



**CITY OF LA MARQUE
CITY COUNCIL SPECIAL
MINUTES
of
JANUARY 19, 2021**

City Council Special Minutes of the City of La Marque City Council held on Tuesday, January 19, 2021, at 6:00 p.m. at 1109-B Bayou Road with the following members present:

(1) CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Bell called the Regular Meeting to order at 6:01 p.m.

(2) ROLL CALL

Keith Bell	Mayor
Joe Compian	Councilmember, District B
Robert Michetich	Councilmember, District C
Casey Mc Auliffe	Councilwoman, District D

OTHER OFFICIALS PRESENT:

Charles "Tink" Jackson	City Manager
Robin Eldridge	City Clerk
Derra Purnell	City Attorney

(3) CITIZENS PARTICIPATION - There were none

(4) OLD BUSINESS

- a. Discussion/possible action regarding amending Resolution No. R-2021-0001, and adopting Resolution No. **R-2021-0002**, calling for the General Election to be held May 1, 2021, to elect one (1) Mayor; (1) Councilmember for District "A"; and one (1) Councilmember for District "C", each for a three (3) year term

City Clerk explained that there was a clerical issue on the first time that this resolution was adopted.

** Councilmember Michetich made a motion to adopt Resolution No. R-2021-0001.

** Councilwoman Mc Auliffe seconded. **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

- ** Councilmember Compian clarified that this resolution will need to once again be amended once polling locations are established which will be after the filing period ends. Two polling locations within the City are going to be on that amended resolution.
- ** Councilwoman Mc Auliffe seconded. **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

(5) WORKSHOP

a. Discussion relating to Safe City Initiative

Mayor Bell began with making a statement that it was evident that violent crimes are on the rise all across the country, and that it is imperative that La Marque be a safe city, which will require planning and execution of plans, that will be outlined and implemented in a Safe City Initiative.

According to the time period of 2019-2020 a Crime Statistics report provided by the La Marque Police Department showed that:

Murder- was at 0% increase;
Rape- decrease 10%;
Robbery- increase 6%;
Aggravated assault- increase 17%;
with a total violent crime being an increase of 10%;
Burglary - decrease 17%;
Theft - decrease 15%;
Motor vehicle theft - increase 16%
Arson - increase 100% (up from 0 to 1)
Total property crime- decrease 13%

Discussion began with each Councilmember submitting criteria that they want to see in the Safe City Initiative:

Councilmember Michetich suggested re-establishing the Neighborhood Watch and Community Policing with training provided or in conjunction with a National Neighborhood Watch organization, or through the Police Department.

Neighborhood Empowerment Coalition-(City-wide) was recently attended by Mayor Bell- community as a whole has to be a part of this

Councilmember Compian clarified the initial effort and goal is to deal with and stop violent crime especially among the youth in La Marque. He has compiled a list that he along with local Pastors of focus groups have initiated. He would like to see visible signage throughout the City to let the community know that this city is a Project of Safe Neighborhood. Implementation of other ways to report crime tips through social media and other communications. Designate neighborhoods within the City-as Neighborhood watch neighborhoods. Promote the usage of additional cameras to the homes, to capture crimes.

Councilwoman Mc Auliffe suggested, that because this idea is so large, first figure out the most crucial points to have a “safe city”, these need to be identified and then each one worked on and begin a plan to meet goals in each one.

- What does making the City a safe place mean?
- Is it violent crime?
- Increase in?
- Decrease in?
- More support in schools?
- More support in families?

She suggested to have more forums and more town hall meetings and invite experts in the field of violent crimes come to speak and share their insights. Unrolling a plan with phases, create a plan then implement with timelines and short and long terms goals.

Mayor Bell said he has never have liked the idea of sugarcoating anything for the community. The facts need to be given to them as facts as they are.

His idea of a safe city is:

- Safe in every area from all crime, that would damage or injure, or take from the property, life, or liberty of the citizens
- Clean water supply
- Proper drainage and sewer systems that is more than adequate
- Stop signs and streetlights that are functional
- Streets repaired and or reconstructed
- Recruiting and hire professional staff and train them so they can be proficient and safe at the same time

Added his three “buckets” that he had gathered for this initiative

1. Community - involve and engage the community in this initiative (Neighborhood Watch Programs); Victims Advocacy; engagement with the Community Policing; Focus Groups, Forums, and Workshops
2. Council - create policies camera systems, incentivize specialized training through the Collectable Bargaining
3. Law Enforcement Community- Community Engagement Officer for Community Policing; Traffic police officers, increasing the Rapid Response Team, adding an investigator for street crime

City Manager Jackson reminded that all of these require resources for these ideas, and shared some ideas from staff earlier in the day:

- Additional lighting in the community
- Bringing in jobs that not only pay minimum wage
- Community engagement for all different age groups
- Blight reduction continuation

- Coffee with the Cops
- Don't lose focus on the things that are working now

Councilwoman Mc Auliffe agreed that a safe city is all that Mayor Bell said, and added; the building of healthy, happy, whole homes, people having access to everything they need and the city supporting them. She reiterated short and long-term goals being set by the collaboration of staff and citizens and work from there.

- Mayor Bell asked what the “must-haves” as it relates to the immediate issue of violent crimes in the City.

Councilmember Compian - a plan that brings in surrounding cities, to join with this City in this plan going forward (Regional approach). Also wants to see the Assistant City Managers to increase their community engagement to gather information from groups to bring forth in this initiative

Councilmember Michetich - Community Watches

Councilwoman Mc Auliffe - 1. Direction to City Manager to immediately schedule a workshop inviting UTMB - Centers for Violence Prevention and the 409 Action Network- to come speak to the City to help flush out our immediate objections
2. More information given on the Neighborhood Watch (Asst. City Manager David Jordan) ; 3. Celebration of the two Assistant City Managers; 4. gather budget numbers for street lighting

Mayor Bell added:

1. Immediately re-establish Community Policing including the compensation of those officers
2. Community Engagement Officer at least for the next 90-180 days (Stipend)
3. Bolster resources to increase our Rapid Response Team to focus on areas and types of crimes
4. Establish clear communication with the community as it relates to the types of crime, the areas of frequent crime and the apprehension of suspects of notable crime

Mayor Bell asked that these eight items (immediate aspects) be brought back in the February meeting . Asked if a Consulting Firm to lead the City to help us to gather the information so we may put this plan together to help us be successful in it be brought in.

City Manager Jackson said that bringing in an outside person/ or firm to gather information and insight from the community to help with this multi-facet plan would be helpful.

Councilmember Compian said that he had some information (DOJ) office on this and that it will be most helpful that he will be sharing with all of Council.

Councilmember Michetich asked that first Chief Jackson provide his resources and current plans for action before hiring a firm, that may not have anything else to provide for these types of services.

Councilwoman Mc Auliffe agreed that to consult a firm who can guide the City to create an organizational path in this plan.

It was the consensus of Council to hold off on any Town Hall or Listening Session until a few more meetings are held which would bring forth some of the items discussed above.

(6) **REQUESTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS** - There were none

(7) **ADJOURNMENT**

** Councilwoman Mc Auliffe made a motion to adjourn the Special meeting at 7:41 p.m.

** Councilwoman Michetich seconded. **SPECIAL MEETING ADJOURNED**

This unofficial copy of the minutes from the above meeting are posted for convenience only. Executed or certified copies of the minutes can be requested by contacting the City Clerk.
