

**CITY OF SANTA FE
REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING
JUNE 23, 2022 7:00 P.M.
COUNCIL CHAMBERS
12002 HWY. 6, SANTA FE, TEXAS**

MINUTES

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Mayor Pittman.

Roll Call: Present: Mayor Bill Pittman
Councilmember Brandon Noto
Councilmember Jason O'Brien
Councilmember John Dickerson
Councilmember Dana Marks

Absent: Councilmember Melanie Collins, excused

The invocation was given by Christine Villareal, a resident of Santa Fe. The Pledge of Allegiance to the U.S. Flag and to the Texas Flag was led by Police Captain Robert Shores.

Swearing-in of new police officers: Christopher Doucette, Shone Riehl, and Rodney Welsh
Police Chief Walter Braun introduced the new officers and administered their Oaths of Office. Council welcomed the officers to the City.

Finance Report – city financial activities (including quarterly cash flow, monthly financial statements, check registers, and sales tax reports).

Acting City Manager/Finance Director Rudy Zepeda presented the City's financial activities to Council and addressed questions regarding franchise fees.

Citizens' Comments:

Christine Villareal, who lives on Avenue F, expressed her concerns about the wellhead at Lago Mar running continuously for the past 18-24 months. She expressed her concern that that Texas City development was using a prodigious amount of groundwater and said that the usage needs to be reduced before it causes a serious issue.

Business:

1. Consideration and possible action: Approval of an updated City of Santa Fe Hazard Mitigation Plan

Police Chief Walter Braun presented the updated City of Santa Fe Hazard Mitigation Plan to Council. He explained that Galveston County's plan used to be one big plan that also covered the City of Santa Fe, but due to changing requirements, the City now needed its own plan. Galveston County drafted the plan for us, and it has been reviewed and approved by attorneys. City Secretary Alun Thomas addressed questions from Council regarding other plans that the City has not yet drafted or approved, such as a Parks Plan, and he recommended that the City begin development of such other plans.

Motion by Councilmember O'Brien, seconded by Councilmember Noto, to approve the updated City of Santa Fe Hazard Mitigation Plan, as presented. The motion passed the roll call vote unanimously.

2. Consideration and possible action: Approval of operating policies and procedures for Santa Fe Police Department

Police Chief Walter Braun said that former Police Chief Meadows and the Police Department's command staff began the process of reviewing and updating the department's operating policies and procedures, which are now based upon best practices developed by the International Association of Chiefs of Police. The proposed document has been reviewed and approved by both the City's Civil Service Director and the Chief of Police. The whole document has been reviewed and updated, Chief Braun said, including the organizational chart.

Motion by Councilmember O'Brien, seconded by Councilmember Dickerson, to approve the updated operating policies and procedures for Santa Fe Police Department, as presented. The motion passed the roll call vote unanimously.

3. Consideration and possible action: Resolution to submit a completed grant application to Texas Department of Emergency Management (TDEM) for the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) DR 4485 grant funds, appointing an authorized official and committing the City to providing the 10% match required by the grant

Acting City Manager/Finance Director Rudy Zepeda presented the item and said that approval of the Resolution is required for the grant. The City will find out in July if its grant application has been approved, and if so, it will need to provide 10% of the total project funding in order to comply with the terms of the grant.

Motion by Councilmember Noto, seconded by Councilmember Marks, to adopt the Resolution to submit a completed grant application to Texas Department of Emergency Management (TDEM) for the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) DR 4485 grant funds, appointing an authorized official and committing the City to providing the 10% match required by the grant, as presented. The motion passed the roll call vote unanimously.

4. Consideration and possible action: Resolution supporting the completion of Grand Parkway Section B

Mayor Pittman informed Council that BayTran is spearheading an effort to encourage Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) to complete the Grand Parkway. Council briefly discussed the proposed path of State Highway 99 and its potential impact on Santa Fe.

Motion by Councilmember Noto, seconded by Councilmember O'Brien, to adopt the Resolution supporting the completion of Grand Parkway Section B, as presented. The motion passed the roll call vote unanimously.

5. Consideration and possible action: Appointment of one member to the Planning and Zoning Commission to serve the remainder of an unexpired term that will expire May 2024

City Secretary Alun Thomas explained that an appointment needed to be made to the Planning and Zoning Commission due to a recent resignation. Mayor Pittman recommended that Council appoint Andrew Mills to the vacant position.

Motion by Councilmember O'Brien, seconded by Councilmember Noto, to approve the Mayor's recommendation and appoint Andrew Mills to serve the remainder of the unexpired term on the Planning and Zoning Commission that will expire May 2024. The motion passed the roll call vote unanimously.

6. Consideration and possible action: Appointment, employment, evaluation, reassignment, duties, discipline, or dismissal of a public officer or employee – Acting City Manager

Mayor Pittman said that the City plans to have a townhall meeting on July 14 from 6:00 to 7:00 p.m. to discuss the City Manager position and the Comprehensive Plan. He thanked Finance Director Rudy Zepeda for working tirelessly as the Acting City Manager, and said that Mr. Zepeda now needs to focus on completing next year's budget. Since former City Manager Joe Dickson left the City, the City has received approximately 75 applicants for the City Manager position, but we have still yet to find the perfect fit. He said that Council knows that it has a good staff member for the role in City Secretary Alun Thomas. He recommended that Mr. Thomas be appointed as Acting City Manager for six months to gain experience in the position and allow for the City, City staff, and City Council to see how he performs. Mayor Pittman gave an overview of Mr. Thomas' credentials for the position, and Councilmember Noto said that Mr. Thomas has always carried himself with fidelity and he is excited for the next six months.

Motion by Councilmember Noto, seconded by Councilmember O'Brien, to accept Rudy Zepeda's resignation as Acting City Manager and to appoint Alun Thomas as Acting City Manager of the City of Santa Fe, Texas. The motion passed the roll call vote unanimously.


Mayor Pittman thanked Mr. Zepeda for having previously accepted, and Mr. Thomas for accepting, the additional responsibilities of Acting City Manager for no additional pay. He said that Mr. Thomas' performance would be reviewed after six months.

Announcements: On Saturday, the City will host its Summer Kickoff at Joe Tambrella Park. There will be free ice cream for the first 150 children that attend. Bayou Animal Services will hold its annual meeting next week in Dickinson. People wishing to be police officers for the City need to submit their civil service examination applications by noon on June 5 to be ready for the examination on July 15 at 9:00 a.m. at City Hall.

Summary of action from this agenda, request for future agenda items, and scheduling future meetings: The next regular Council meeting is currently scheduled for July 14, 2022.

Motion by Councilmember O'Brien, seconded by Councilmember Noto, to adjourn. The motion passed and the meeting adjourned at 7:43 p.m.

ATTEST:



Alun W. Thomas, City Secretary



BILL PITTMAN, MAYOR