



**CITY OF LA MARQUE
CITY COUNCIL
REGULAR MINUTES
of
April 10, 2023**

Minutes of a **Regular Meeting** held in the **Council Chambers** at **1109-B Bayou Road La Marque, Texas as well as via videoconference hosted through Zoom** on **April 10, 2023**, beginning at **6:00 PM :**

4/10/2023 - Minutes

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Mayor Bell called the meeting to order at 6:03 p.m.

2. ROLL CALL

All council members were present, with Councilmember Carlson attending virtually from 3801 Kell Blvd Wichita Falls, TX 76308.

3. INVOCATION AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Councilmember Yancy gave the invocation and Councilmember McAuliffe led the pledge.

4. PRESENTATIONS

Citizen Ana Lopez was given a certificate of appreciation to thank her for her hard work restoring the rock garden at a local park after it was vandalized.

Mayor Bell presented La Marque Public Works Department representatives with a proclamation to celebrate Work Zone Awareness Week.

Representatives from the Court Appointed Special Advocate Program (CASA) received a Child Abuse Awareness Prevention Month proclamation.

Mayor Bell read into the record a Fair Housing Awareness Proclamation.

Lead Telecommunicator Sheila Maya received a proclamation to celebrate National Telecommunicators Week.

City Manager Cesar Garcia shared that Officer Dana Thomasson received state recognition for her service, receiving a visit from State Representative Terri Leo Wilson.

New officers Marco Hernandez and Oleana Buentello were introduced to the community.

Dr. Penn gave a brief overview of the results seen at La Marque High School due to the Teen and Police Service Academy and shared that the Texas Education Agency has approved the program to qualify for one high school credit.

Representatives of the College of the Mainland gave a presentation regarding the current status of the College of the Mainland.

5. CITIZENS PARTICIPATION

- W.T. Ethridge (4201 Blackhawk Dr, Texas City, TX) supported the Rental Registration fee and the cost reduction. He shared his concerns regarding the differentiation between single and multi-family homes in terms of pricing, and he feels that the fee should be equal across the board and the potential to expand the fees beyond just investment properties but for residential homeowners as well.
- Clarence Caldwell (3608 Prairie) spoke about the corner of Prairie St and Volney with overgrown tree limbs, a vacant lot on the opposite side with dead limbs hanging over the street, issues with the trash collectors not collecting trash from the recycling cans, and ditches not being cleaned by Public Works.
- Robert Michetich (24 N Curlew) spoke regarding the debt services update, which he says has not happened since 2021. He requested project tracking on grant funds. He congratulated Councilmember Carlson on his new job and expected a special election be called at the next meeting to fill his seat.
- Bill McGarvy (808 Buttonwood Dr. Texas City, TX) spoke to share his support of the College of the Mainland bond and also share his support of the agenda item to reduce the rental registration fees.

6. MINUTES

Mayor Pro Tem Compian made a motion to approve the minutes as submitted. Councilmember McAuliffe seconded the motion. **MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

7. ORDINANCES

7.I. Ordinance No. O-2023-0002

Mayor Pro Tem Compian spoke about the purpose of the Rental Registration Ordinance, which was to curb and make suggestions regarding the uniformity of the fee and create a "flat" fee of \$50 each, regardless of type. He also questioned the penalty for violations under this ordinance and questioned the program's effective date and if the fee is prorated throughout the year.

City Attorney Knebel clarified that Section 1-7 of the Code of Ordinances is the overarching penalty provision and can be added to the ordinance, and assured that the effective date correlates with the program's renewal date.

Councilmember McAuliffe shared her support of the current fee structure but also understands her fellow councilmembers' concerns. She clarified with staff the rationale behind the difference in fees for single and multi-family homes: the amount of work required to verify each home.

Mayor Bell shared his concerns regarding the lack of participation from property owners, as it is shared that only approximately 60 percent of owners are registered, and that there is value in the statements made by the citizens tonight. He feels that the top priority should be to capture the remaining 40% of owners who are not enrolled in the program.

Councilmember Carlson spoke to the citizens who requested \$50 across the board, he shared that duplexes at the current rate pay \$60, triplexes \$90, and so forth, but he has no issue with \$50 for all. He also reminded Council and staff that his initial intent in bringing this item before Council was to remove the application fee.

Mayor Pro Tem Compian made recommendations regarding notifying owners and utilizing measures such as online applications and email notifications.

