

The City Council of the City of Columbus, Texas met in regular session on Monday, December 14, 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
Councilman	-	Gary Swindle
Councilwoman	-	Sandra Frnka
City Manager	-	Donald Warschak
City Secretary	-	Bana Schneider (Absent)
Asst City Secretary	-	Dinah Jacobs

Other City Staff present included:

Police Chief	-	Skip Edman
Code Enforcement	-	Richard LaCourse (arrived 5:49 p.m.)

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 of Allegiance and Invocation.

3. Consent Agenda:

- a. Approval of Invoices
- b. Approval of Minutes of the November 23, 2020 Regular Meeting

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

The vote was as follows:

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

The motion passed.

5. Citizens' Presentations and Comments. ¹

Laura Weido spoke about the Shop with a Cop program with the Boys & Girls Club children, along with a request for a donation. The event will take place on Wednesday, December 16th at 4:00 p.m. There are 36 children in need. The goal was for \$200/child as in previous years. That goal has not yet been met, so at this time it looks like it will be \$150/child.

Gobert read a proclamation and presented a check to Weido. A photo was taken of the presentation from Gobert to Weido. Weido thanked the City and Council for the donation.

6. City Manager's Report Including Sales Tax, the Water Filtration Project, the Water Well Rehab Project, and the GLO Storm Sewer Project Updates.

City Manager, Donald Warschak, gave his report. A copy of the report is attached to these minutes. He stated the sales tax the City received for the month of December, was \$125,824 compared to \$145,281 for the same time period last year. This was a decrease of almost \$20,000. The Cities of Weimar and Eagle Lake each saw increases, while the County saw a decrease.

Regarding the Water Filtration Project, Warschak stated the two vessels are onsite in Iowa. They are currently working on the first filter, welding stiffeners. WesTech plans to hydro test on Wednesday. If everything looks good, they will sandblast Friday, and prepare to paint next week. Warschak stated he had received a schedule this morning, with a target date of January 4th for them to be wrapped up and have the first vessel shipped back. Strand Engineers will go by and do some field visits. Those visits are being coordinated with WesTech. Pictures were sent to Warschak of the reinforcements being made. Warschak stated when the vessel left, there were 4 stiffeners, and now there are nine, which is significantly more reinforcement. Councilman Rankin asked if any simulation had been done, to which Warschak responded, no.

Regarding the Water Well Rehab Project, Warschak stated Weisinger is installing the motor on the well. Once that is complete, the well will be pumped and samples taken. If the samples return satisfactory, the well will be placed back into service.

Regarding the GLO Storm Sewer Improvement Project, Warschak stated this project is nearing completion. A walk through and punch list are scheduled for Friday to get the project wrapped up.

Regarding the Government Finance Officers Association Award, Warschak stated the City has once again received this award in recognition for their excellence in financial reporting. Warschak recognized City Secretary, Bana Schneider, and Assistant City Secretary, Dinah Jacobs, for their work.

Regarding Sewer Averaging, Warschak stated, sewer averaging will begin tomorrow, and will run through February 15th. Water consumption during this time period will be used to determine residential sewer rates for the upcoming year.

Regarding COVID and staff updates, Warschak reported a library employee was experiencing COVID symptoms and is awaiting results. The library is closed again to the public.

7. Consideration and Action to Approve Resolution 224-20, a Resolution to Select an Administrative Service Provider to Complete Application and Project Implementation for the 2021-2022 TDA CDBG Community Development Fund Program.

Gobert stated a project has yet to be determined, but if a Resolution is passed, the City will get an additional 2 points on the program. She, along with Warschak and Jacobs scored the bidders. Langford and Associates had the highest score. This is an opportunity for free money.

Councilman Cummings made a motion to approve Langford & Associates as the Administrative Service Provider. Councilman Swindle seconded the motion.

The vote was as follows:

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

The motion passed.

8. Public Hearing Regarding a Proposed Zoning Change, Specifically, Lot PT S-4, 5, 7 in Block 34, Consisting of .2155 Acres, Fronting on Houston Street, from District R, Single-Family or Two-Family Residential to District R-2, Lodging and Boarding and Bed and Breakfast District.

The Public Hearing opened at 5:50 p.m.

Gobert stated the P & Z Commission voted unanimously to recommend Council to approve the requested zoning change, a first of this designation within the City. Councilman Swindle spoke in support of the zoning change for this property.

Let the record reflect that Code Enforcement, Richard LaCourse arrived at 5:49 p.m.

LaCourse was questioned about this designation and if these properties were subject to any stricter codes. He replied there are no specific requirements for this designation. He also stated there will probably be more properties requesting this designation.

The Public Hearing was closed at 5:53 p.m.

