City Council, the above restrictions placed on the use of Purchase cards may be waived. This includes the ability to raise the transaction limits. If the limits are not used within one month, they do not roll over to the next month. It is set amount per month. Under city vehicle repairs and equipment there is no Taft Fleet Manager that should be City Manager. Under disallowed purchases no streaming subscriptions services should be added. Under misuse of P-Card it should include possible charges, including having to pay back for the misuse and charges through the Police Department for the misuse. The City Managers limits should be \$2,500.00 per day and \$5,000.00 per month. At this time there are three P-cards issued by the bank to the City Manager, Chief of Police, and Public Works Director. At this time the City Attorney stated that an ordinance needed to be created. Mayor Castillo stated that this item is for discussion only. This is only a draft and the changes that have been discussed will be put in an ordinance that the City Attorney will create and bring back for final approval from the City Council.

9.13 Mayor Castillo stated that they heard earlier from Jozua Garcia, Public Works Director, that there is a lot of brush at the wastewater treatment plant. They are trying to come up with different ways to dispose of the brush. They are thinking of taking the chipper and making mulch from the brush. There is a lot of vermin out there and that can create a problem for our wastewater treatment plant. They want to see if perhaps implementing a stricter use of disposal, because there are a lot of contractors that have a residence here and go and dispose of their waste for free. Jozua Garcia, Public Works Director, stated that these contractors charge their customers from other places and then come and dispose of it for free, since they live in Taft. There should be some kind of fee set. He stated that the brush should be allowed only once a week, on Tuesday. Mayor Castillo stated that the ordinance should be amended and placed with steeper fees. The brush is currently from Monday through Thursday, so that needs to be amended to once a week, only on Tuesday. The City Attorney is going to review the ordinance. The ordinance is 953. The Public Works Director is going to look at the ordinance and see what changes need to be

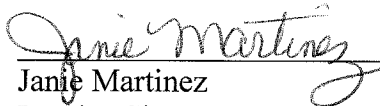
made and perhaps bring it to the next council meeting so that the City Attorney can review and make the amendments that need to be made. The City Attorney stated that TCEQ had restrictions on what can be put in the area where the wastewater treatment plant is located. There was no action taken at this time, it was just for discussion.

9.14 Mayor Castillo stated that in reference to the street maintenance sales tax that will expire on June 30, 2026. These should have been put on the November 2025 ballot, that means that the city will lose ¼ cent of sales tax that was going to the street maintenance. It can not be put back on the election ballot till November 2027. The City Attorney stated that if the city did not want to lose that ¼ cent to the state, then it could be put in this November 2026 election, and let the city get that ¼ cent and instead of the city getting 1 cent, they could get 1 ¼ cent, that could go to the general fund. It is in the city's best interest to apply for the ¼ cent sales tax in November 2026 and put it in the general fund. This was just a discussion item.

11. Adjournment: Motion was made by Mayor Castillo and seconded by Councilman Molina that this meeting be adjourned at 10:00 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.

Elida Castillo
Mayor
City of Taft

ATTEST:



Jamie Martinez
Interim City Secretary
City of Taft

Approved on: 6-9-2026