

REGULAR MEETING

CITY COMMISSION

HARLINGEN, TEXAS

May 6, 2020

A Regular Meeting of the Harlingen City Commission was held May 6th, 2020 via videoconference, providing the public the ability to view the meeting via internet, live streaming and permitting the public to offer citizen communication or participate in items listed on the agenda via videoconferencing or telephonically via www.myharlingen.us those in attendance were:

Mayor and Commissioners

Mayor Chris Boswell
Michael Mezmar, Mayor Pro-Tem District 3
Richard Uribe, Commissioner District 1
Frank Puente, Commissioner District 2
Ruben de la Rosa, Commissioner District 4
Victor Leal, Commissioner District 5

City Staff

Dan Serna, City Manager
Amanda C. Elizondo, City Secretary
Allison Bastian-Rodriguez, Asst. City Attorney

Invocation – Frank Puente, City Commissioner

Pledge of Allegiance/Welcome

Mayor Boswell recited the Pledge of Allegiance and welcomed those in attendance.

Call Meeting to Order

Mayor Boswell called the meeting to order and announced a quorum was established. He stated the meeting was duly posted according to state law. The following proceedings were held:

Citizen Communication/Input - None

1) Presentation of Proclamations:

a) Proclaiming the week of May 4-9, 2020 as “National Economic Development Week”

Mayor Boswell presented a proclamation to Raudel Garza, CEO and Manager of the Development Corporation of Harlingen, Inc. proclaiming the week of May 4th thru 9th, 2020 as “National Economic Development Week”.

b) Proclaiming the week of May 17th thru 23rd, 2020 as “National Public Works Week”

Mayor Boswell presented a proclamation to Rodrigo Davila, Public Works Director, proclaiming the week of May 17th thru 23rd, 2020 as “National Public Works Week”.

2) Approval of Minutes

a) Special Meeting of the City Commission of April 24, 2020

b) Joint Special Meeting of the City Commission and Harlingen Water Works System of November 6, 2019

c) Special City Commission Meeting of November 1, 2019

Motion was made by Commissioner Puente and seconded by Commissioner De La Rosa to approve the minutes of April 24, 2020, November 6, 2019 and November 1, 2019 with a correction on the November 1, 2019 Special Meeting to reflect that Commissioner Frank Puente voted against the Tony Butler Golf Course Action Plan. Motion carried unanimously.

CONSENT AGENDA

3a) Investment Report for the City of Harlingen for the quarter ending March 30, 2020.

b) Consideration and possible action to approve a refund of property taxes paid by Maria G. Valdez, Acct. #23-6970-0040-0110-00 for \$592.58 due to a homestead reinstatement and disabled veteran’s exemption for Year 2018-2019.

- c) Second and final reading to approve and adopt an ordinance to amend the Planned Development ("PD") Site Plan to adjust the layout and land use for a 16.49 acres out of 18 acres, out of Block 6, F.Z. Bishop Subdivision, Survey 41, located on the west side of Tucker Road, north of Garret Road. Applicant: Juan Garcia of JNH Surveying Co. LLC. c/o Elena Villarreal.

Motion was made by Commissioner Leal and seconded by Commissioner De La Rosa to approve the Consent Agenda, Items 3 (a thru c). Motion carried unanimously.

For the record, the caption of Ordinance No. 2020-15 read as follow:

ORDINANCE NO. 2020-15

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE CODE OF ORDINANCES OF THE CITY OF HARLINGEN: AMENDING THE PLANNED DEVELOPMENT ("PD") SITE PLAN TO ADJUST THE LAYOUT AND LAND USE FOR A 16.49 ACRES OUT OF 18 ACRES, OUT OF BLOCK 6, F.Z. BISHOP SUBDIVISION, SURVEY 41, LOCATED ON THE WEST SIDE OF TUCKER ROAD, NORTH OF GARRETT ROAD; PROVIDING FOR PUBLICATION AND ORDAINING OTHER MATTERS RELATED TO THE FOREGOING

ATTEST: /s/Amanda C. Elizondo, City Secretary

CITY OF HARLINGEN
/S/CHRIS BOSWELL, MAYOR

Passed and approved on first reading this the 4/15/20
Passed on second and final reading this the 5/06/20

- 4) Consideration and possible action to authorize the City Manager to sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on behalf of Harlingen Police Department with the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) Homeland Security Investigations (HSI) to designate a Task Force Officer to perform certain HSI duties.

