



**CITY OF LA MARQUE
CITY COUNCIL
REGULAR MINUTES
of
JANUARY 10, 2022**

City Council Regular Minutes of the City of La Marque City Council held on Monday, January 10, 2022 at 1109-B Bayou Road:

(1) CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Mayor Bell called the meeting to order at 6:05pm.

(2) ROLL CALL

All members of council were physically present except Councilmember McAuliffe who attended virtually from the City Hall conference room at 1111 Bayou Road, La Marque, TX 77568

(3) INVOCATION AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE -

Pastor Kevin Jones of Greater Love Church led the invocation and Councilmember Carlson led the pledge.

(4) PRESENTATIONS/PROCLAMATION

a. Proclamation- Kevin Wilcox

Mayor and Council celebrated the work of Coach Kevin Wilcox of the La Marque High School Basketball program and commemorated his 100th victory during his tenure.

b. Proclamation- Thank A Mail Carrier Day

Mayor and Council honored the local mail carriers for their continued dedication and service to the community.

c. Introduction of Houston Galveston Area Council

Although no members of the Houston Galveston Area Council available for a presentation, Mayor Pro Tem spoke as the city's representative. He encouraged citizens to check out the opportunities available through this organization.

d. Presentation- Clear Channel Outdoor

No representative at meeting for presentation.

e. Presentation- College of the Mainland

No representative at meeting for presentation.

(5) CITIZENS PARTICIPATION (Limited to three minutes per person)

Mandalyn Salazar (509 Laurel St. # 995) stated that she has concerns over the current environment in La Marque. She is not a citizen but has a non-profit business located in the city that has helped many residents. She also attended church in La Marque, but after recent harassment and bullying issues, she no longer attends services. She stated that she wants the Council and Mayor to continue moving forward with their initiatives and that she supports their moves but needs the public to stop the harassment and bullying, especially online.

(6) CONSENT AGENDA

a. 12.28.2021 Special City Council Minutes

Councilmember Carlson made a motion to approve the minutes from the Special Council Meeting on December 28, 2021. Councilmember Yancy seconded. **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

(7) NEW BUSINESS

a. Discussion/possible action regarding entering into a Contract with the Galveston County Clerk and Galveston County Election Officer for the Tax Rollback and Bond Elections to be held on May 7, 2022

Council discussed the upcoming elections and reviewed the \$25,500 budget amount assigned for the elections. City Clerk Nance identified that this is a standard budget amount, especially if multiple elections are to be held in the same year.

Councilmember Carlson made a motion to approve entering into the contract and for the \$25,500 budget assigned to the elections. Councilmember McAuliffe seconded. **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

b. Discussion/possible action regarding awarding professional services agreement for architectural services for facility assessment, programming, and design of new public safety building

Mayor Pro Tem Compian made a motion to approve the relationship and contract with McLemore Luong Company for facility assessment, programming, and design of new public safety building. Councilmember McAuliffe seconded. **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

c. Discussion/ possible action regarding providing direction on approving a one-year lease for 2222 Cedar Drive to serve as a police substation
THIS ITEM WAS TABLED.

- d. Discussion/ possible action regarding approving a lighting commission study for the City of La Marque
Councilmember Carlson made a motion for administration to bring back three (3) bids for a lighting study. Councilmember Yancy seconded. **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**
- e. Discussion/ possible action regarding cleaning the waterways in Omega Bay subdivision
Councilmember Carlson made a motion to direct the city manager to start working on a plan to clean the waterways in Omega Bay. Councilmember Yancy seconded. **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**
- f. Discussion/ possible action regarding allocating funds received from American Rescue Plan Act
Mayor Pro Tem Compian made a motion to have a special meeting on January 24, 2022, at 3pm to discuss plans for the American Rescue Plan Act funds. Councilmember Carlson seconded. **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**
- g. Discussion/ possible action regarding forming a Charter Review Committee
Mayor Pro Tem Compian made a motion to direct the city attorney to explore opportunities for a charter review election in May. Councilmember Carlson seconded. **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**
- h. Discussion/ possible action regarding resolution of water billing overcharges
Mayor Pro Tem Compian made a motion to make a one-time adjustment of ten dollars (\$10) on everyone's water bills. Councilmember Carlson seconded. **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**
- i. Discussion/ possible action regarding review of proposed City expenditures in light of Tax Rollback Election
Mayor Pro Tem Compian made a motion to authorize the city manager and staff to develop a tax rollback fact sheet on the purposes of the upcoming election. Councilmember Yancy seconded. **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**
- j. Discussion/ provide direction to amend billboard sign ordinance potentially adding an annual fee and raising the minimum elevation
Mayor Pro Tem Compian made a motion to bring this item back on the next agenda on January 24, 2022 with additional research/background information. Councilmember Carlson seconded. **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**
- k. Discussion/ possible action regarding providing direction to Interim City Manager to authorize Parks Board to utilize Youth Fund funds to replace fencing and update lighting at Mahan Park
Councilmember Carlson made a motion to direct staff to bring 3 bids on refencing 3 fields; 3 bids on upgrading the lighting; and direct staff to make contact with chemical refineries in our area as well as other large employers with a history of donating to youth organizations. Councilmember Yancy seconded. **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

(8) REPORTS

- a. Discussion relating to judicial facilities and technology update

Council discussed the possibility of adding bulletproof glass for the court. **THIS ITEM WAS TABLED.**

- b. Discussion relating to managerial audit
City Attorney Gus Knebel gave an update on the managerial audit. He noted that the city did not have a formal records retention policy, specifically regarding business text messages completed through private phones. A higher management level of distrust was placed on the Council, which led to several employee walkouts in 2021. The plan is to find a better solution for tracking business text messages and to continue moving forward with the current staff.

