



**1111 Bayou Road
La Marque, Texas
409-938-9202**

**CITY OF LA MARQUE
CITY COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING
of
FEBRUARY 14, 2022**

Minutes of a City Council Regular Meeting held in the Council Chambers, 1109 Bayou Road, La Marque, Texas as well as via teleconference - ZOOM and via YouTube. The council will meet for the purpose of considering the following agenda:

(1) CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Mayor Bell called the meeting to order at 6:22 p.m.

(2) ROLL CALL

Keith Bell	Mayor
Kimberley Yancy	Councilmember District A
Joe Compian	Mayor-Pro-Tem District B
Michael Carlson	Councilmember District C
Casey Mc Auliffe	Councilmember District D (4101 Main St. La Marque, TX 77568)

STAFF:

Randall Aragon	Interim City Manger
Gus Knebel	Consulting City Attorney
Kierra Nance	City Clerk

(3) INVOCATION AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Councilmember Yancy led the invocation and Councilmember Carlson led the pledge.

(4) PRESENTATIONS/PROCLAMATION

- a. Recognition- Corporal King, Detective Shores, Officer Guzman
Chief Aragon read a letter submitted by Interim Fire Chief David Merryman commending the officers for their assistance at the scene of a fire.
- b. Presentation- College of the Mainland
Earl Alexander, a representative for College of the Mainland presented current opportunities for the citizens wishing to continue their education including the Clean Slate Grant, Promise Grant, CARES ACT funding, reskilling campaign, Gulf Coast Safety Institute, and over \$400 million in federal aid that goes unused each year. College of the Mainland is looking forward to partnering with the

City to help create a better community and offered to set up an area in the proposed police substation to assist the community in applying for college.

- c. Presentation- Houston Galveston Area Council
Representatives from H-GAC showed a short video introducing the organization to the public.

(5) CITIZEN'S PARTICIPATION

Wayne Hobgood (406 Edgar St)- Spoke on the Boards and Commissions ordinance that allows for previously appointed nonresidents to sit on boards. Only tax-paying citizens should be allowed on boards. Appointees should be vetted and only citizens that live in the city should be allowed to serve.

(6) MINUTES

- a. 01.12.2022 Special City Council Minutes
 - b. 01.24.2022 Special City Council Workshop Minutes
 - c. 02.03.2022 Special City Council Minutes
 - d. 02.07.2022 Special City Council Minutes
- ** Councilmember Yancy made a motion to approve all minutes as submitted. Councilmember Carlson seconded the motion. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

(7) OLD BUSINESS

- a. Discussion/ possible action regarding adopting Resolution No. R-2022-0003, establishing a Charter Review Committee- Legal G. Knebel

After a brief clarification of appointments from City Attorney Knebel the council discussed appointment decisions. Councilmember McAuliffe appointed Antinell Martin to the Charter Review Committee followed by Councilmember Carlson who appointed Sally Austin. Councilmember Yancy appointed Valry Allen to the committee and appointed Re'chard Loftis as an alternate. Mayor Pro Tem Compian appointed Laura Divine and Mayor Bell appointed James Osteen as a committee member and David Pennington as an alternate.

- ** Councilmember Yancy made a motion to approve Resolution No. R-2022-0003 and accept all appointments discussed. Councilmember Carlson seconded the motion. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

- b. Discussion/ possible direction regarding creating a Vacant Registry Program- Councilmember K. Yancy

Councilmember Yancy introduced the idea of a Vacant Registry Program as a way to identify buildings that are not being utilized for their purpose, she notes that there are many commercial buildings in the city that are simply being used as storage space for the owners or have people living in commercial structures. Development Services Director Kathleen Van Stavern was asked to help discuss this topic. The program would require owners to register their buildings and assess fees and provide for the City to conduct inspections and ensure that they remain in good condition. She pointed out that the City cannot restrict the uses of the buildings unless they violate City code. However, most cities construct this program in a way that the fees are high enough to force the owners to maintain their property. She did explain that it was a labor-intensive program

and would require an additional code officer as well as an administrative position.

Councilmember McAuliffe showed support for the program but only if the department was given the staffing and tools necessary to make the program successful.

Mayor Pro Tem Compian showed hesitation citing property rights as an area of concern, asked that criminal statistics be used as a starting point creating a tiered fee structure.

Interim City Manager Aragon stated that this program is important and there could potentially be grants to assist with funding.

Mayor Bell agreed that it is a great idea, and the city should continue to do due diligence in terms of legalities but his key issue is that this program needs to be user funded. It would not be fair to the average taxpayer nor the owners who are operating properly to bear the burden of funding this program.

Mayor Bell directed Interim City Manager Aragon to work with staff to do a thorough review of all the current registration programs to see “what is still left on the table”.

Councilmember Carlson asked that once the program is implemented the owners should be allowed to make payments online.

** No action was taken.

- c. Discussion/possible action regarding the City Manager position for the City of La Marque

Mayor bell gave a brief history of all that has happened in the City Manager process and announced that a decision would be made Thursday, February 17, 2022.

** No action was taken.

(8) NEW BUSINESS

- a. Discussion/ possible action regarding amending and updating the City Social Media Policy

Public Relations Officer Joshua Pritchett gave a brief overview of the changes that were made to the Social Media Policy, updating the policy to reflect the changes that have been made since 2016 when the current policy was drafted and including relevant case law, Texas Penal Code, and best practices.

There was much discussion including the language of the policy, the process of drafting the policy, and clarifications of scenarios in which the policy applies.

