

The City Council of the City of Columbus, Texas, met in regular session on Thursday, March 27, 2014 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
Mayor Pro Tem	-	Curtiss Schonenberg
Councilman	-	Steve Woodall
Councilman	-	John Axel (absent)
Councilman	-	Eddie Hernandez
Councilman	-	Chuck Rankin
City Manager	-	Donald Warschak
City Secretary	-	Linda Lakich

Other City Staff present included:

Police Chief	-	Bill Lattimore
Code Enforcement Off.	-	Ford Stein

1. Call to Order.

Mayor Dwain Dungen called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. He explained that Councilman Axel was absent due to illness.

2. Pledge of Allegiance and Invocation.

Mayor Dungen led the Pledge of Allegiance and Invocation.

3. Consent Agenda.

- a. Approval of Invoices.
- b. Approval of Minutes of March 13, 2014 Regular Meeting.

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

The vote was as follows:

Ayes: Councilman Woodall, Schonenberg, Hernandez, and Rankin
Absent: Councilman Axel

The motion passed.

4. Citizens' Presentations and Comments.¹

Those signed up for citizens comments wished to speak during agenda items.

5. City Manager's Report Including Trash Off, Water Plant Project, Gas Line Project, and Mayes Property Project.

City Manager, Donald Warschak, presented his City Manager's Report, a copy of which is attached to these minutes.

6. Discussion Concerning Groundwater Issues.

Jim Brasher, with the Colorado County Groundwater Conservation District, made a presentation to Council regarding water usage in the County and the effects that usage has on water levels in the City of Columbus wells. He explained that since LCRA is not releasing water for rice farmers, the number of large water wells being drilled has increased. He said that while we are not yet at a critical stage, that the cities should monitor water levels and have a game plan in place for drought conditions.

7. Consideration and Action on the Property Located at 1030 Dewees, Block 103, Lot S-10, PT S-9 that has been Determined to be in Violation of Article 3.07 Unsafe or Substandard Building, Structures and Premises.

Ford Stein reported that the property currently belongs to siblings. He said that the sibling doing the work on the property would like an extra 30 days so that he can get the deed from the others before he takes on the financial burden of tearing down the houses on the property. Ford said that the 30-day extension would mean that the property would be completed at the end of May.

Councilman Rankin made a motion to grant a 30-day extension to the owners of the property in question. Councilman Schonenberg seconded the motion.

The vote was as follows:

Ayes: Councilman Woodall, Schonenberg, Hernandez, and Rankin
Absent: Councilman Axel

The motion passed.

8. Consideration and Action to Approve the Closure of Travis Street from Walnut to Spring Streets on May 17, 2014 from 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. for the Rededication of the Colorado County Courthouse.

Councilman Schonenberg made a motion to approve the closure of Travis Street as presented. Councilman Hernandez seconded the motion.

The vote was as follows:

Ayes: Councilman Woodall, Schonenberg, Hernandez, and Rankin
Absent: Councilman Axel

The motion passed.

9. Consideration and Action, if Necessary, Regarding Panhandling Activity.

Ben Rosenbaum spoke on behalf of his son and daughter-in-law, who were unable to attend the meeting. He said that they are opening a business next to Cantus at Milam and Hwy 71 South and that panhandling has become a problem in the area. He also read a letter from Mark Cantu stating that begging has become a problem in the area and that it looks bad for the City and impacts his business. Chief Lattimore explained that the parking lot where the panhandlers are is privately owned property with public access. He said that if the landlords say that they do not want the panhandling activity on their property, the police can help. It was decided that the City should consult with the City Attorney to explore the options available to curtail panhandling activities.

No action was taken.

10. Consideration and Action to Authorize the Advertising for Construction Bids for the Downtown Sidewalk Project.

Donald Warschak told Council that the engineering drawings will soon be complete and that the bids will be due on April 22nd. He said that they will have a base bid and then added alternates. The base bid is expected to be between \$175,000 and \$180,000. Councilman Rankin requested that business owners be provided with information on the Texas Historical Commission approval of the project.

Councilman Schonenberg made a motion to authorize the advertising for construction bids for the Downtown Sidewalk Project. Councilman Woodall seconded the motion.

The vote was as follows:

Ayes: Councilman Woodall, Schonenberg, Hernandez, and Rankin
Absent: Councilman Axel

The motion passed.

11. Consideration and Action to Approve Resolution 135-14 Authorizing the Approval of a Law Enforcement Mutual Assistance Agreement with Colorado County.

Chief Lattimore stated that this was an item discussed previously and that a formal resolution was needed.

Councilman Rankin made a motion to approve Resolution 135-14 authorizing a law enforcement mutual assistance agreement with Colorado County. Councilman Schonenberg seconded the motion.

The vote was as follows:

Ayes: Councilman Woodall, Schonenberg, Hernandez, and Rankin
Absent: Councilman Axel

The motion passed.

12. Consideration and Action, if Necessary, to Adjust Municipal Telecommunications Right-of-Way Access Line Rates.

Donald Warschak explained that the Public Utility Commission is giving the City the opportunity to increase telecommunications right-of-way access line rates. Council was of the consensus that since the increases would be passed on to the consumer that they would not want to take advantage of the opportunity to increase the rates.

No action was taken.

13. Consideration and Action to Approve a Budget Amendment for Library Grant Revenues and Supplies Expenditures.

It was explained that the Library had received an additional \$6,543 from the Dumraese Foundation which they would like to spend on shelving.

Councilman Schonenberg made a motion to approve the budget amendment for the library grant revenues and expenditures as presented. Councilman Rankin seconded the motion.

The vote was as follows:

Ayes: Councilman Woodall, Schonenberg, Hernandez, and Rankin
Absent: Councilman Axel

The motion passed.

14. Consideration and Action, if Necessary, Regarding an Update on Columbus Community and Industrial Development Corporation Activities.

Councilman Schonenberg provided Council with an update on CCIDC activities and gave them copies of minutes from recent meetings. Councilman Rankin suggested that they look at opportunities for commercial development and update their strategic plan.

No action was taken.

15. Consideration and Action, if Necessary, on the February 2014 Police Report.

Police Chief, William Lattimore, presented his February 2014 Police Report, a copy of which is attached to these minutes.

No action was necessary.

16. Items from Councilmembers.²

Councilman Woodall – no comment.

Councilman Schonenberg – no comment.

Councilman Hernandez – no comment.

Councilman Rankin – no comment.

17. Announcements.

The City Manager reminded everyone that the Trash Off would be taking place on Saturday, April 5th.

18. Adjournment.

The Mayor adjourned the meeting at 7:50 p.m.



Mayor, Dwain K. Dungen

ATTEST:



Linda Lakich, 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.

Citizens who wish to comment on a posted agenda item may do so when that item is addressed by the Mayor. Citizen's comments are limited to five minutes.

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.