

The City Council of the City of Columbus, Texas met in regular session on Monday, May 24, 2021, 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	-	Ronny Daley
Councilman	-	Gary Swindle
Councilwoman	-	Sandra Frnka
City Manager	-	Donald Warschak
City Secretary	-	Bana Schneider
Asst City Secretary	-	Dinah Jacobs

Other City Staff present included:

Police Chief	-	Skip Edman
Code Enforcement	-	Richard LaCourse

**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 May 10, 2021 Regular Meeting

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

The vote was as follows:

Ayes: Councilmen Swindle, Rankin, Cummings, Daley, and Councilwoman Frnka

The motion passed.

**4. Consideration and Action to Approve the 2020 Comprehensive Annual Financial Report.**

Kent Willis of Patillo, Brown, and Hill, LLC, joined the meeting via Zoom. He gave an overview of the annual financial report for Council members and asked for any questions. Councilman Rankin asked about the pension liability area, with discussion following.

Councilman Rankin made a motion to approve the 2020 Comprehensive Annual Financial Report. Councilman Cummings seconded the motion.

The vote was as follows:

Ayes: Councilmen Swindle, Rankin, Cummings, Daley, and Councilwoman Frnka

The motion passed.

**5. Citizens' Presentations and Comments. <sup>1</sup>**

Debbie Damon addressed Council regarding a nursing home that closed in Eagle Lake. Gobert stated there were some inaccuracies in her comments.

Billy Kahn, Executive Director of the Columbus Chamber, and Amber Becerra, Magnolia Days Festival Organizer, gave a recap of the festival and thanked Council, the City employees and Police Chief Edman and his staff. Gobert stated the community comments have been overwhelmingly positive.

**6. City Manager's Report Including Sales Tax, the Water Filtration Project Update, the Water Well Rehab Project Update, the Transportation Alternatives Sidewalk Application Update, and the McCormick Wastewater Treatment Plant Outfall Project Update.**

City Manager, Donald Warschak gave his report. A copy of the report is attached to these minutes. Regarding sales tax, Warschak stated the May payment was \$168,319, compared to \$178,224 last year over the same time period. The County saw a decrease as well, while the Cities of Weimar and Eagle Lake both saw increases.

Regarding the Water Filtration Project update, the Tait Plant filter is back in operation. The Hill Plant filter is expected to be delivered on Thursday, with setting and piping scheduled for Friday or the Tuesday after Memorial Day. The media will then be installed.

Regarding the Water Well Rehabilitation Project, the Tait Water Plant well is back in service.

Regarding the Transportation Alternative Sidewalk Application, Warschak stated the application is due in June. We are working to get the application completed. The MLK project is at the 100% design phase.

Regarding the McCormick Wastewater Treatment Plant Outfall Project, Warschak stated the Corps of Engineers is finalizing plans for the project and they anticipate advertising for bids in June. July 6<sup>th</sup> is the anticipated bid date with a project award date of August 10<sup>th</sup>.

Rankin referenced the sales tax graph and stated we are on a rolling average of being below budget and we need to be looking at options. There was discussion regarding the appraised value notices that were mailed out and the values, along with discussion on the tax rate. City Secretary, Bana Schneider stated the budget will need to be approved by August 25<sup>th</sup> of this year.

**7. Consideration and Action to Approve Resolution 230-21, a Resolution Supporting Participation in the TxDOT Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside Program.**

Warschak gave an overview of the Montezuma Sidewalk Project. Gobert stated it would solve a lot of safety issues.

Councilwoman Frnka made a motion to approve Resolution 230-21. Councilman Cummings seconded the motion.

The vote was as follows:

Ayes: Councilmen Swindle, Rankin, Cummings, Daley and Councilwoman Frnka

The motion passed.

**8. Consideration and Action to Approve Resolution 231-21, a Resolution Denying AEP's Request to Increase Distribution Recovery Costs Within the City.**

Councilwoman Frnka made a motion to approve Resolution 231-21. Councilman Swindle seconded the motion.