** Councilmember Yancy made a motion to approve the updated City Social Media Policy. Councilmember Carlson seconded the motion. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

- b. Discussion/ possible action regarding adopting Resolution No. R-2022-0004, calling a Special Election

** Councilmember Carlson made a motion to adopt Resolution No. R-2022-0004, calling a Special Election. Councilmember McAuliffe seconded the motion. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

- c. Discussion/ possible action regarding adopting Resolution No. R-2022-0005, approving the aerial spraying of mosquitoes by Galveston County Mosquito

Control District, as required on a yearly basis by the Federal Aviation Administration

- ** Councilmember Carlson made a motion to adopt Resolution No. R-2022-0005, approving the aerial spraying of mosquitoes by Galveston County Mosquito Control District. Councilmember Yancy seconded the motion. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Mayor Bell reminded the community that council approved the purchase of equipment to supplement the aerial sprays conducted by the county.

- d. Discussion/ possible action regarding adopting proposed telecommunicator pay scale

After a brief discussion, Council apologized for the oversight and discussed a desire to review the City's pay structure.

- ** Councilmember McAuliffe made a motion to adopt the proposed telecommunicator pay scale. Councilmember Yancy seconded the motion. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

- e. Discussion / possible action regarding accepting the final (5) year goals as assigned by the La Marque Safe City Initiative

- ** Mayor Bell exited the meeting at 9:03 p.m. and returned at 9:06 p.m.

Chief Aragon presented the (5) core goals of the Safe City Initiative including: Reintroduction of Community Oriented Policing, Reintroduction of CompStat program, Establish a fully trained "Gang" Unit, Hire a contractor to assist in "crime analyst" functions, and to Matriculate into the Texas Recognition Program. A brief discussion relating to the goals and thanking the community for their participation ensued.

- ** Councilmember Carlson made a motion to authorize Chief Aragon to proceed with the Safe City Initiative. Councilmember Yancy seconded the motion. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

- f. Discussion/ possible action regarding amending Game Room Ordinance

Councilmember Yancy expressed concern regarding the amount of game rooms (12) in relation to our city's size. The current game room fees are \$1000 per machine per year in addition to an annual \$1000 application fee with an average of 39 to 50 8 liner machines in each business.

Mayor Bell gave historical information as to why these businesses have been allowed to persist, citing the conservative nature of La Marque Councils and the desire to not raise taxes, game rooms are an additional source of revenue adding an estimated \$500,00 to the annual budget.

Code Compliance Supervisor Kathleen Van Stavern showed support for raising Game Room Permit fees, citing that Hitchcock charges \$5000 for the annual application fee and \$1200 per machine, although recommending a \$1500 fee per machine. This can be justified by the additional staff that is required to continue this program. She also mentioned revisiting the fact that other stores have the same machines but are charged \$15 per machine due to not having the game room designation.

After a lengthy discussion, Mayor Bell thanked Councilmember Yancy for bringing this item for discussion and asked that she work with Ms. Van Stavern to create a plan that allows for a Council vote. Mayor also reiterated that programs like this are a good idea, but they must be user-funded programming.

** No action was taken on this item.

(8) REPORTS

- a. Animal Resource Center Report (January 2022)- Emergency Management Coordinator Kyle Hunter

** No action was taken on this item.

(9) APPOINTMENTS

- a. Discussion/possible action regarding appointments and/or reappointments to fill various positions of the Boards and Commissions - Mayor K. Bell

** No action taken on this item.

(10) EXECUTIVE SESSION

** There was no executive session.

(11) ACTION - EXECUTIVE SESSION

** No action was taken on this item.

(12) REQUESTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Councilmember McAuliffe wished everyone a Happy Valentine's Day and thanked everyone involved in organizing a very productive day.

Councilmember Yancy announced the Inaugural Stop the Violence Week beginning Saturday, February 19 including a webinar a social media campaign asking citizens to wear purple to stop the violence, a clergy dinner with discussion, a leadership summit, a Stop the Violence musical, a male-only event to discuss the "definition of the American man" and concluding with a basketball tournament held at La Marque High School on Saturday. She asked the community to come and support.

Councilmember Carlson asked the community to honor Black History Month by researching the contributions of the black community in health and wellness. He thanked the citizen from last time who spoke to assisting the city's homeless population, reigniting a fire within him, asking the council to soon look at the homeless situation within the City. He closed by apologizing to his Valentine for not being home but admitting that did spend breakfast with her.

Mayor Pro Tem Compian expressed thanks to the La Marque Lions Club for inviting him to their meeting this past week, and pledging \$100 to their cause, a camp for youth with disabilities in East Texas. He recognized all the citizens in La Marque who donated valuable time and resources to assist with the Texas City apartment fires. He closed by thanking the community leaders and department heads for their contributions to the City Manager search.

Mayor Bell wished everyone a Happy Valentine's Day and took a moment to reflect on Black History Month. He also thanked staff and community members for their assistance today. He announced the Annual State of the Cities and County Address on February 16th at the Chuck Doyle Convention Center, February 17th a Special meeting will be held to address the bond issue, announce a new City Manager, and the Managerial Audit giving a review over the last 2 years. Mayor announced a La Marque State of the City Address and

Town Hall to be held at La Marque High School February 24th to offer those unable to attend the event on February 17th.

(13) ADJOURNMENT

****** Councilmember Carlson made a motion to adjourn. Councilmember Yancy seconded the motion. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

****** Meeting was adjourned at 10:13 p.m.

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