



The City Council of the City of Columbus, Texas met in regular session on Monday, July 24, 2023, at 5:30 PM, 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
Councilman – Keith Cummings
Councilman – Ronny Daley
Councilwoman – Paige Sciba
Councilman – Michael Ridlen
City Manager – Donald Warschak
City Secretary – Bana Schneider
Assistant City Secretary – Dinah Jacobs

Other City Staff present included:

Police Chief – Skip Edman
Fire Marshal – Brent Gorman, Jr.
Code Enforcement – Richard LaCourse
Fire/Code Admin Assistant – Duane Naiser

1. Call to Order

Mayor Lori An Gobert called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

2. Pledge of Allegiance and Invocation

Gobert led the pledge and invocation.

3. Consent Agenda:

Motion to approve the consent agenda as presented.

Moved by: Ronny Daley



Seconded by: Paige Sciba

Aye Michael Ridlen, Paige Sciba, Chuck Rankin, Keith Cummings, and Ronny Daley

Carried 5-0

3.1

Approval of Invoices [INVOICES_07.24.2023.pdf](#)

- 3.2 **Approval of Minutes of the July 10, 2023 Regular Meeting**
[MINUTES_20230710.pdf](#) 
- 3.3 **Approval of the January 2023 Financial Statements** [JANUARY 2023 FINANCIALS.pdf](#) 
- 3.4 **Approval of the February 2023 Financial Statements** [FEBRUARY 2023 FINANCIALS.pdf](#) 
- 3.5 **Approval of the March 2023 Financial Statements** [MARCH 2023 FINANCIALS.pdf](#) 

4. Citizens' Presentations and Comments¹

Debbie Damon addressed Council about her dismay to what was said in the newspaper regarding the approval of a proclamation.

5. City Manager's Report Including Sales Tax, TxDOT Projects Update, Montezuma Street Sidewalk Grant Application, and the PHMSA Pipeline Grant. [CM_REPORT.pdf](#) 

City Manager, Donald Warschak, gave his report. A copy is attached to these minutes.

Regarding sales tax, Warschak reported the City's sales tax payment for July was \$183,249.23, an increase compared to \$154,705.40 over the same time period. The County and City of Weimar saw increases, while the City of Eagle Lake saw a decrease.

Regarding the Hwy 71 (Fannin Street) Signal Light Project, Warschak reported the contractor continues to work on the installation of the curb radius at the intersection.

Regarding the Montezuma Street Sidewalk Grant Application, Warschak reported the application has been submitted. October is the target date for TxDOT to compile a list of projects for recommendation to the Texas Transportation Commission.

Regarding the PHMSA Pipeline Grant, Warschak reported work continues on the application for submission that is due in August.

6. Consideration and Action to Send to Planning & Zoning the Replat of the Original Lots 9 and 10 in the WB Dewees League A-18 in the City of Columbus ETJ, Into Lots 9A with an Increase to 3.168 Acres and Lot 10A with a Decrease to 1.739 Acres as Requested by Dwayne "Scott" Schobel. [SCHOBEL REPLAT.pdf](#) 

Warschak gave an overview of the property up for replat consideration. It is a change in the lot lines.

Motion to send to P & Z for replat.

Moved by: Chuck Rankin

Seconded by: Keith Cummings

Aye Michael Ridlen, Paige Sciba, Chuck Rankin, Keith Cummings, and Ronny Daley

Carried 5-0

7. Consideration and Action Regarding the Abandonment of the Most Southern Right of Way on Great Southern Way. [ROW ABANDONMENT GSW.pdf](#)

Warschak presented the plat showing the ROW being requested for the abandonment.

Motion to approve the abandonment of the City ROW on Great Southern Way.

Moved by: Paige Sciba

Seconded by: Chuck Rankin

Aye Michael Ridlen, Paige Sciba, Chuck Rankin, Keith Cummings, and Ronny Daley

Carried 5-0

8. Discussion Regarding the Mansfield Library Property.

Warschak discussed the options and costs. Someone locally had a recent asbestos survey done, and it came in at approximately \$1,500.00. The cost to demo is approximately \$30,000.00, assuming the concrete can be disposed of relatively closely, and roll off costs of approximately \$4,000.00. There would be an additional cost to abate any asbestos, should there be any.

The lot is approximately 58x160' and the appraised value is roughly \$80,000.00.

There was discussion on how to proceed.

