

The City Council of the City of Columbus, Texas met in regular session on Monday, August 28, 2017 at 6:30 p.m., in the Council Chambers of City Hall located at 605 Spring St., Columbus, Texas, with the following present:

Mayor	-	Dwain Dungen
Councilman	-	Keith Cummings
Councilwoman	-	Lori An Gobert
Councilman	-	Eddie Hernandez
Councilman	-	Chuck Rankin
Councilman	-	Gary Swindle
City Manager	-	Donald Warschak
City Secretary	-	Bana Schneider

Other City Staff present included:

Police Chief	-	Bill Lattimore
Police Lieutenant	-	Skip Edman
Fire Chief	-	Dusty Dittmar

**1. Call to Order.**

Mayor Dwain Dungen called the meeting to order at 6:35 p.m.

**2. Pledge of Allegiance and Invocation.**

Dungen led the Pledge of Allegiance and Invocation.

**3. Consent Agenda:**

- a. Approval of Invoices
- b. Approval of Minutes of August 14, 2017 Regular Meeting
- c. Approval of June 2017 Financial Statements

Councilwoman Gobert made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. Councilman Swindle seconded the motion.

The vote was as follows:

Ayes: Councilmen Cummings, Swindle, Hernandez, and Rankin; Councilwoman Gobert

The motion passed.

**4. Citizens' Presentations and Comments.<sup>1</sup>**

There were no citizen comments.

**5. City Manager's Report Including Visitors Center Project and Hurricane Update.**

City Manager Donald Warschak stated the Visitors Center is there, but there were more important items to discuss. He continued his report with an update on Hurricane Harvey. He stated the City has experienced one eventful time. There was lots of water over the weekend and yesterday he met with county officials. A Disaster Declaration was made by the Mayor, along with a Voluntary Evacuation Notice. Residents in the danger areas were notified by a door to door canvas by the Public Works and Utility Departments, the Police Department, as well as the CVFD, Councilwoman Gobert, the Mayor and Warschak.

The areas notified included the south side of town from the RV park on Hwy 71 up to Interstate 10; the eastside of Spur 52 on Front and Charter Street up to Walnut and then north of Walnut up to North Street. Those residents north of North Street were also notified.

The nursing home facilities evacuated critical patients last night and other residents were evacuated by Colorado Valley Transit today.

Residents in the Legion Circle/Drive areas, the Parkview Apartments and those between Hwy 90 and the railroad were advised to make wise decisions. The effects of the high water could be seen in those areas this morning with the golf course, the City maintenance facilities and the entry lane to the Parkview Apartments taking on water. The fire department rescued residents of the apartments cut off by the high water using the City dump truck.

An evacuation shelter was set up at the Veteran's Hall in Weimar for those with nowhere else to go. The Red Cross had been contacted to manage the site in Weimar, but they were unable to make it in. CISD school busses were used to transport evacuees without transportation from the High School cafeteria to Weimar.

Before the High School was opened as a staging area, St. Paul Lutheran Church opened their parish hall for evacuees to wait. The City tracked those individuals who evacuated by having them register at the school. There were 14 individuals who have been taken to Weimar. There have been donations of food and water dropped off at City hall that has been taken to the shelter.

Warschak stated the Colorado River was currently at 47.56 feet, but it may go to 50. The next 12 to 24 hours will tell. Councilman Hernandez asked if Austin was releasing water. Warschak stated he had heard they were releasing, but he had not verified that information. Councilman Swindle asked how long the crest would take coming from LaGrange. Warschak stated anywhere from 12 to 18 hours. He stated water was up to the eaves at the KC Hall there.

Councilman Rankin stated the LCRA Website has a lot of information on the current river conditions.

Fire Chief Dusty Dittmar stated they had rescued several residents and some people in Alleyton and others across the North River Bridge. He stated the fire station would be manned around the clock until the crisis was over.

Chief Lattimore stated the Magnolia Place and Montezuma Apartments had been evacuated. He discussed road conditions in the area. Wal-Mart and HEB have been closed. He also said there is a lot of misinformation out there, and his department has been trying to speak the truth. Lattimore stated they were using fuel from local gas stations since the fueling station at the maintenance yard is inaccessible, and the local hospital is keeping an eye out for the flooding of the gravel pits behind them.

