

**CITY OF SANTA FE
REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING
JANUARY 12, 2023 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 Bill Pittman.

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

Absent: None

The Invocation was given by Pastor Lucas Campbell and the pledge to the U.S. Flag and to the Texas Flag was led by Mayor Bill Pittman.

Mayor's and City Manager's Report:

Mayor Pittman did not have a report for the meeting. Acting City Manager Alun Thomas gave an update on the month's activities, which included employee evaluations, progress on the annual financial audit, efforts to have Texas Department of Transportation assist with repairing 2nd Street, substandard structures, records management, repouring of pavement sections in Mulberry Farms Public Improvement District, the increasing frequency of predevelopment meeting requests, City policy reviews, and the lack of damage to City infrastructure from the cold weather at the end of December. Jacquelyn Poteet from Santa Fe Resiliency Center also gave an update.

1. Presentation and approval of minutes: 12/8/2022 joint meeting, 12/8/2022 regular meeting, and 1/5/2023 special meeting minutes were approved as presented.

2. Presentation of departmental reports by staff, specifically a recap of the activities performed during the previous month and a report of upcoming activities, events, and projects on the horizon

- 1) Finance – city finance activities (including cash flow, financial reports), and SFEDC project updates
- 2) Community Services – building permits issued, fees collected, inspections performed, development update
- 3) Parks and Community Center – park maintenance activities, center rental statistics
- 4) Municipal Court – cases filed, revenue collected, warrants issued and cleared
- 5) Police – calls for service statistics, traffic crash analysis, use of force incidents
- 6) Fire Marshal – burn permit issuance, inspection activities
- 7) Library – patron and program attendance, circulation material statistics, fines and donations collected, library accreditation
- 8) Street – drainage projects, street maintenance and improvement activities, equipment maintenance

Citizens' Comments:

Julian Zaro of 5602 Avenue M thanked Police Chief Braun and the Santa Fe Police Department for their efforts in proactively policing traffic violations in the vicinity of his home, noting that instances of violations have been sharply reduced since Chief Braun assumed his position with the City.

Business:

A. New Business:

1. Public Hearing: Proposed readoption of a juvenile curfew ordinance

Police Chief Walter Braun presented the item to Council, noting that the City's previous juvenile curfew ordinance had expired. Chief Braun explained the provisions of the proposed readoption of the ordinance, remarking that the ordinance's language would be unchanged from the previous one. Juvenile curfews, he said, are a useful tool for police departments, and he recommended that the City readopt the ordinance.

Mayor Bill Pittman opened the public hearing at 7:12 p.m.

There were no comments from the public.

Mayor Bill Pittman closed the public hearing at 7:13 p.m.

2. Consideration and possible action: First reading of an ordinance reestablishing a curfew for minors and establishing curfew times for minors in the City of Santa Fe, Texas

Acting City Manager Alun Thomas informed Council that this item is the action item for the previous public hearing, and that Section 3.16 of the City Charter requires that the ordinance, should Council wish to pass and adopt it, be read at least twice due to its impositions of fines for violators.

Motion by Councilmember O'Brien, seconded by Councilmember Collins, to approve the first reading of the Ordinance as presented. The motion passed the roll call vote unanimously.

3. Consideration and possible action: Adoption of a resolution designating representatives to the Houston-Galveston Area Council 2023 General Assembly

Acting City Manager Alun Thomas told Council that the City may appoint a representative and an alternate representative to the Houston-Galveston Area Council 2023 General Assembly. Per Section 2 of Article III of the Houston-Galveston Area Council's bylaws, both the representative and the alternate representative must be elected officials of the City. During the following brief discussion, Mr. Thomas explained the meeting schedule and location so that Council could make appointments knowing the time commitment that each appointment would entail.

Motion by Councilmember O'Brien, seconded by Councilmember Marks, to appoint Mayor Bill Pittman as the City's representative and Mayor Pro Tem Brandon Noto as the City's alternate representative to the Houston-Galveston Area Council 2023 General Assembly. The motion passed the roll call vote unanimously.

4. Consideration and possible action: Casting of a ballot for the 2023 Houston-Galveston Area Council Officers Election

Acting City Manager Alun Thomas said that this agenda item allows the City to determine how to cast its ballot for the 2023 Houston-Galveston Area Council Officers Election, and he explained the criteria for selection. City Council briefly discussed whether to support the recommended candidates as presented by the Houston-Galveston Area Council or to vote for other people.