Ridlen questioned the cost to maintain. City Secretary, Bana Schneider, stated it is roughly \$5,000.00.

Gobert stated should we touch it; it would have to meet code standards.

Schneider stated it in order to sell it, it has to be sealed bids and go through the entire process.

Rankin stated there is no advantage to having the asbestos survey done.

Ridlen questioned the cost to advertise again. Schneider stated \$370/ad, and it has to be run for two weeks.

Ridlen stated he thinks minimum should be half the value of the lot, \$40,000.00.

General consensus was to go back for bids.

This will be on the next agenda.

9. Consideration and Action, if Necessary, Regarding the June 2023 Fire Marshal Report.

[FIRE MARSHAL JUNE 2023.pdf](#)

Fire Marshal, Brent Gorman, Jr. gave his report. A copy is attached to these minutes.

Gorman reported on inspections and the Tower 14 incident, as well as number of June

monthly calls for service. There is a burn ban in place. Gorman also gave an update on the public hearing at the Commissioner's Court. It was overly positive. The commissioner's voted to show it was feasible and necessary. There will be one more meeting before it can be placed on the ballot.

Gobert thanked him for all of his diligent work.

10. Consideration and Action, if Necessary Regarding the June 2023 Code Enforcement

Report. [CODE ENFORCEMENT JUNE 2023.pdf](#)

Code Enforcement officer, Richard LaCourse, gave his report. A copy is attached to these minutes. LaCourse reported on the 38 permits issued for June, highlighting the building permits and several miscellaneous items, which included substandard structure and sidewalk repair investigations.

Popeyes and Dominos is dragging, but there are gas line issues. The gas line is right through an old grease trap.

Ace Hardware has a mountain of dirt. Warshack and LaCourse have met with them about their concerns.

Dr. Buckle's office has pulled all of their permits and it appears they will begin really soon.

Ridlen questioned the amount of fill and whether there were any studies done regarding drainage. LaCourse stated they are talking to them about erosion mitigation. LaCourse stated they did a negative loss. Ridlen stated it does nothing for a "Harvey". Rankin asked how had they planned for drainage down Hwy 71? Warschak stated that would be Wilson Engineering. Ridlen questioned if we, as a City, are doing anything within our code or ordinances to mitigate that? LaCourse stated the civil was reviewed by Warschak. Rankin asked that Warschak review that again. Gobert stated looking at drainage is always a good thing, because the heavy rains always cause issues. LaCourse stated he would take detention ponds into consideration.

Gobert thanked him for his work.

11. Consideration and Action to Approve a Police Budget Amendment for an Office of the Governor Grant and Associated Expenditures. [POLICE GRANT BUDGET](#)

[AMENDMENT.pdf](#)

Police Chief, Skip Edman, addressed Council regarding the police shields grant that was received.

Motion to approve the budget amendment.

Moved by: Chuck Rankin

Seconded by: Michael Ridlen

Aye

Michael Ridlen, Paige Sciba, Chuck Rankin, Keith Cummings, and Ronny Daley

Carried 5-0

12. Consideration and Action, if Necessary, Regarding the June 2023 Police Report. [JUNE 2023 STATS.pdf](#) 

Edman gave his report. A copy is attached to these minutes. Edman reported on training. The new Tahoe is here. It hit the road on Thursday. The old one is being stripped now for the Fire Marshal. There were three mental health transports. He also stated he is about to come to the end of his overtime budget.

13. Discussion of Budget Workshop

Schneider gave an overview of what was being presented.

13.1 HOT Fund

HOT fund revenue is down approximately 13%.

The Chamber looks to have leftover funds from this fiscal year.

There was discussions with the Chamber members and Council.

13.2 General Fund

Schneider stated we did not get numbers from the CAD. CAD is having trouble with the numbers being certified as the \$100k homestead exemption will come into play this year. They could not certify ours because all taxing entities have to be certified at the same time.

There was discussion of the wish list and those items included and not included in the budget.

14. Items from Councilmembers²

Cummings - none

Daley - none

Sciba - none

Ridlen - none

Rankin - none

Gobert - none

15. Announcements

Assistant City Secretary, Dinah Jacobs, reminded members about the paperwork for open enrollment that will be due by the next Council meeting.

15.1 07/31/2023 Special Budget Workshop Meeting 5:30 PM

16. Adjournment

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:00 p.m.



Lori An Gobert, Mayor

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.