

The City Council of the City of Columbus, Texas met in regular session on Monday, June 8, 2020 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
Councilman	-	Keith Cummings
Councilman	-	Michael Ridlen (Arrived 5:39 p.m.)
Councilman	-	Gary Swindle
Councilwoman	-	Sandra Frnka
City Manager	-	Donald Warschak
City Secretary	-	Bana Schneider

Other City Staff Present:

Police Chief	-	Skip Edman
Code Enforcement	-	Richard LaCourse

**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. Administer the Oath of Office to Newly Elected Officials.**

Mayor Gobert administered the oaths of office to Councilmen Swindle and Rankin, and to Councilwoman Frnka.

**4. Consent Agenda:**

- a. Approval of Invoices
- b. Approval of Minutes of the May 11, 2020 Regular Meeting
- c. Approval of Minutes of the May 26, 2020 Regular Meeting
- d. Approval of the January 2020 Financial Statements

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, Swindle, and Rankin; Councilwoman Frnka  
Absent: Councilman Ridlen

The motion passed.

**5. Citizens' Presentations and Comments.'**

Chris Christensen addressed Council via telephone. He spoke about the transfer of the property, where the Veteran's Memorial is located, from the school district to the City. He stated he would speak to the school board about getting the proper documentation to the City so the transfer can take place. He also stated, in light of current events, he believed it would be very important for the Council to announce their support and appreciation of our local police.

Debbie Damon addressed Council regarding several requests. A copy of those requests is attached to these minutes. She spoke about the need for the trees of an adjacent property to be trimmed by AEP. She stated she had given the company permission many times over the years to cross her property to reach the trees, but they have never done the work.

Damon also asked when the restrooms at the Visitors Center would be reopened. She stated it would be wonderful to have them open during the Saturdays on the Square Farmers Market. City Manager, Donald Warschak, stated they are working on a plan for reopening the Visitors Center with Bill Lattimore.

Damon then asked about funding for advertising for the Farmers Market. She stated she thought there was a line item in the City's budget for the Farmers Market. City Secretary, Bana Schneider, stated there is no line item for the Farmers Market in the City's budget. She stated there is a line item in the Chamber's budget presented to Council for their request of HOT funds. Billy Kahn of the Chamber stated there is an application for HOT funds requests. Schneider stated those applications are for very specific projects requiring information regarding the number of visitors, and the number of hotel rooms booked for an event. Warschak informed Damon they should apply for a grant from the CCIDC when those applications come out later in the year.

Damon finally asked about the possibility of having speed bumps placed on Milam Street in the downtown area in order to help lower the speed of vehicles. Warschak stated speed bumps would be virtually impossible to install along Milam since that is TxDOT right-of-way.

**6. City Manager's Report Including the Water Filtration Project, the Water Well Rehab Project, and the Library Roof Project Updates.**

Warschak gave the report, a copy of which is attached to these minutes. Regarding the Filtration Project, Warschak stated he had requested a new time from WesTech for them to come and complete the startup at the Hill Water Plant. They were unable to make the previously scheduled meeting.

The contractors will be installing the new equipment at the pool well this week. Once it has been completed, the well will be fired up and disinfected, and then be put back online.

Warschak stated they are taking bids on the 18<sup>th</sup> of this month for the Library Roof Project. He indicated there has been a lot on interest from contractors.

**7. Consideration and Action to Award the Bid for the 2020 Sewer Line Improvement Project.**

**Councilman Ridlen arrived at 5:39 p.m.**

Warschak stated bids had been received last week for the Sewer Line Improvement Project. The project will entail rehabbing lines in three locations of the City. Work will be done on Preston Street, Fannin Street, and at the intersection of Chapman and Tait Streets. Eight bids were received. Warschak stated he has never worked with the low bidder, but he did make inquiries of the references the company provided. He spoke with the cities of Conroe and Sugarland, and a MUD in the City of Houston regarding their experiences with the contractor. Warschak recommended awarding the Sewer Line Improvement Project to T Construction.