Mayor Pro Tem made a motion to adopt Ordinance No. O-2023-0002, with a uniform fee of \$50 per unit and an added section in regard to penalties. Councilmember Carlson seconded the motion. **MOTION PASSED WITH 4 AYES AND 1 NAY (MCAULIFFE).**

7.II. Ordinance No. O-2023-0003

Discussions relating to the location of the property ensued. Members of the Council shared concerns regarding the location being "in the middle" of a subdivision, while others, including Councilmember Yancy, District Representative for the area, shared their support and a need for commerce in the area. The council discussed the need to hear from more of the citizens in that area.

Mayor Pro Tem Compian made a motion to table this item. Councilmember McAuliffe seconded the motion. **MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

8. RESOLUTIONS

8.I. Resolution No. R-2023-0023

***Mayor Pro Tem Compian exited the room at 7:42 p.m.*

Public Works Director Sailer gave a brief overview of the bid and disclosed that this is Phase 1 of a multiphase project.

Councilmember McAuliffe made a motion to adopt Resolution No. R-2023-0023. Councilmember Yancy seconded the motion. **MOTION PASSED 4 AYES (COMPIAN ABSENT).**

9. CITY MANAGER REPORT

***Mayor Pro Tem Compian returned at 7:45 p.m.*

Councilmember McAuliffe requested additional data regarding race and ethnicity in the future. Mayor Pro Tem Compian shared her sentiments in addition to questions regarding "Theft under \$100" citations issued and juvenile accidents.

10. OLD BUSINESS

10.I. Naming Policy

Mayor Pro Tem Compian requested clarity of a section that references "Council Committee", it was clarified by City Clerk Nance **VIDEO**

CM - Naming Committee comprised of the chairperson of boards and commissions

Fees for each naming structure. and differentiate process for councilmembers.

No action was taken on this item.

11. NEW BUSINESS

11.I. Special Meeting May 15, 2023

City Clerk Nance informed the council that a special meeting would need to be called in order to

canvass the results for the May 6, 2023 election.

Councilmember McAuliffe questioned if this would be in lieu of the Regular Meeting scheduled on May 22, 2023, or in addition. City Manager Garcia clarified that it would be in addition. However, the intent is to be very efficient at the May 8, 2023, meeting and not need the May 22 meeting.

Mayor Pro Tem Compian made a motion to call a Special Meeting on May 15, 2023. Councilmember Yancy seconded the motion. **MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

11.II. Items For The Good Of The Order

MC- Thanked the Citizen who requested he stepped down, VIDEO. thank you to staff, boards and commissions, and council

Councilmember McAuliffe wished everyone a Happy Easter and Passover and gave a thank you to everyone on Council and Staff.

Mayor Pro Tem Compian congratulated Councilmember McAuliffe and Galveston's Own Farmers Market for their collaboration with local schools and the Young Gardeners Program. He also congratulated a citizen who took a vow to become a priest. He reminded the community that early voting is from April 24 to May 2, and Election Day is May 6. He also requested that the Council review their property tax exemptions as we prepare this next budget session.

Councilmember Yancy shared that she is so excited to see the TAPS Program, born of the Safe City Initiative. She spoke of a citizen who appreciates the hard work done by the city to clean up the crime on Pirtle Street and shared that he will be attending the next council meeting. She announced Stop the Violence Week, being held from April 23-29 and encouraged the citizens to get involved to join the fight to beautify the City. She is proud to be a citizen of La Marque, Texas.

Mayor Bell requested a plan from the City Manager to capture the other 40% of rental registration revenue and the comprehensive La Marque 2050 parameters for the next council meeting. He shared that on April 15th, the one-year anniversary of the Community Policing Program celebration will be at Queen of Peace Church at 11:30 a.m.

11.III. Upcoming Events

City Manager Garcia notified the public of Hurricane Huddle on April 29, 2023, Spring Clean Up scheduled for April 22, 2023 and gave a brief recap of the food giveaway that was held the previous week.

12. EXECUTIVE SESSION

There was no executive session.

13. ACTIONS TAKEN FROM EXECUTIVE SESSION

No action was taken.

14. ADJOURNMENT

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

*** Meeting was adjourned at 8:19 p.m.*

Keith Bell

Mayor

Kierra K. Nance, TRMC

City Clerk

DRAFT