

The City Council of the City of Columbus, Texas met in regular session on Monday, January 28, 2019 at 5:30 p.m., in the Council Chambers of City Hall located at 605 Spring St., Columbus, Texas, with the following present:

Mayor	-	Lori An Gobert
Mayor Pro Tem	-	Chuck Rankin (arrived at 5:45 p.m.)
Councilman	-	Keith Cummings
Councilman	-	Michael Ridlen
Councilman	-	Gary Swindle
Councilwoman	-	Sandra Frnka
City Manager	-	Donald Warschak
City Secretary	-	Bana Schneider

Other City Staff present included:

Police Chief	-	Skip Edman
Fire Chief	-	Dusty Dittmar
Code Enforcement	-	Richard LaCourse
Library Director	-	Susan Chandler

1. Call to Order.

Mayor Lori An Gobert called the meeting to order at 5:31 p.m.

2. Pledge of Allegiance and Invocation.

Gobert led the Pledge of Allegiance and Invocation.

3. Consent Agenda:

- a. Approval of Invoices
- b. Approval of Minutes of the January 14, 2019 Regular Meeting
- c. Approval of Quarterly Investment Report for the Quarter Ended December 31, 2018

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

The vote was as follows:

Ayes: Councilmen Cummings, Ridlen, and Swindle; Councilwoman Frnka
Absent: Councilman Rankin

The motion passed.

4. Citizens' Presentations and Comments. ¹

There were no citizen comments.

5. City Manager's Report Including Water Filtration Project, Waterline Project Update, and Sewer Averaging.

City Manager, Donald Warschak, gave his report, a copy of which is attached to these minutes. Regarding the water filtration project, Warschak stated a letter from the City Attorney had been sent to WesTech, and a response had been received. WesTech has painted the flanges which they had made modifications on at the Tait water plant; however, Warschak stated he did not know if the flanges had been tested after they were welded. Warschak indicated if testing had been done, then the piping could be installed. At the Spring plant, Warschak stated WesTech would be submitting

information regarding several different types of flanges that could be used instead of making modifications to the existing flanges. At the Hill plant, WesTech has requested the vertical piping be installed in order to verify which flanges needed to be changed. Warschak stated he had spoken to Bruce Tesch with B&D Services, and Tesch stated they would be able to begin the vertical pipe install the latter part of this week or early next week.

Regarding the bond waterline project, Warschak said he had received the field work from the surveyors, and he has started the design. Hopefully the project will go out for bids in the spring. He stated Mercer had started the survey field work for the grant waterline project. Hopefully both projects would be ready to go out for bids at the same time so we might receive more competitive bids if the contractors are bidding two projects.

Warschak said the sewer averaging period will end on February 15th. Residential customer usage during the sewer averaging period will determine their sewer rates for the remainder of the year.

Warschak also informed Council about the repairs needed at the Industrial Park waste water treatment plant. The skirting on the clarifying unit, which separates the solids and clear water, has deteriorated. It will have to be replaced at some point. The money budgeted for repairs at the other plant will have to be used at this plant. Councilman Ridlen asked if this was an off the shelf item or will it need to be fabricated. Warschak described the skirting mechanism. He stated they come in vinyl and aluminum, but the vinyl would last longer. Warschak stated the current skirting is aluminum, but he would look at pricing of both materials.

6. Consideration and Action Regarding the Mayor's appointment of a Committee to Work with Texas A&M on a Proposed Study and Potential Projects.

The Mayor stated she and Donald sit on the Steering Committee which is just a group of interested citizens. The committee is headed by Barbara Peterman. The committee has submitted information to Texas A&M regarding concerns and ideas to enhance the City. Gobert stated she felt it would be important for oversight and legal purposes to formally appoint a committee to work with the faculty and student program. She stated it makes the most sense to appoint a committee made up of some Steering Committee members who have been working on the Texas A&M Texas Targeted Communities project the last few years. Councilman Swindle asked who those members were. Peterman stated she, former mayor, Dwain Dungen, Kathleen Townzen, and Roger Wade made up this sub-committee. Peterman explained the program. The top three items the committee has submitted to the Texas Targeted Communities project are visual attractiveness of the city; zoning and ordinances; and making the city attractive to visitors.

