

The City Council of the City of Columbus, Texas met in regular session on Monday, May 29, 2018 at 5:30 p.m., in the Council Chambers of City Hall located at 605 Spring St., Columbus, Texas, with the following present:

Mayor	-	Dwain Dungen
Mayor Pro Tem	-	Lori An Gobert
Councilman	-	Keith Cummings
Councilman	-	Gary Swindle
Councilwoman	-	Sandra Frnka
Councilman	-	Chuck Rankin
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
Library Director	-	Susan Chandler

1. Call to Order.

Mayor Dwain Dungen called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

2. Pledge of Allegiance and Invocation.

Dungen led the Pledge of Allegiance and Invocation.

3. Consent Agenda:

a. Approval of Invoices

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

The vote was as follows:

Ayes: Councilmen Cummings, Swindle, and Rankin; Councilwomen Gobert and Frnka

The motion passed.

4. Citizens' Presentations and Comments.¹

Sharon Wegenhoft, Martha Jordan, and Mary Jane Moore of the Columbus Garden Club made a presentation regarding National Garden Week. Mayor Dungen signed a proclamation declaring June 2 thru June 8 as National Garden Week in Columbus. The Mayor thanked the Garden Club for all of the work they do around the City.

Billy Kahn, Kathleen Townsend, Susan Chandler, Marilyn Wade of the Chamber of Commerce Board, and Amber Becera, board member and chair of the Magnolia Days Festival, thanked the City for all of the help during the festival. Mayor Dungen congratulated the Chamber on the success of Magnolia Days. He stated this year's event was the best in a very long time, and they have laid a great foundation for future events.

5. City Manager's Report Including Water Filtration Project Update, Water System Flushing, and the Industrial Park Wastewater Treatment Plant Outfall.

City Manager, Donald Warschak, presented his City Manager's Report, a copy of which is attached to these minutes. Warschak stated the filter foundation walls were poured last week at the Tait plant,

and this morning, the backwash foundation was poured. Work will be moving to the Hill Plant where excavation for the beams and setting the forms for the foundation will be started.

Warschak stated the water system flushing was continuing. City crews have completed the flushing to Burford Street. They will be starting downtown tomorrow near Baumgart Insurance moving north toward Midtown Park.

Warschak told Council about the flood damage discovered at the Industrial Park Wastewater Treatment Plant. It was discovered that the outfall pipe had been washed out during the flooding; leaving only the pipe casing. The City is working with Supac Construction and B&D to get the pipe replaced. Because of Hurricane Harvey, there is approximately 20 additional feet of riverbank in that area, so additional pipe length will be added. Mayor Dungen added this damage was unbeknownst to us until a neighboring land owner reported standing water where no water should be.

Councilman Rankin asked about the permanent repair at the McCormick WWTP. Warschak stated the Army Corps of Engineers is doing a feasibility study, and it will be about the end of the year before they have that completed.

6. Consideration and Action to Approve the City of Columbus Comprehensive Annual Financial Report for 2017.

Paula Lowe of Pattillo, Brown and Hill, the City's audit firm, gave an overview of the annual report. She highlighted the unmodified audit opinion along with the various fund balances and report sections.

Rankin asked if there was a way to measure the effectiveness of the money that was spent on the new meters. There was discussion on different ways to measure the efficiencies.

Councilwoman Gobert made a motion to approve the 2017 Comprehensive Annual Financial Report. Councilman Rankin seconded the motion.

The vote was as follows:

Ayes: Councilmen Cummings, Swindle, and Rankin; Councilwomen Gobert and Frnka

The motion passed.

7. Public Hearing on the Property Located at 716 Back Street, Block 104, Lot S-16 that has been Determined to be in Violation of Article 3.07 Unsafe or Substandard Building, Structures and Premises.

The Mayor opened the public hearing at 5:51 p.m.

Code Enforcement Officer, Richard LaCourse, gave an overview of the property violations. His photographic and written reports are attached to these minutes.

Property owners, Eron and Agustan Lara, spoke to Council regarding the plans for the property. Some health issues had kept the owner from completing the project earlier.

A time frame for completion was discussed with the Mayor suggesting extra time was allowed to complete the project, but a report would need to be given to LaCourse on a monthly basis. LaCourse stated the property needed to be secured and made water tight, and the grass has to be kept mowed. Rankin asked the Lara's how much time they would need to complete the project. They felt, with only working on weekends, they should be done in six months. Rankin stated he would be more comfortable with giving 90 days with another determination if an extension would be warranted at that time. Councilwoman Gobert concurred.

The public hearing was closed by Mayor Dungen at 6:01 p.m.

Councilman Rankin made a motion to grant a 90 day extension with an update given to council on August 27, 2018. Councilwoman Frnka seconded the motion.

The vote was as follows:

Ayes: Councilmen Cummings, Swindle, and Rankin; Councilwomen Gobert and Frnka

The motion passed.

