



MINUTES

City of Taft City Council Regular Meeting
Tuesday July 28, 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 was called and all members were present
3. Pledge of allegiance and Texas pledge was done
4. Invocation was given by Pastor Steve

5. Proclamations, presentations and council and staff announcements: Councilwoman Lopez wanted to say Thank You to Scott for the amazing job that he is doing in keeping the Council Members updated. Also wanted to let everyone know that the Immaculate Conception Catholic Church is having their 2nd annual casino night on August 8, 2026. There will be food and door prizes. Mayor Pro-Tem Cruz stated that she wanted to say Thank You to Mr. Albert for coming to the City of Taft. She is looking forward to getting Taft back on track. Councilwoman Moreno stated that she wanted to thank Mr. Albert for letting them know what is going on in the city. She also wanted everyone to know that the Petty Elementary School is having their back-to-school event on August 6, 2026. Councilman Molina stated he just wanted to say thank you to Scott. Mayor Castillo stated that she wanted to thank Mr. Albert for stepping in with all the grants that are going on at this time, also the one project that there is no paperwork being turned in. He is working very hard to locate documents at this time to proceed with that project. City Manager stated it has been very busy these past two weeks. He has been looking over the finances, grants and other departments and everything will work out. There are a lot of issues that need to be addressed but it can all be worked out.

6. Citizens Communications:

6.1 Beverly Gilbreath, president of Chamber of Commerce, stated that the new website is live. There is a total of 15 members as of today. She stated that the last time that the lights were discussed was when Ryan Smith was here and that the poles were going to be too short for the Christmas decorations that they have. If the street poles are not going to be taller than that will not work with the decorations that they currently have. The Chamber has created a fundraiser for the new Visitors Center and EMS building. Their goal is \$50,000.00. This is for new signage and inside remodels. More events to follow for this fundraiser.

7. Consent Agenda: None

8. Staff Reports and other Discussion Items:

- a. City Manager Reports – Has done report already
- b. City of Taft Projects – Ardurra – Hector Castaneda, with Ardurra, stated that he will be giving a monthly report on the second council meeting concerning all the projects. The TEDM project included four generators. That project has been completed. There is also a water line project that is going on, in connection with San Patricio with a 10-inch water line from the water tanks to the elevated tanks.

9. Action Items:

9.1 Hector Castaneda, with Ardurra, stated that they are covering five blocks on Green Avenue, from US181 to Hoover Street. There were originally 50 lights but with the cost of the lights and the height of the pole, it can only be 30 lights. The difference in cost is about \$4,000.00 per light, from \$8,000.00 to \$12,000.00. A decision needs to be made no later than January 2027. After some discussion there was no action taken on this item.

9.11 City Manager stated that he was able to get three different proposals for ice machines. It was mentioned that the Little League concession stand has an ice machine that is not being used at this time. The City Manager and Public Works Director will look into that ice machine. After some discussion motion was made by Councilwoman Lopez and second by Councilman Molina to allow the City Manager to purchase/lease a commercial ice machine for the Public Works Department, not to exceed the cost of \$10,000.00 but before purchasing/leasing to look at the ice machine at the concession stand. Motion carried unanimously.

9.12 City Manager stated that there was a proposal from ZACTax. ZACTax is a company that provides financial and accounting services and provides their own staff. They provide services for over 55 cities throughout Texas. They will be providing us with operating procedures for accounts payable, receivables, payroll, also will be looking at the utility billing. They are experts with incode. They also provide training staff. The cost will be \$6,000.00 per month. He would dedicate the salary from the finance director to paying for this role. There will not be a finance director. There are a lot of issues with payroll that need to be addressed. After some discussion motion was made by Councilwoman Lopez and second by Councilman Molina to contract with ZACTax as a third party for accounting and financial service provider as the City Manager has proposed. Motion carried unanimously.