The vote was as follows:

Ayes: Councilmen Swindle, Rankin, Cummings, Daley, and Councilwoman Frnka

The motion passed.

**9. Consideration and Action to Approve the Appointment of Leonard Peters as Municipal Court Judge.**

Councilman Swindle made a motion to approve Leonard Peters as Municipal Court Judge. Councilwoman Frnka seconded the motion.

The vote was as follows:

Ayes: Councilmen Swindle, Rankin, Cummings, Daley, and Councilwoman Frnka

The motion passed.

**10. Consideration and Action to Approve the Appointment of Francis Truchard as Associate Municipal Court Judge.**

Councilman Cummings made a motion to approve Francis Truchard as Associate Municipal Court Judge. Councilman Rankin seconded the motion.

The vote was as follows:

Ayes: Councilmen Swindle, Rankin, Cummings, Daley, and Councilwoman Frnka

The motion passed.

**11. Consideration and Action To Approve the Appointment of Luke Cochran as City Prosecutor.**

Councilman Rankin made a motion to approve Luke Cochran as the City Prosecutor. Councilman Cummings seconded the motion.

The vote was as follows:

Ayes: Councilmen Swindle, Rankin, Cummings, Daley, and Councilwoman Frnka

The motion passed.

**12. Consideration and Action to Approve the Appointment of Bovey & Cochran, PLLC as City Attorney.**

Councilman Cummings made a motion to approve Bovey & Cochran, PLLC as City Attorney. Councilwoman Frnka seconded the motion.

The vote was as follows:

Ayes: Councilmen Swindle, Rankin, Cummings, Daley, and Councilwoman Frnka

The motion passed.

**13. Consideration and Action to Approve the Appointment of John D. Mercer & Associates as City Engineer.**

Councilman Rankin made a motion to approve John D. Mercer & Associates as City Engineer. Councilman Cummings seconded the motion.

The vote was as follows:

Ayes: Councilmen Swindle, Rankin, Cummings, Daley, and Councilwoman Frnka

The motion passed.

**14. Consideration and Action to Approve the Appointment of Brent A. Gorman, Jr., as City Fire Marshal.**

Councilwoman Frnka made a motion to approve Brent A. Gorman, Jr. as City Fire Marshal. Councilman Daley seconded the motion.

The vote was as follows:

Ayes: Councilmen Swindle, Rankin, Cummings, Daley, and Councilwoman Frnka

The motion passed.

**15. Consideration and Action to Approve the Appointment of Bart Klaus as City Public Health Officer.**

Councilman Rankin made a motion to approve Bart Klaus as City Public Health Officer. Councilwoman Frnka seconded the motion.

The vote was as follows:

Ayes: Councilmen Swindle, Rankin, Cummings, Daley, and Councilwoman Frnka

The motion passed.

**16. Consideration and Action to Approve the Reappointment of Five Members to the Board of Adjustments for Terms Ending May 2023.**

The five member board consists of Ann Butler, Patti Hill, Modina Mangini, Lori Meyer, and Shane Theriot.

Councilman Rankin made a motion to approve the reappointment of the five members to the Board of Adjustments. Councilman Daley seconded the motion.

The vote was as follows:

Ayes: Councilmen Swindle, Rankin, Cummings, Daley, and Councilwoman Frnka

The motion passed.

**17. Consideration and Action to Approve the Reappointment of Three Members to the CCIDC for Terms Ending May 2023.**

The three members are Michael Ridlen, Andy Nunmaker, and Dwain Dungen.

Councilman Rankin made a motion to approve the reappointment of the three members to the CCIDC. Councilwoman Frnka seconded the motion.

The vote was as follows:

Ayes: Councilmen Swindle, Rankin, Cummings, Daley, and Councilwoman Frnka

The motion passed.