8. **Public Hearing on the Property Located at 1023 Martin Luther King Street, Block 102, Lot S-10 that has been Determined to be in Violation of Article 3.07 Unsafe or Substandard Building, Structures and Premises.**

Dungen opened the public hearing at 6:01 p.m.

Code Enforcement Officer, Richard LaCourse, gave an overview of the property violations. His photographic and written reports are attached to these minutes.

Andre Waddle spoke to Council regarding his plans for the property. He stated he had finally found a contractor, and it would take approximately 3 to 4 months for renovations to be completed. His plans are to make this house a rental unit. Dungen stated, from the pictures, it does not look like much would be salvageable, and it might be better to start from scratch. Waddle stated he felt the pictures looked worse than it really is, and he has a sentimental attachment to the home because of family.

Councilwoman Frnka asked if he was prepared financially for this undertaking, and if the contractor was bonded.

Waddle stated he had sold a piece of property to get the funding, and the contractor was bonded. He plans on pulling permits next week.

Dungen suggested a 90 day extension with a progress report.

The public hearing was closed at 6:10 p.m.

Councilwoman Frnka made a motion to grant a 90 day extension with an update given to council on August 27, 2018. Councilman Rankin seconded the motion.

The vote was as follows:

Ayes: Councilmen Cummings, Swindle, and Rankin; Councilwomen Gobert and Frnka

The motion passed.

9. **Consideration and Action, if Necessary, Regarding the Nesbitt Memorial Library Foundation Expansion Project.**

Jim Kearney of the Nesbitt Memorial Library Foundation stated the foundation needs assurances that the City will commit to the maintenance and operation and provide one new full-time staff position before they will launch any fundraising efforts for the new building. They have decided to have a separate structure to be called the Columbus Civic Center, which will incorporate meeting rooms for the library.

Kearney gave an overview of the fund raising goals for the new building and the renovations of the existing library. He stated their goal was to raise 3 million dollars.

Frnka asked about parking and how the buildings might connect. She also asked if the renovations to the existing library building would be completed before the new construction, and if the meeting room in the library would be repurposed. Kearney stated the order of construction and renovations would be determined by the professionals, but he did comment no work would commence until the fundraising goal was reached. There was an in-depth discussion of different parking options. Kearney confirmed the meeting room would free up space for reconfiguring smaller meeting rooms and additional restrooms and workspace.

There was discussion regarding the approximate cost of \$100,000 per year for a full-time employee and operational costs for the building, as well as plans for the Mansfield building.

The Mayor stated he felt this was a tremendous asset for the community, and a wonderful opportunity to possibly help bring tourism to the City for special events.

Councilman Rankin made a motion to accept the gracious offer of the new civic center building from the NMLF. Councilman Cummings seconded the motion.

The vote was as follows:

Ayes: Councilmen Cummings, Swindle, and Rankin; Councilwomen Gobert and Frnka

The motion passed.

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

Fire Marshal, Brent Gorman, gave his report; a copy of the report is attached to these minutes. Gorman spoke about working with the utility department and load testing the fire hydrants during flushing. If all of the hydrants are tested every three years, this could help lower the City's insurance rates. There was a discussion of the testing method and the time frame for completing the testing.

No action was required

11. Consideration and Action, if Necessary, Regarding the April 2018 Code Enforcement Report.

Code Enforcement Officer, Richard LaCourse, gave the report, a copy of which is attached to these minutes.

LaCourse stated he was working on three new substandard properties. There was discussion regarding the status of several other properties, and the erection of a shipping container building. Also, Council discussed the status of the sign ordinance.

No action was required.

12. Consideration and Action, if Necessary, Regarding the April 2018 Police Report.

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

Edman spoke about recent department training, and stated there was one participant for the distracted driver program. Chief stated CHS graduation went off without a hitch. There was a heavy police presence there. He also stated he would be working on getting used fire hose for the schools to use as door barricades by placing short lengths of hose over the door hinges.

Rankin asked about the progress with junk vehicles. Edman stated he has not tracked the vehicles the way Chief Lattimore had, and at this point, he has been concentrating on some other code violations. Edman stated so much of what they do is complaint driven.

There was discussion concerning the traffic in the City during the weekends as well as about proper staffing at those times.

Rankin asked if Council had approved the street closure in front of Memorial Stadium during graduation. Edman stated the school district called him at the last minute to close the street, and he felt it was a public safety issue, so he agreed to barricade it. He said the school district would like to have gates similar to the elementary school in order to close the street whenever there is an event at the stadium.

No action was required.

13. Items from Councilmembers.²

Councilman Cummings – None

Councilwoman Gobert – None

Councilman Swindle – None

Councilwoman Frnka – None

Councilman Rankin – None

Mayor Dungen – Thanked everyone involved in the Magnolia Days Festival.

14. Announcements.

There were no announcements.

15. Adjournment.

The Mayor adjourned the meeting at 6:48 p.m.



Mayor, Dwain Dungen

ATTEST:



Bana Schneider, City Secretary

¹During 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.

²Limited 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.

