

The City Council of the City of Columbus, Texas met in regular session on Monday, November 27, 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 (Absent)
Councilman	-	Eddie Hernandez
Councilman	-	Chuck Rankin (Absent)
Councilman	-	Gary Swindle
City Manager	-	Donald Warschak
City Secretary	-	Bana Schneider

Other City Staff present included:

Police Chief	-	Skip Edman
Code Enforcement	-	Richard LaCourse
Fire Marshal	-	Brent Gorman

**1. Call to Order.**

Mayor Dwain Dungen called the meeting to order at 6:30 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 the November 13, 2017 Regular Meeting

Councilman Cummings made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. Councilman Hernandez seconded the motion.

The vote was as follows:

Ayes: Councilmen Cummings, Swindle, and Hernandez  
Absent: Councilwoman Gobert, Councilman Rankin

The motion passed.

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

Debbie Damon spoke about volunteering and small businesses in our community. A copy of her presentation is attached to these minutes. Mayor Dungen stated the *Austin American Statesman* had published an article about the flooding in small towns, and Columbus was mentioned in the article.

Billy Kahn of the Chamber of Commerce spoke about the planning of an official ribbon cutting ceremony for the Visitors Center.

**5. City Manager's Report Including Playground Park Project Update, Visitors Center, and Surcharge from Natural Gas Supplier to Recover Relocation Costs.**

City Manager, Donald Warschak, gave his report, a copy of which is attached to these minutes. Warschak introduced Evan Herchek who gave an update on his Eagle Scout Playground Project. Herchek stated the build day at the park would be Saturday, December 2<sup>nd</sup>. He thanked the City for fixing the lights at the park, and he stated the entire budget had been used. Mayor Dungen stated Evan had exceeded his fundraising goals, and was able to expand on the original plan for the playground.

Warschak gave an update on the Visitors Center. He stated a walkthrough was scheduled for Thursday, and a punch list would be made for any remaining items. Warschak said the Columbus Garden Club had started the landscaping of the Visitors Center grounds, and they were moving fast on the project.

Warschak concluded his report with the surcharge from the natural gas supplier. To recoup the cost of relocating the line into the City, Petroleum Fuels Midstream will be charging the City an additional \$.57 per MMBTU over a 3 year period. That relocation cost is being split between all users from Eagle Lake to Columbus with a variable MMBTU cost based on usage. Councilman Hernandez asked if this charge would be passed to the customers. Warschak stated it would.

**6. Consideration and Action to Approve a Manufactured Home Permit for Block 71 Subdivision Lot 8 of Back Street as Requested by Brenda Jones.**

Code Enforcement officer, Richard LaCourse, stated the address was 1627 Back Street. The lot is 37 feet by 166 feet, and the single-wide manufactured home being purchased will fit on the lot. Block 71 allows manufactured homes.

Councilman Cummings asked if the MH would be non-compliant since it is in a commercial zone. LaCourse explained residential units were allowed in commercial zones, but commercial units would not be allowed in residential areas.

Dungen stated if all requirements are met, then the permit should be approved.

Councilman Hernandez made a motion to approve the manufactured home permit as requested by Brenda Jones. Councilman Cummings seconded the motion.

The vote was as follows:

Ayes: Councilmen Cummings, Swindle, and Hernandez

Absent: Councilwoman Gobert, Councilman Rankin

The motion passed.

**7. Consideration and Action to Approve a Manufactured Home Permit for Block 111 Subdivision Lot PTS- 5, 6 of Preston Street as Requested by Brandy Young.**

LaCourse stated the address is 1231 Preston Street. He stated there is a manufactured home located there presently, but it received flood damage. The new manufactured home was a double-wide, and larger than the current home. The mayor stated it will take a little maneuvering to get it in place. LaCourse stated the home will need to be addressed on Hancock Street because of set-back requirements.

Councilman Cummings made a motion to approve the manufactured home permit as requested by Brandy Young. Councilman Hernandez seconded the motion.

The vote was as follows:

Ayes: Councilmen Cummings, Swindle, and Hernandez

Absent: Councilwoman Gobert, Councilman Rankin

The motion passed.