**18. Consideration and Action to Approve the Appointment of Nancy Stiles to the Nesbitt Memorial Library Advisory Board for an Unexpired Term Ending October 1, 2021.**

Councilman Swindle made a motion to approve the appointment of Nancy Stiles to the Nesbitt Memorial Library Advisory Board for an unexpired term. Councilman Rankin seconded the motion.

The vote was as follows:

Ayes: Councilmen Swindle, Rankin, Cummings, Daley, and Councilwoman Frnka

The motion passed.

**19. Consideration and Action to Appoint Members to the Employee Grievance Committee.**

Members being appointed are Chuck Rankin and Gary Swindle.

Councilwoman Frnka made a motion to approve the appointment of Rankin and Swindle to the Employee Grievance Committee. Councilman Daley seconded the motion.

The vote was as follows:

Ayes: Councilmen Swindle, Rankin, Cummings, Daley, and Councilwoman Frnka

The motion passed.

**20. Consideration and Action to Appoint Members to the Citizen Grievance Committee.**

Members being appointed are Barbara Peterman, Councilman Keith Cummings, and Mayor Lori An Gobert.

Councilwoman Frnka made a motion to approve the appointment of Peterman, Cummings, and Gobert to the Citizen Grievance Committee. Councilman Rankin seconded the motion.

The vote was as follows:

Ayes: Councilmen Swindle, Rankin, Cummings, Daley, and Councilwoman Frnka

The motion passed.

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

Schneider stated all elected officials and City employees have completed and passed the Cyber Security Awareness training.

Councilman Rankin made a motion to approve the certification of the Cyber Security Training. Councilwoman Frnka seconded the motion.

The vote was as follows:

Ayes: Councilmen Swindle, Rankin, Cummings, Daley, and Councilwoman Frnka

The motion passed.

**22. Consideration and Action, if Necessary, Regarding the April 2021 Fire Marshal Report.**

Code Enforcement, Richard LaCourse, gave the report in Brent A. Gorman's absence. A copy of the report is attached to these minutes. LaCourse reported Gorman had texted and appreciated the vote of confidence in him as Fire Marshal. The hospital required a couple of fire watch days. Review of the hospital plans and Lil' Einstein Learning Center continue. There were only 4 total fire calls for service. LaCourse also reported Gorman was stopping by to check the status of the tower and its

progress. Gobert questioned when they would be taking possession, to which LaCourse responded, hopefully by the end of the month.

No action was necessary.

**23. Consideration and Action, if Necessary, Regarding the April 2021 Code Enforcement Report.**

Code Enforcement, Richard LaCourse, gave his report. A copy is attached to these minutes. LaCourse stated there were 33 permits issued. Those being for a swimming pool, portable buildings, GLO construction, additions and remodels, and the largest for the hospital and wellness center. LaCourse stated he had his first request for a tiny house. He is currently looking at the Code, which it appears to be like an RV, and therefore a violation of Code. Research continues on that subject.

No action was necessary.

**24. Consideration and Action, if Necessary, Regarding the April 2021 Police Report.**

Police Chief, Skip Edman, gave his report. A copy is attached to these minutes. Edman gave an overview of Officer training, Officer Neumann received his Intermediate Peace Officer License, meetings and memorials attended, as well as 2 mental health transports that month. Councilwoman Frnka questioned where the mental health cases were transported to. Edman stated it depends on where the doctors send them.

**25. Items from Council members.<sup>2</sup>**

Councilman Cummings – none

Councilman Daley – none

Councilman Swindle – none

Councilwoman Frnka – none

Councilman Rankin – none

Mayor Gobert – the Magnolia Festival was fantastic and applauded the City staff that helped and attended the festival

**15. Announcements.**

Schneider stated we will need to start preparing for the budget.

**16. Adjournment.**

The Mayor adjourned the meeting at 6:23 p.m.



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.