Motion by Councilmember Dickerson, seconded by Councilmember Marks, to vote for the recommended candidates (Waller County Judge Trey Duhon for Chair, City of Houston Councilmember Sallie Alcorn for Chair Elect, and Liberty County Judge Jay Knight for Vice Chair) in the Officers Election. The motion passed the roll call vote by a

vote of three to two, with Councilmembers Dickerson, O'Brien, and Marks voting in favor of the motion, and Councilmembers Noto and Collins voting against the motion.

5. Consideration and possible action: Approval of a Task Force Officer assignment to the United States Secret Service and authorizing the Chief of Police to execute a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Santa Fe Police Department and the United States Secret Service

Police Chief Walter Braun introduced the item and said that Detective Jesse Cannon, as a subject matter expert in the field of financial crimes and fraud, has been asked by the U.S. Secret Service to become part of its Cyber Fraud Task Force in Houston as a Task Force Officer. Chief Braun explained that, should Council agree to the assignment, Detective Cannon would take his current case load with him, and continue to work any and all future cases assigned by the Santa Fe Police Department, in addition to his duties at the Secret Service. In return, the Secret Service has agreed to provide up to \$15,000 of overtime reimbursement to the City, along with investigative equipment that the City would keep, as well as additional training, and full access to the Secret Service's state-of-the-art forensic lab which would benefit the investigation of crimes that occur within the city. Detective Cannon said that his posting would entail approximately one day a week of assignment to the Secret Service (with the day of the week varying based on workload and other scheduling issues) and that his workload there would consist only of Santa Fe cases.

Motion by Councilmember Noto, seconded by Councilmember Collins, to approve the Task Force Officer assignment to the United States Secret Service and to authorize the Chief of Police to execute a Memorandum of Understanding between the Santa Fe Police Department and the United States Secret Service. The motion passed the roll call vote unanimously.

6. Discussion and direction: Possible future Impact Fees to be charged to property developers by the City of Santa Fe to assist in improving the City's infrastructure to levels that will sufficiently accommodate new developments

Acting City Manager Alun Thomas introduced the item and said that as Santa Fe continues to grow, new developments add additional stress and wear and tear on the City's infrastructure. Many communities help to offset some or all of that cost through the imposition of impact fees that are charged to property developers. He said that this item, which was requested by Mayor Pro Tem Noto, is to allow the City Council to consider whether such fees would be suitable for the City of Santa Fe, and if so, to provide staff with direction on what fee(s) it would like to consider adopting. Mayor Pittman noted that the City is limited on what types of impact fees it could adopt, and said that most other cities in the area charge developers impact fees. Following a discussion on the topic, it was the direction of Council that a workshop meeting be scheduled to discuss impact fees once staff has gathered information on neighboring cities' fees and has a recommendation on what fees to charge and in what amount.

7. Consideration and possible action: Approval of the Santa Fe Economic Development Corporation's intent to support the Santa Fe Fire and Rescue's request for funding up to \$500,000 for a new Ladder Truck

Mayor Pittman said that this item is a complex issue that ought to be discussed in more detail than as an item during a regular meeting; he recommended that Council consider the matter during the scheduled upcoming joint City Council/Santa Fe Economic Development Corporation meeting on January 31, 2023.

Santa Fe Fire and Rescue (SFFR) Chief Chris Anderson explained the proposal at hand, which calls for the Santa Fe Economic Development Corporation (EDC) to set aside \$125,000 each fiscal year for the next four fiscal years so that it can then give the resulting \$500,000 to SFFR to help pay for a ladder truck that is expected to cost a total of approximately \$2,000,000. Chief Anderson assured Council that SFFR is not just asking the City and the EDC for funding, noting that there are three planned facilities for Santa Fe (a three-story apartment complex, a three-story assisted living facility, and a four-story hospital) that would directly benefit from the addition of the ladder truck. The addition of the ladder truck to SFFR's fleet, he said, is expected to allow the city's ISO rating (a score provided

to fire departments and insurance companies by the Insurance Services Office) to drop from a 2 to a 1, saving local businesses approximately 11% on their fire insurance premiums. Residential addresses should also see a reduction in their fire insurance rates, but less than commercial addresses' reductions.

Motion by Councilmember O'Brien, seconded by Councilmember Collins, to postpone consideration of this item until the January 31 joint City Council/Santa Fe Economic Development Corporation meeting. The motion passed the roll call vote unanimously.

8. Consideration and possible action: Adoption of a resolution by the City Council of the City of Santa Fe, Texas in support of the abolition of the Office of County Treasurer in Galveston County

Galveston County Treasurer Hank Dugie introduced the item and thanked the members of Council for their service. Treasurer Dugie said that he ran for the office of Treasurer on the promise that, if elected, he would work to have the position eliminated. He explained that nine other counties in Texas have eliminated their Treasurer positions, and that if Galveston County followed suit, it would result in approximately \$500,000 in annual savings to the taxpayer while not adversely affecting the County's ability to conduct its business. Saving the county money is a key objective of his, Treasurer Dugie said, as is reflected by his decision to forego the \$117,000 annual salary that is offered to the Treasurer.