Councilman Swindle made a motion to award the contract to T Construction. Councilman Ridlen seconded the motion.

The vote was as followed:

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

The motion passed.

**8. Consideration and Action to Approve the Closure of Milam Street (Spur 52) Beginning in Front of the Elementary School Playground and Ending at Walnut Street (Highway 90), and the Closure of Walnut Street (Highway 90) from Milam Street (Spur 52) to Legion Drive from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. on June 20, 2020 for the Juneteenth Parade.**

Pastor Dan Pore` spoke to Council regarding a Juneteenth celebration. He stated the intent is to have a parade and celebration on a yearly basis. Police Chief, Skip Edman, stated if the number of parade entries was less than 20, the police department would be able to handle rolling closures at

intersections on their own, but if there are more than 20, utility and public works employees will be utilized for hard closures. Pore` stated he was excited for the interest they have received.

Councilman Swindle made a motion to approve the parade street closures as requested. Councilman Rankin seconded the motion.

The vote was as followed:

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

The motion passed.

**9. Consideration and Action to Approve a Manufactured Home Permit for Block 99, LT PT 7, 8 of Fannin Street as Requested by Sherian Barnes.**

Code Enforcement Officer, Richard LaCourse, gave Council an overview of the application. He stated Ms. Barnes is a Hurricane Harvey survivor and the home is being supplied by the Rio Texas Conference. LaCourse stated he still needed the survey and an elevation certificate, but they should be received within two weeks. There was a discussion about the location of the lot and the placement of the home. LaCourse stated he did not see any problems, and he recommended approval of the permit.

Councilman Ridlen made a motion to approve the manufactured home permit. Councilman Cummings seconded the motion.

The vote was as followed:

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

The motion passed.

**10. Consideration and Action to Approve Resolution 207-20, a Resolution Authorizing the Execution of an Advanced Funding Agreement with the Texas Department of Transportation for a Transportation Alternative Set-Aside Project.**

Schneider stated this resolution is for the sidewalk project from the junior high to Midtown Park. Warschak stated the City had already been approved for the awarded project, and the resolution was a formality before any funds can be disbursed.

Councilman Cummings made a motion to approve Resolution 207-20. Councilman Ridlen seconded the motion.

The vote was as followed:

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

The motion passed.

**11. Consideration and Action to Request Funding Under the Corona Virus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act for the Coronavirus Relief Fund (CRF).**

Schneider explained the program and the amount of funding eligible to the City. She stated to date, the City has incurred approximately \$10,000 in expenditures related to COVID-19. Gobert spoke about the items required by the Municipal Court and other COVID supplies the City needs to order.

Councilman Swindle made a motion to approve the request for coronavirus funding. Councilwoman Frnka seconded the motion.

The vote was as followed:

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

The motion passed.

**12. Consideration and Action to Approve the Certification for Local Governments for House Bill 3834 Cyber Security Awareness Training.**

Schneider certified all City employees had received the required cyber security training. She stated Council would be certifying the City is in compliance with the employee security awareness training and audit requirements.

Councilman Rankin made a motion to approve the certification. Councilman Cummings seconded the motion.

The vote was as followed:

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

The motion passed.

**13. Consideration and Action, if Necessary, Regarding the May Golf Association Report.**

Schneider highlighted the financial statements which are attached to these minutes. She stated players seemed ready for the course to open back up. The number of rounds played during the month was up.

No action was taken.

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

Councilman Cummings – None

Councilman Ridlen – Wanted to make sure it was noted he arrived at 5:39 p.m.

Councilman Swindle – None

Councilwoman Frnka – None

Councilman Rankin – None

Mayor Gobert – None

**15. Announcements.**

There were no announcements.

**16. Adjournment.**

The Mayor adjourned the meeting at 6:07 p.m.



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Mayor, Lori An Gobert

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 council members 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.