Michael Kester, Chief of Police recommended renewing the existing MOU with the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) Homeland Security Investigations (HIS) to designate a Task Force Officer. The Task Officer would perform certain HIS duties and upon completion of the tasks and training course, the officer would receive an approved Designation Customs Officer and would be a designated as a customs officer.

Motion was made by Commissioner Uribe and seconded by Commissioner Leal to authorize the City Manager to sign the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on behalf of Harlingen Police Department with the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) Homeland Security Investigations (HSI) to designate a Task Force Officer to perform certain HSI duties. Motion carried unanimously.

- 5) Consideration and possible action to approve a resolution authorizing the Mayor, on behalf of the City of Harlingen Police Department, to submit a grant application for a proposed \$57,650.00 made available through the Officer of the Governor Homeland Security Grants Division, to provide additional overtime hours for manpower, enhance, and improve border security under the Operation Stone Garden Program (OPSG).

Chief Kester, stated the Police Department is requesting authorization for the Mayor to submit a grant on behalf of the Police Department for \$57,650.00 to the Office of the Governor, Homeland Security Grants Division to pay for overtime costs and enhance operational capability under the Operation Stone Garden Program (OPSG).

Motion was made by Commissioner De La Rosa and seconded by Mayor Pro-Tem Mezmar to approve the resolution authorizing the Mayor, on behalf of the City of Harlingen Police Department, to submit a grant application for \$57,650 made available through the Officer of the Governor Homeland Security Grants Division, to provide additional overtime hours for manpower, enhance and improve border security under the Operation Stone Garden Program (OPSG). Motion carried unanimously.

- 6) Consideration and possible action to approve an ordinance on first reading to amend the City of Harlingen's budget for Fiscal Year 2019-2020.

Robert Rodriguez, Finance Director, stated the budget amendment is to allocate the funds received from awards, grants, and other revenues and expenditures not included in the current fiscal year budget. Exhibit "A" reflects the total revenues, expenditures, and estimated fund balances by fund. Exhibit "B" reflects detailed changes in revenues and expenditures by account number. He highlighted the following information.

- Catastrophic Emergency – Expenditures increase by \$50,000
- Award Programs – Restricted Fund – Revenues increase - \$566,245
- Expenditures increase - \$566,245
- Total Increase in Revenues - \$566,245
- Total Increase in Expenditures - \$616,245

Motion was made by Commissioner De La Rosa and seconded by Commissioner Leal to approve the ordinance on first reading amending the City of Harlingen's Budget for Fiscal Year 2019-2020. Motion carried unanimously.

- 7) Consideration and possible action to prioritize landscape beautification projects at gateways into our city and authorize the City Manager to utilize the \$270,000 grant funding from the Governor's Community Achievement Award (GCAA) to construct the improvements for priority Project #1.

Carlos Sanchez, Assistant City Manager, stated through the efforts of committed volunteers and some city departments, Keep Texas Beautiful awarded the City of Harlingen the 2020 Governors Community Achievement Award for "clean-up" and "green-up" efforts. Ten (10) Texas cities were awarded a grant. The City wished to express its appreciation to Keep Harlingen Beautiful Board Members, Marine Military Academy, Harlingen Consolidated Independent School District, Texas Stated Technical College for volunteering their time and efforts to keep Harlingen beautiful. The City will receive \$270,000 in grant funds. The funds will be use to construct some landscaping projects. City staff and Keep Harlingen Beautiful are working on identifying possible beautification projects to improve the appearance of the gateways into the City. Staff is recommending the following projects based on priority, availability of funds and community impact and develop a plan to undertake the improvements for each of the areas. The projects could include natural plants, shrubs, artificial grass, brick pavers, concrete ribbon curbs, irrigation where required and lighting under the overpass areas.

- 1: Beautify the traffic islands at the intersection of Commerce and Business 77.
- 2: Beautify the traffic islands at the intersection of Business 77 and Washington Street.
- 3: Beautify the traffic island at the intersection of 25th Street and Harrison.
- 4: Beautify the overpass at Ed Carey and Frontage.
- 5: Beautify the center medians and under the overpass of Spur 54 and Expressway.

Discussion was held regarding the proposed projects; the cost for each project; the impact of the proposed turnaround on the Intersection of Commerce and Business 77 by TXDOT; drainage impact on Spur 54 overpass and traffic improvements.

Motion was made by Commissioner Leal and seconded by Commissioner Uribe to approve the list of the recommended priority projects starting with Priority No. 1.

Mayor Boswell stated they should consider Commissioner De La Rosa's comments, that TXDOT could not intervene in this project and tell the City to do a turnaround and after the City has spend the money on the project and then has to tear down the project. There is the possibility of bringing this item back to the City Commission because if it was not compatible.