Passage of the resolution is not a requirement for the elimination of the position – such elimination is approved and conducted by the State of Texas – but passage of the resolution will help demonstrate support for the action. Treasurer Dugie said that the Cities of League City, Kemah, and Dickinson have all passed such a resolution, and said that he has asked the other cities in Galveston County to entertain such a resolution too. Galveston County Commissioners Court recently unanimously voted in approval of eliminating the position.

Motion by Councilmember Noto, seconded by Councilmember O'Brien, approve the Resolution as presented. The motion passed the roll call vote unanimously.

9. Consideration and possible action: Purchase of property for one Dollar (\$1.00) from Santa Fe Independent School District, with such land being generally located west of Mae S. Bruce Library, legally described as approximately 4.07 acres out of Lot 193 of Gulf Coast Development Company's Subdivision, also known as Thaman's Second Subdivision, in Galveston County, Texas, according to the Map thereof recorded in Vol. 231, Page 413 in the office of the County Clerk of Galveston County, Texas, SAVE AND EXCEPT that part of Lot 193 heretofore conveyed to the County of Galveston by deed recorded in Vol. 2089, Page 482, in said County Clerk's office

Mayor Pittman discussed the proposed purchase and commented that there are several parts of the proposed agreement that the City Attorney's office have identified that need to be corrected or changed before the agreement is accepted by the City. One such item is the unexpected condition that the land, if purchased by the City, be used for the construction of the proposed Santa Fe Ten Memorial. A representative from the Santa Fe Ten Memorial Foundation made clear during the November 12, 2022 regular Council meeting that the Foundation does not wish to see built upon City-owned property, so that requirement should be removed. Council discussed the ownership of the land immediately to the west of the property at hand, which is currently owned by Galveston County, asking aloud what it would take for the City to also take ownership of that land, given that it currently forms the westernmost portion of Joe Tambrella Park. Acting City Manager Alun Thomas reminded Council that the City currently has a 25-year lease on the school district's property which is set to expire or automatically renew in 2026, so the City has plenty of time to ensure that any agreement reached is mutually beneficial.

Motion by Councilmember O'Brien, seconded by Councilmember Noto, to postpone consideration and possible approval of this item until the City's and the School District's counsels have managed to reach an agreement on the language in the agreement. The motion passed the roll call vote unanimously.

10. Consideration and direction: Recruitment efforts for a new Fire Marshal, and possible changes to the Fire Marshal position

Acting City Manager Alun Thomas explained the purpose of the agenda item, which is to consider making changes to the Fire Marshal position to attract a candidate. Mr. Thomas noted that the City had recently extended an offer to potential candidate, but the City and the candidate were ultimately unable to reach an agreement about the salary for the position. He recommended that Council consider making changes to the position, including the possibility of making the position full-time, and increasing the hourly salary. Following a brief discussion, it was the consensus and direction of Council that staff reach out to Galveston County Emergency Services District No. 1 to explore the possibility of the City and the District sharing the cost of a full-time Fire Marshal who would provide fire marshal services to both entities.

Announcements:

The next Comprehensive Plan Open House is scheduled for February 2, 2023 at 6:00 p.m. at The Hidden Palms, 3706 Avenue E 1/2, Santa Fe. Members of the public are strongly encouraged to attend the meeting to provide guidance on how they would like to see Santa Fe manage developments going forward. Council and Acting City Manager Alun Thomas addressed questions from a Santa Fe resident, Christine Villere, about what the Comprehensive Plan does and whether public input would truly matter and be included in the Plan.

The Santa Fe Chamber of Commerce's Annual Awards Dinner and Gala will be held on January 27. There is still time to reserve a spot at the event.

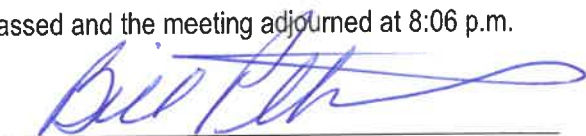
Summary of action from this agenda, request for future agenda items, and scheduling future meetings: The next regular Council meeting is currently scheduled for January 26, 2023.

Motion by Councilmember Noto to adjourn. The motion passed and the meeting adjourned at 8:06 p.m.

ATTEST:



Alun W. Thomas, City Secretary



BILL PITTMAN, MAYOR