9. **Consideration and Action to Approve Ordinance 237-20, an Ordinance Designating Lot PT S-4, 5, 7 in Block 34, Consisting of .2155 Acres, Fronting Houston Street, from District R, Single-Family or Two-Family Residential to District R-2, Lodging and Boarding and Bed and Breakfast District.**

Councilman Rankin made a motion to approve Ordinance 237-20. Councilman Ridlen seconded the motion.

The vote was as follows:

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

The motion passed.

Let the record reflect that LaCourse departed the meeting at 5:54 p.m.

10. **Public Hearing Regarding Proposed Changes to Chapter 14 Zoning, Article 14.02 Zoning Ordinance, Division 4 Supplementary District Regulations, Part II Off Street Parking and Loading Requirements, with the addition of Section 14.02.847 Parking Requirements Based on Location, of the Municipal Code of the City of Columbus, Texas.**

The Public Hearing was opened at 5:54 p.m.

Warschak present the streets that would be affected by this Ordinance. There was discussion on the parking on public roadways in front of respective businesses. Businesses cannot designate specific parking spots in front of their business on those public roadways.

The Public Hearing was closed at 5:57 p.m.

11. **Consideration and Action to Approve Ordinance 238-20, an Ordinance Amending Chapter 14 Zoning, Article 14.02 Zoning Ordinance, Division 4 Supplementary District Regulations, Part II Off-Street Parking and Loading Requirements, with the addition of Section 14.02.847 parking Requirements Based On Location, of the Municipal Code of the City of Columbus, Texas.**

Councilman Rankin made a motion to approve Ordinance 238-20. Councilman Swindle seconded the motion.

The vote was as follows:

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

The motion passed.

12. **Consideration and Action on the Mayor's Appointment of City Attorney.**

Gobert stated everyone she has spoken to has high regards for Cary Bovey. He has since added a partner, Luke Cochran and the business name has changed to Bovey & Cochran, PLLC. The City Attorney would be the firm of Bovey & Cochran, PLLC. Bovey has been the CCIDC contact and Cochran has primarily been the City contact. This would be approving the firm with the new name.

Councilman Swindle made a motion to approve the Mayor's Appointment of Bovey & Cochran, PLLC as the City Attorney. Councilman Rankin seconded the motion.

The vote was as follows:

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

The motion passed.

13. Consideration and Acting on the Mayor's Appointment of Associate Prosecutor.

Gobert stated Luke Cochran has only one other municipality and Cary Bovey has four. They have been splitting the work, but it makes more sense to work with one person consistently. Warschak stated it needs to be one for the person of record. Both can still do the work as needed.

Councilman Swindle made a motion to approve the Luke Cochran of Bovey & Cochran, PLLC as the Associate Prosecutor. Councilman Ridlen seconded the motion.

The vote was as follows:

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

The motion passed.

14. Second Reading of Resolution 223-20, a Resolution Approving Expenditures of 4B Revenues over \$10,000 of City Created Economic Development Corporations, with less than 20,000 Residents for Funding of an Economic Development Grant to the Columbus Volunteer Fire Department to Help with the Acquisition of a Newer Upgraded Ladder Truck for the Columbus Community.

Gobert read Resolution 223-20 approving an expenditure over \$10,000 for the Columbus Volunteer Fire Department.

15. Consideration and Action to Approve Resolution 223-20, a Resolution Approving Expenditures of 4B Revenues over \$10,000 of City Created Economic Development Corporations, with less than 20,000 Residents for Funding of an Economic Development Grant to the Columbus Volunteer Fire Department to Help with the Acquisition of a Newer Upgraded Ladder Truck for the Columbus Community.

Councilman Cummings made a motion to approve the Resolution 223-20. Councilman Rankin seconded the motion.

The vote was as follows:

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

The motion passed.

16. Consideration and Action, if Necessary, Regarding the November 2020 Golf Association Report.

A copy of the golf report is attached to these minutes. Gobert stated the report looks pretty good. Councilman Swindle questioned the membership number of 650, stating it seemed really high.

No action was required.

17. Items from Council members.²

Councilman Cummings – none

Councilman Ridlen – none

Councilman Swindle – questioned the large rolls/spools of AT&T wire hanging from the poles because they are very unsightly; Warschak asked if it was AT&T or Spectrum, but he would look into this

Councilwoman Frnka – none

Councilman Rankin – none

Mayor Gobert – Chief Edman and the police department were thanked for their hard work and diligence regarding the parade cancellation; Parade Criteria will need to be a future agenda item

18. Announcements.

Gobert reminded council members of the meeting on Wednesday, December 23rd at noon; she also pointed out members should have received a gift card from the City in lieu of the Christmas party, and it was very gracious of the City to include Council along with the employees; the end of year recognitions usually done at the Christmas party will be done at the meeting on the 23rd


19. Adjournment.

The Mayor adjourned the meeting at 6:15 p.m.



Mayor Lori An Gobert

ATTEST:



Dinah Jacobs, Assistant 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 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.