**8. Consideration and Action to Submit to Planning & Zoning a Replat of a 0.641 Acre Tract Located in Block 13 of the City of Columbus into Two (2) Lots (0.618 Acres (Lot 1) and (0.023 Acres (Lot 2)) as Requested by the City of Columbus.**

Dungen stated this was a strip of land by the Visitors Center that will be sold to the Durbin's. Warschak stated it was a 7 foot wide strip that would even out their property. The Mayor stated Council had approved the sale of the land at cost.

Councilman Hernandez made a motion to submit the replat to Planning & Zoning. Councilman Cummings seconded the motion.

The vote was as follows:

Ayes: Councilmen Cummings, Swindle, and Hernandez  
Absent: Councilwoman Gobert, Councilman Rankin

The motion passed.

**9. Consideration and Action to Authorize Management to Negotiate a New Electrical Rate Contract.**

Warschak stated the rates are locked in and closed on the same day so the actual rate itself will not come before Council. The last negotiation was two years ago.

Councilman Swindle made a motion to authorize management to negotiate a new electrical rate. Councilman Hernandez seconded the motion.

The vote was as follows:

Ayes: Councilmen Cummings, Swindle, and Hernandez  
Absent: Councilwoman Gobert, Councilman Rankin

The motion passed.

**10. Consideration and Action to Set the Date and Time for the Second December City Council Meeting.**

Dungen stated the second December meeting falls on Christmas so the meeting would shift to Tuesday the 26<sup>th</sup>. He stated many people may have plans that week, and suggested to have a noon meeting before the holiday in order to approve invoices and any other important items.

Councilman Hernandez made a motion to approve noon on December 21<sup>st</sup> as the second Council meeting in December. Councilman Swindle seconded the motion.

The vote was as follows:

Ayes: Councilmen Cummings, Swindle, and Hernandez  
Absent: Councilwoman Gobert, Councilman Rankin

The motion passed.

**11. Consideration and Action, if Necessary, Regarding the Fire Marshal Report.**

Brent Gorman gave the report, a copy of which is attached to these minutes. He stated his goal was to have a 100% inspection rate for all commercial properties in the City. Additionally he

said many commercial properties have never been inspected. He discussed findings from several inspections.

Gorman spoke about St. Anthony's problems with automatic calls from their alarm company to the Sheriff's department. They company would always get a busy signal. He stated he will work with the Sheriff's department to get a dedicated line for alarm companies.

He informed Council about the inspection of local hotels, and about the lack of stand-pipe requirements in the fire code. Dungen asked if the fire code could be altered. Gorman stated the Fire Marshal can change the fire code, especially with the backing of City Council.

No action was required.

**12. Consideration and Action, if Necessary, Regarding the October 2017 Code Enforcement Report.**

Richard LaCourse gave the report, a copy of which is attached to these minutes. There was discussion regarding permits for flood damaged homes. LaCourse stated a permit was required only if the repairs involved electrical or plumbing issues, not for drywall replacement. Mayor Dungen suggested no cost permits be issued for all storm recovery projects for tracking purposes, and to protect residents by making sure quality work is being done.

LaCourse stated a FEMA trailer is now in place at the Milentz trailer park on New World Drive. Councilman Cummings asked about trash accumulating at a Preston Street address. LaCourse stated the residents are going through an eviction, but they have been told the trash was not the City's responsibility.

No action was required.

**13. Consideration and Action, if Necessary, Regarding the October 2017 Police Report.**

Chief Edman gave the report, a copy of which is attached to these minutes.

He spoke about departmental training and community outreach.

Edman introduced new patrol officer, Joshua Solis, to Council.

No action was required.

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

Councilman Cummings – None

Councilwoman Gobert – Absent

Councilman Swindle - None

Councilman Hernandez – Announced that Congressman Michael McCall announced the new County VA clinic that will open in the spring of 2018 at St. Marks Hospital in LaGrange.

Councilman Rankin – Absent

Mayor Dungen – None

**15. Announcements.**

The City Secretary reminded Council about the Christmas party, and asked that those who would be attending should let her know.

**16. Adjournment.**

The Mayor adjourned the meeting at 7:06 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.