Councilman Rankin arrived at 5:45 p.m.

Councilman Swindle made a motion to approve the appointment of a committee to work with Texas A&M on the proposed study and projects. Councilwoman Frnka seconded the motion.

The vote was as follows:

Ayes: Councilmen Cummings, Ridlen, Swindle, and Rankin; Councilwoman Frnka

The motion passed.

7. Consideration and Action to Approve the Closure of Milam Street (Spur 52) from Jackson Street to Walnut Street (Highway 90) and the Closure of Walnut Street to Legion Drive from 10:15 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. on Saturday February 23, 2019 for the Annual FFA Parade.

Chief Edman stated this would be the normal full closure of intersections.

Councilman Ridlen made a motion to approve the street closures as requested. Councilman Cummings seconded the motion.

The vote was as follows:

Ayes: Councilmen Cummings, Ridlen, Swindle, and Rankin; Councilwoman Frnka

The motion passed.

8. **Consideration and Action for the Approval of Polling Places for the 2019 May General Election. Consideración y acción para la aprobación de los lugares de votación para las elecciones generales de mayo de 2019.**

City Secretary, Bana Schneider, stated the Saturday polling place would be at Columbus High School.

La secretaria de la ciudad, Bana Schneider, declaró que el lugar de votación del sábado sería en Columbus High School.

Councilwoman Frnka made a motion to approve the polling places for the May General Election. Councilman Swindle seconded the motion.

La concejal Frnka hizo una moción para aprobar los lugares de votación para la elección general de mayo. El concejal Swindle secundó la moción.

The vote was as follows:

Ayes: Councilmen Cummings, Ridlen, Swindle, and Rankin; Councilwoman Frnka

The motion passed.

La votación fue la siguiente:

Sí: los concejales Cummings, Ridlen, Swindle y Rankin; Concejal Frnka

La moción pasó.

9. **Consideration and Action to Adopt Resolution 191-19, a Resolution of the City of Columbus Authorizing a General (Regular) Municipal Election to be Held on May 4, 2019. Consideración y acción para adoptar la resolución 191-19, una resolución de la ciudad de Columbus que autoriza un elección municipal (regular) general para ser sostenido el 4 de mayo de 2019.**

Councilwoman Frnka made a motion to approve Resolution 191-19. Councilman Cummings seconded the motion.

La concejal Frnka hizo una moción para aprobar la Resolución 191-19. El concejal Cummings secundó la moción.

The vote was as follows:

Ayes: Councilmen Cummings, Ridlen, Swindle, and Rankin; Councilwoman Frnka

The motion passed.

La votación fue la siguiente:

Sí: los concejales Cummings, Ridlen, Swindle y Rankin; Concejal Frnka

La moción pasó.

10. Consideration and Action, if Necessary, Regarding the Columbus Community & Industrial Development Corporation Report.

CCIDC President, Bruce Tesch, delivered the report. Tesch stated there have been many questions in the community regarding Colorado Materials. CCIDC has received a request for a meeting with them in February. Tesch stated they will be advertising for bids soon for the annual park maintenance contract. He concluded by stating Acorn Seekers is again interested in partnering with CCIDC to become a tenant of the business park. Warschak showed Council the expected plans Acorn Seekers has for a curing and retail facility. Ridlen asked if the same US contacts were involved. Tesch stated 67% of the company had been sold, but the one local contact would stay the same. Councilman Cummings asked how many employees they may need, and Rankin asked about the retail operations. Tesch stated they had not completed the application process, so at this time, the number of potential employees is unknown. Tesch stated, he believed, Acorn Seekers was looking to sell fresh meat products locally.

No action was required.

11. Consideration and Action, if Necessary, Regarding the Nesbitt Memorial Library Report.

Library Director, Susan Chandler, gave the report, a copy of which is attached to these minutes. Chandler highlighted the increase in the number of programs. She stated the ESL programs were not being conducted this year so the programming numbers may be down next year. She stated the number of active cardholders is down, and she mentioned a possible sign up for library cards at the schools. Chandler said computer use was down, but wifi logins were up. Councilwoman Frnka stated she had read almost all of the eBooks the library has. Chandler stated the cost of electronic versions of best sellers was very expensive. She added the library has paper copies of all best sellers.