9.13 After some discussion motion was made by Councilman Molina and second by Councilwoman Lopez to contract with ZACTax as a third-party payroll service provider. Motion carried unanimously.

9.5 Mayor Castillo stated that the city is currently charging businesses \$45.00 for building permits. It would get expensive for the city to do all the permits that are required for a new business, however, there should be more than a \$45.00 building permit. There is concern as to who and how it was determined to charge only \$45.00 for building permits. It was never approved by city council. The city manager stated that the city has a master fee schedule that can get changed during budget. This was a discussion only item, there was no action taken at this time.

Councilwoman Lopez left at 8:00 p.m.

9.2 Mayor Castillo stated that she had asked to get two different quotes from the San Patricio County Elections office. One quote was with early voting to be held in Taft in the amount of \$17,478.33 and the other quote was for election day only in the amount of \$3,620.83. As it is right now, there is early voting at Sinton, Portland, Mathis and Aransas Pass. It was mentioned that it seems like there are not that many voters that come out and vote. After some discussion motion was made by Mayor Castillo and second by Councilman Molina to table this item and put it for a vote in a Special Call Meeting. Motion carried unanimously.

9.3 City Attorney, Mr. Ysassi, stated that the amendment for section E-1(a) was to change the reapplication period from twelve months to six months. Applicants who fail the test, positive results, will not be allowed to reapply until six months after the date of the test and then they will consent to random testing. This ordinance also includes that there will be random drug testing for safety-sensitive positions. After some discussion there was no action taken on this item.

9.4 Councilwoman Moreno stated that there are several street signs that are not visible. Public works director stated that he had spoken to Fast Signs in Corpus Christi and he was given options as what they could do for the signs. They could purchase aluminum signs at \$75.00 per sign, they could take the original signs and strip the vinyl from each sign, and they would redo the signs for \$8.65 per sign. The City Manager stated that there are specific standards for street signs. He will call the City of Corpus Christi to see if perhaps they have a sign department and if they do, maybe they can give us a quote for the street signs. It was mentioned that Commissioner Ski Zagorski from precinct 1 has a sign making machine. After some discussion there was no action taken on this item.

9.6 Mayor Castillo stated that this had been put on hold till they could sort things out with incode. They are having billing issues. However, at the same time it is costing the city a lot of money. The City Manager stated that there has to be a balance between the governing body and the residences. There have been too many complaints about customers not getting called back concerning their water bill. After some discussion motion was made by Councilwoman Moreno and second by Councilman Molina that we start the late fees and the disconnection fees with notices being send out on the August and September bills with the proceeding of the late fees and disconnection fees starting in October, with the dates as set on the ordinance. Motion carried unanimously.

9.7 This item was already discussed under item #9.5

9.8 After some discussion motion was made by Mayor Castillo and second by Councilman Molina that the workshop date be set for August 29, 2026, at 10:00 am. Motion carried unanimously.

9.9 Mayor Castillo stated that with school starting up, that perhaps the city could post a date on the website to get people to come together and exchange clothing for the kids that are going back to school. It will not be a garage sale. After some discussion motion was made by Mayor Castillo and second by Councilman Molina to set the date for August 8, 2026, from 11 am till 5 pm to go in sight with the Chamber of Commerce Market Day that will be held at the Memorial Park. Motion carried unanimously.

9.10 Mayor Castillo stated that this is an issue that they have been having with contractors that have been using our landfill for brush disposal. There are contractors that are working on a home, and they go and dispose of the material at no cost to them, so we are providing the contractor with free service. The city has a woodchipper that can be used, but it takes too many people to run the equipment and that means taking manpower that we don't have, as we are small. After some discussion there was no action taken on this item.

12. Adjournment – Motion was made by Councilman Molina and second by Councilwoman Moreno that this meeting be adjourned. Motion carried unanimously.

Adjourn at 9:18 pm

Mayor, Elida Castillo

ATTEST:


Interim City Secretary, Janie Martinez

Approved on: 8/11/2024