The Mayor commended everyone for all of their hard work, but he said this was all preliminary and in the next 24-48 hours the real work will begin. He will be attending another meeting at the Emergency Management Office this evening. He also stated because the river rose faster than expected, some residents were ready to go, but the high school was not open yet. He thanked St. Paul for opening their doors early so those residents would be safe. He also thanked Curtiss Schonenberg and DyAn Lauzon for using the church's van to pick up residents who had no transportation. The high school shut down at 6:00 pm this evening. They will speak to them if a staging area will be needed tomorrow.

Gobert stated the City workers, along with the fire department and police, were showing amazing tact and patience in dealing with everything and maintaining a state of calm. Dungen stated that professionalism must be maintained for the next few days.

Swindle asked what the effects were in the county. Dungen stated he had been so wrapped up in the City he had not even thought about the county. Gobert stated from everything she had heard; the county was fairing quite well. The new bridges after last year's flooding have held up.

Gobert asked about the status of the sewer plant. Warschak stated it is not floating yet. He stated the City workers were able to get in by boat and everything is still working. Rankin asked about the status of the river bank. Dungen stated it can't be seen right now. Warschak commented the WWTP at the industrial park is faring well since there is much less water there. Water plants are still functioning, except for the Spring plant, which had been down since a motor had been sent for repairs.

Gobert and Dungen both voiced concerns on the saturation of the ground and the uprooting of trees.

Warschak stated there had been some power outages at the lift stations. They had been running on a generator, and if there is too much rain, they will stop. AEP came out and got the electric back up. He stated AEP is being dispatched in cases of medical necessity.

**There was no discussion of items 6 thru 9.**

**10. Consideration and Action to Approve Partial Closure of Crossroads Blvd. from 10:0a.m. Friday, September 8, 2017 through Saturday, September 9, 2017 for the Colorado County Fair.**

Councilwoman Gobert made a motion to approve the partial street closure for the fair. Councilman Rankin seconded the motion.

The vote was as follows:

Ayes: Councilmen Cummings, Swindle, Hernandez, and Rankin; Councilwoman Gobert

The motion passed.

**11. Consideration and Action to Approve Closure of Milam Street (Spur 52) Beginning in Front of the Elementary School and Ending at Walnut Street (Highway 90), and Closure of Walnut Street (Highway 90) to Veteran's Memorial Center from 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. for the Colorado County Fair Parade on Saturday, September 9, 2017.**

Councilwoman Gobert made a motion to approve the street closures for the fair parade. Councilman Hernandez seconded the motion.

The vote was as follows:

Ayes: Councilmen Cummings, Swindle, Hernandez, and Rankin; Councilwoman Gobert

The motion passed.

**There was no discussion of items 12 thru 19.**

**20. Items from Councilmembers.<sup>2</sup>**

Councilman Cummings – None

Councilwoman Gobert – None.

Councilman Swindle - None

Councilman Hernandez – It is good to see neighbors helping neighbors. John Brasher has been pumping water out of a low area out to Memorial Drive. He has probably saved six houses from flooding.

Councilman Rankin – None

Mayor Dungen – None

**21. Announcements.**

Warschak stated for everyone to stay safe and evacuate if they felt in danger. Dungen stated the emergency declaration and evacuation notice was only in place for seven days. They might have to be reissued, so there may have to be a special meeting for Council approval.

**22. Adjournment.**

The Mayor adjourned the meeting at 7:04 p.m.

  
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Mayor, Dwain Dungen

ATTEST:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Bana Schneider, City Secretary

<sup>1</sup>During this agenda item, citizens may comment for the record on items, which are not on the agenda. However, the Council may not participate in discussion or deliberation on any item that is not on the agenda. Citizens may request that a topic be added to a future agenda.

<sup>2</sup>Limited to statements. Issues raised by councilmembers under this item cannot be deliberated by Council. The Open Meetings Act does not allow Council to deliberate items that don't appear on the agenda.