Gobert asked about the capital campaign for the library expansion. Chandler stated a professional marketing company is currently working on the campaign, with hopes of rolling out the campaign by the end of February.

Chandler spoke about upcoming library programs. Gobert asked about the attendance at the teen programs. Chandler stated they are trying to build the numbers, but they usually get between 4 and 6 teens. Gobert commended Chandler on the variety of programs offered by the library.

No action was required.

12. Consideration and Action, if Necessary, Regarding the Columbus Volunteer Fire Department Report.

Fire Chief, Dusty Dittmar, delivered the report, a copy of which is attached to these minutes. Dittmar highlighted the number of calls and meeting hours during the year. He reported on the economic losses due to fires, and spoke about the largest fire in the City at the Columbus Inn.

Dittmar stated they have nine new members and have had 3 members retire. He spoke about training and the donation of old extrication tools to the Bernardo Fire Department.

Councilmen Rankin and Ridlen asked about the training at Texas A&M. Dittmar stated it was a week long program. Gobert asked about other training available. Dittmar spoke about different training the department offers.

No action was required.

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

Code Enforcement Officer, Richard LaCourse, gave the report for Fire Marshal Gorman. A copy of the report is attached to these minutes. LaCourse reviewed the fire control system, including stand pipes, which will be put in place at the Best Western Hotel when it is built. There was a discussion regarding the need for stand pipes in some of the existing hotels. Rankin asked for the Fire Marshal to review the changes that need to be made to the existing fire code, and make a report to Council.

La Course spoke about another fire at the Columbus Inn, and he stated the ESO software would be implemented in February.

Councilman Cummings asked if there were safety hazards at the Columbus Inn. LaCourse stated there were some deficiencies, and Gorman has scheduled a second full inspection.

No action was required.

14. Consideration and Action, if Necessary, Regarding the December 2018 Code Enforcement Report.

Code Enforcement Officer, Richard LaCourse, gave his report, a copy of which is attached to these minutes. LaCourse stated it had been a light month regarding permit applications. He stated a lien had been filed against the property at 1509 Rampart for the amount of demolition costs.

He spoke about the recent ISO audit. He stated the City residential grade remained the same at 6 while the City commercial went from a 5 to a 6. Adopting a newer building code and submitting training records could help with lowering the rating.

Gobert asked if a rating of 5 was typical for a town of our size. LaCourse stated he would need to do some research to find out.

No action was required.

15. Consideration and Action, if Necessary, Regarding the December 2018 Police Report.

Chief Edman gave the report, a copy of which is attached to these minutes. Edman stated the racial profiling report was included in the Council packet. The report is required to be delivered during a meeting. He explained the information in the report and how it was compiled. Edman indicated there had been no complaints regarding racial profiling.

Edman highlighted the recent state mandated training Captain Alley and Detective Moulder recently received on eye witness identification.

No action was required.

16. Items from Councilmembers.²

Councilman Cummings – Thanked Chief Edman for participating in the MLK day celebration; also thanked Councilwoman Frnka for attending.

Councilman Ridlen – None

Councilman Swindle – None

Councilwoman Frnka – Also thanked Chief Edman for his participation in the MLK celebration. The program was very interesting, and she enjoyed learning about the history of the buildings in the area.

Councilman Rankin – None

Mayor Gobert – None

17. Announcements.

Schneider stated candidate packets were available for the election. The deadline for filing for a place on the ballot would be 5:00 p.m. Friday, February 15th, and the deadline to file as a write-in candidate is 5:00 p.m. Tuesday, February 19th.

Schneider declaró que los paquetes candidatos estaban disponibles para la elección. La fecha límite para solicitar un lugar en la boleta electoral será a las 5:00 p.m. Viernes, 15 de febrero, y la fecha límite para presentar una solicitud como candidato por escrito es a las 5:00 p.m. Martes 19 de febrero.

18. Adjournment.

The Mayor adjourned the meeting at 6:25 p.m.



Mayor, Lori An Gobert

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.