Commissioner Uribe stated the turnaround is not part of Priority #1.

Commissioner Leal stated that Priority #1 is the area where there could be a turnaround.

Commissioner Puente asked if Priority #5 could be change.

Commissioner Leal recommended that staff speak to TXDOT to see what would be the City's position. The two (2) priorities that would have the least impact are priorities #1 and #2 because of the MPO. If everything changes then the Commission should make Priority #2 available to be next in line in case Priority #1 did not go through. . We need to be sure that the City will not end up with a turnaround in five (5) years.

Mayor Boswell stated before the Commission commits to spending the money on Priority #1; they need to be certain that it would be compatible with whatever the turnaround might look like. There is a motion and a second to approve the list of the priorities starting with Priority #1, Intersection of Commerce and Business 77.

Mr. Serna recommended proceeding with Priority #2, because it would have as much of an impact; it would not have the proposed turnaround and it would not have to be tear down in the future.

Commissioner Leal and Commissioner Uribe amended their first motion and moved to approve Priority #2 as the first choice. Motion carried unanimously.

- 8) Consideration and possible action to change the primary and alternate appointments from the City of Harlingen to the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) of the Rio Grande Valley Metropolitan Planning Organization (RGVMPO).

Mr. Serna stated the RGVMPO requires for the City to appoint a member and alternate to the Policy Board and Technical Advisory Committee. Due to the departure of Joel Garza, Special Projects Manager, he recommended to appoint Carlos Sanchez, Asst. City Manager to serve as the primary

member and Gabriel Gonzalez, Asst. City Manager, as the alternate member. Mr. Sanchez and Mr. Gonzalez possess the necessary experience and understanding of the MPO process.

Motion was made by Commissioner De La Rosa and seconded by Mayor Pro-Tem Mezmar to approve the appointments of Carlos Sanchez the as the primary member and Gabriel Gonzalez as the alternate member to the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) of the Rio Grande Valley Metropolitan Planning Organization (RGVMPO). Motion carried unanimously.

- 9) Consideration and possible action to approve the preliminary ranking of the Insurance Consulting Firms for Professional Consultant Services for Insurances to assist in researching, developing, and implementing an employee self/fully funded Health Insurance, Life, AD&D, Employee Assistance Program, Vision Insurance, Dental Insurance, and Cafeteria Plan and Products, and Windstorm Insurance, and to authorize the City Manager to negotiate a contract with the highest ranked firm.

Efren Fernandez, Human Resources Director, stated the City solicited RFQ's for Professional Consultant Services for the above mentioned insurances on March 30, 2020. The City received four (4) proposals from First Financial Group of America, Gallagher Benefit Service, Inc., McGriff, Seibels & Williams of Texas, Inc., and Valley Risk Consulting, Inc., The committee assigned to review the proposals consisted of Gabriel Gonzalez, Robert Rodriguez, Belinda Castillo and Efren Fernandez. The committee recommended selecting McGriff, Seibels & Williams of Texas, Inc., highest ranking firm to start the contract negotiations.

Discussion was held in regards to why the process is being conducted earlier than the previous year; why is the City looking for other vendors and not working with the current vendor to try and renew the contract; and why is staff not waiting until July to obtain more current numbers? How long was the process to obtain the health services?

Mr. Serna responded this item is only to hire a consultant not to change the plan that the City currently has.

Mayor Boswell stated something similar happened a year ago or so, because the City did not act soon enough and some of the employees missed out on their medication and medical services.

Mr. Fernandez replied the consultant needs plenty of time to prepare the documentation and provide recommendations for the City Commission to choose a health provider. The City has \$30,000 in the budget for professional services. The cost for the health plan would be divided among the City, Harlingen Water Works, Airport, and Housing Authority.

Motion was made by Mayor Pro-Tem Mezmar and seconded by Commissioner Leal to approve the preliminary ranking of the Insurance Consulting Firms for Professional Consultant Services for Insurances to assist in researching, developing, and implementing an employee self/fully funded Health Insurance, Life, AD&D, Employee Assistance Program, Vision Insurance, Dental Insurance, and Cafeteria Plan and Products, and Windstorm Insurance, and authorize the City Manager to negotiate a contract with the highest ranked firm. Motion carried unanimously.

- 10) Board Appointments

None

Adjournment

There being no other business to discuss, Mayor Boswell adjourned the meeting at 6:27 p.m.

City of Harlingen



Chris Boswell, Mayor

ATTEST:


Amanda C. Elizondo, City Secretary