(9) APPOINTMENTS

- a. Discussion/possible action regarding appointments and/or reappointments to fill various positions of the Boards and Commissions
Councilmember Carlson nominated Joel Camacho for the Cemetery Board, Kimberly Hall to the Keep La Marque Beautiful Commission, and Robert Stevenson to the Planning & Zoning Commission.

Councilmember Yancy nominated Grayling Alexander for the Planning and Zoning Commission, and Alexa Cross to the Board of Adjustments.

Mayor Pro Tem Compian nominated Lois Jones to the Board of Adjustments and reappointed Katherine Herrin-Keith to the Keep La Marque Beautiful Commission.

Councilmember McAuliffe reappointed Bim Crowder to the Cemetery Board.

(10) EXECUTIVE SESSION

The City Council for the City of La Marque, Texas reserves the right to adjourn into executive session at any time during the course of this meeting to discuss any of the matters listed above, as authorized the Texas Government Code Section 551.071 (Consultation with Attorney), 551.072 (Deliberations about Real Property), 551.073 (Deliberations about Gifts and Donations), 551.074 (Personnel Matters), 551.076 (Deliberations about Security Devices) and 551.086 (Economic Development)

NO EXECUTIVE SESSION

(11) REQUESTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Requests by Mayor and Council Members for items to be placed on future City Council agendas and announcements on city events/community interests TEX. GOV'T CODE §551.415. (b), "items of community interest" includes:

- (1) *expressions of thanks, congratulations, or condolence;*
- (2) *information regarding holiday schedules;*
- (3) *an honorary or salutary recognition of a public official, public employee, or other citizen, except that a discussion regarding a change in the status of a person's public office or public employment is not an honorary or salutary recognition for purposes of this subdivision;*
- (4) *a reminder about an upcoming event organized or sponsored by the governing body;*

(5) information regarding a social, ceremonial, or community event organized or sponsored by an entity other than the governing body that was attended or is scheduled to be attended by a member of the governing body or an official or employee of the municipality or county; and

(6) announcements involving an imminent threat to the public health and safety of people in the municipality or county that has arisen after the posting of the agenda.

Councilmember McAuliffe took time to apologize for not speaking up sooner about the social media attacks that several members of Council have been enduring. She stated that she finds social media to be a toxic place and a medium that brings nothing but divisiveness. Casey is in absolute shock and deep dismay of the attacks against her fellow councilmembers, specifically Mayor Bell, Councilmember Yancy, and Councilmember Carlson. She apologized for not standing up sooner to this and boldly stated that she is standing in solidarity with all of council and finds the actions of those who are harassing the members of council and the community distasteful.

Councilmember Carlson started his statement with a happy 2022 and believes this year holds new motivation and a new focus for everyone. He also noted the larger community involvement on the council meeting and encouraged the community to stay active in their government.

Councilmember Yancy first thanked Councilmember McAuliffe for her words and her support. Kimberley stated that she came back to La Marque to make a difference in the lives of children and make a difference in the lives of a city that she admired growing up and she will continue to do so. She noted that her family has been harassed and threatened to a point where her husband has now purchased a gun for their household as a means of protection. She also stated that the community should be careful as to what they support or like, especially on social media and noted that God is always watching. Councilmember Yancy then stated that good energy and positivity should be celebrated. She is proud to serve with Council and the staff that has stayed and continues to do their jobs well and with a smile.

Mayor Pro Tem Compian first noted that redistricting was not discussed. City Attorney Knebel clarified that an email was sent on the topic and will have an update at the next meeting.

Mayor Pro Tem then commented that it is great to see the new faces of the community at the Council meeting and hopes to continue to see their involvement.

Mayor Bell started by thanking Councilmember McAuliffe for her words of encouragement and that it meant a lot and he knew just how much she meant it. He then explained that there is a lot to be excited about in 2022 noting 3 projects he is excited to move forward. The first being the safe city initiative and the significant improvements that the Police Department has made and how the citizens' requests are being met. The election in May regarding the tax rollback could place our city in jeopardy as it would affect the progress of the safe city initiatives. He shared that he is not trying to create a political spin on this, but rather is pointing out the facts that if the tax rollback does

happen, then the community will be faced with slowing the progress of making the city safer. The second item of the Mayor's focus is customer service responses to the citizens and he plans to work directly with Public Works and Code Enforcement to provide appropriate training. The final item of Mayor Bell's focus is tackling infrastructure issues. He noted that several items are in grant funding but waiting on the actual funds to arrive from the Federal Government before any progress can take place.

Mayor Bell shared how he wants to get to know the community members better and for the community to get to know him. He wants to have sit-downs to where community members can openly air their concerns and have full discussions rather than hear about things on social media. He wants the city to continue moving forward and that can only happen if all parties can have open conversations to address their concerns.

Mayor Bell then gave updates on upcoming events. First is the Crimestoppers meeting at Kelley's Restaurant on Wednesday, January 12th, 2022 at 12pm. Second is a free car seat check on February 5th, 2022 at the Central Fire Station from 10:00am to 1:00pm.

Chief Aragon discussed that Lake Road would be first for lighting and other improvements, and Omega Bay will follow. He expects Omega Bay improvements to begin in May or June 2022. Chief also asked for help in getting a Community Watch Chairperson and block captains by Lake Road. He noted that he has never seen such a divided city in all his years as an officer. He reiterated that the city needs support, not division. Chief Aragon promoted the police station tour on January 19th, 2022 at 6pm and encouraged the community to participate. He also discussed the Tax Forum being held at Council Chambers on January 27th, 2022 at pm.

(12) ADJOURNMENT

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

***Meeting was adjourned at 10:39 p.m.*

Keith Bell
Mayor

Kierra K. Nance, TRMC
City Clerk