



**CITY OF LA MARQUE
CITY COUNCIL
REGULAR MINUTES
of
June 9, 2025**

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

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

2. ROLL CALL

PRESENT:

Keith Bell

Mayor

Joe Compian

Mayor Pro Tem/ District B

Kimberley Yancy

District A

Joseph Lowry

District C

James Ross

District D

3. INVOCATION AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mayor Pro Tem Compian gave the invocation. Councilmember Ross led the pledge.

4. CITIZENS PARTICIPATION

Harvey Freebird (declined to give address) opened stating that a particular individual is "out of control" emphasizing that with claims of his behavior such as storming out of meetings, doxxing private citizens, allegedly stalking those who disagree with him, and using "his elected position to harass the public instead of serving it". He shared concerns regarding the councilmember's social media posts where he allegedly referenced building a "bulletproof killer" in the fashion of Marvin Haymier. "Why would he be announcing plans to build this machine if he wasn't planning an attack". He believes that these statements are not jokes, they are threats, and urged the public to protect themselves. He shared his support for the recall petition by the people of District C.

Vanessa McAfee (Texas City) stated that "y'all's drama has spilled over to my community". She asserted claims of attempted tax evasion by an elected official regarding grant funding received and quoted a Galveston Daily News Article regarding this topic. She requested that the council make arrangements for repayment.

Ivy Strong (3123 Steveroy) shared concerns regarding trash pickup and a large pile of debris near her neighbor's home and another neighbor who failed to retrieve their trashcans from the street. She also spoke regarding the drainage issues caused by the repavement in the area.

Richard Holcomb (did not provide address) spoke regarding the Mahan Boat Ramp, questioning why it still has not been opened for use. He also questioned why solar-powered lights were installed since the parks close at dusk.

Michael Adams (1428 23rd Ave N Texas City, TX) spoke on behalf of 1727 Main St LLC. This was purchased in December 2023, and a substantial investment has been made on this property. In April, the Building Standards Commission gave the owners a punch list

of items to correct, and recently issued a demolition order. He and his clients believe that completing the project is in the best interest of all parties.

Holly Cooper (504 Beech St) ***did not respond to calls to speak*

Hayley Winkelmann (1413 Bowie) announced to District C that drainage relief is coming. She met with senior members of the Public Works department, and they realized the issue and are working to resolve it. She filed a petition for recall for the councilmember of District C. She states that she believes one of the main duties of the role is to advocate for the residents, and on at least 4 occasions, he has left the meeting without reason. She spoke to the reaction she has received from the Councilmember, citing statements made against her and an "abusive cookie cake" that was sent to city staff.

5. PRESENTATIONS

5.I. Introduction: Shannon Breaux, Public Works Director

City Manager Pritchett emphatically introduced the new Public Works Director, Shannon Breaux. Public Works Director Breaux thanked God for the opportunity, his family for their support, and the department. He pledged his commitment to solving the issues, stating they won't be solved overnight, but he will continue to persevere until the city is where it wants to be.

Mayor Bells stated that he and the City Council are very proud of Director Breaux.

5.II. Bay Area- Houston Economic Partnership Update : Brian Freedman

Bay Area- Houston Economic Partnership President Brian Freedman gave a brief update on the partnership with the organization. He spoke regarding the value proposition of the region, and the "BAHEP Hot Projects" such as the La Marque High School improvements, The Texan, Dataprana, and more. He spoke to the outreach and educational opportunities the partnership provides.

5.III. Grant Works: Texas Department of Agriculture CDBG Project Progress (Section 3)

Alex Sievers of Grantworks gave a short presentation regarding the Section 3 Wisteria Project. This \$500,000 grant was provided by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development and the Department of Agriculture. He provided information regarding the requirements of businesses considered to be Section 3 Businesses, and who qualifies for this designation.

Councilmember Yancy asked for clarification regarding the project timeline, and who does the Section 3 outreach. Mr. Sievers stated that there are specific announcements that are put out with each process solicitation, including direct outreach, notices on the bid documents, and through the awarded companies. She requested a report from Grantworks regarding their outreach efforts. She stated that historically, local residents and students have not known about these opportunities until it was too late.

Mayor Pro Tem Compian stated that there should have been outreach information as well as monthly reports of how many individuals have applied and were selected for this program.

5.IV. OpenGov Software Implementation Status Update

***Mayor Pro Tem Compian exited the meeting at 6:56 p.m.*

Finance Director Christine Turner and Proinsias Fitzpatrick gave a brief update regarding the OpenGov Software Implementation. The individuals involved met weekly, and spoke highly of each other. The project initially "kicked off" in February 2025, a data migration plan has been implemented, integration configuration, and is now in a testing phase. Pending successful testing, the launch date is expected to occur in late summer or early fall.

***Mayor Pro Tem Compian returned at 7:01 p.m.*

***Councilmember Lowry exited the meeting at 7:02 p.m.*

City Manager Pritchett asked clarification questions regarding the timeline, to which Mr. Fitzpatrick stated he would have a better answer after he was on site in the upcoming 2 weeks.

6. MINUTES

***Councilmember Lowry returned to the meeting at 7:04 p.m.*

Councilmember Ross made a motion to approve all minutes as submitted. Mayor Pro Tem Compian seconded. **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

6.I. Special City Council Minutes 05.12.2025

6.II. Regular City Council Minutes 03.10.2025

6.III. Special City Council Minutes of 09.03.2024

6.IV. Regular City Council Minutes 04.22.2024

6.V. Regular City Council Minutes 03.25.2024

7. PUBLIC HEARINGS

***Mayor Bell recessed the Regular Meeting and entered into Public Hearings at 7:05 p.m.*

7.I. Ordinance No. O-2025-0012

There was no public comment.

8. OLD BUSINESS

***Mayor Bell closed the Public Hearings and reconvened the Regular Meeting at 7:06 p.m.*

8.I. Ordinance No. O-2025-0012

***Councilmember Ross exited the meeting at 7:05 p.m.*

Mayor Pro Tem Compian made a motion to approve Ordinance No. O-2025-0012. Councilmember Yancy seconded. **MOTION CARRIED 4 AYES 1 ABSENT (ROSS).**

8.II. Boards and Commissions Appointments

***Councilmember Ross returned to the meeting at 7:08 p.m.*

Councilmember Lowry nominated Robert Michetich to the Ordinance Review Committee.

City Clerk Nance reminded the council that Mr. Michetich already serves on the Public Safety Building Committee.

Mayor Bell stated that if it is the will of the Councilmember, Mr. Michetich could

be appointed after his service on the Public Safety Building Committee has been completed.

NO ACTION TAKEN.

9. NEW BUSINESS

9.I. Resolution R-2025-0029

After clarification that the signing agents on the account are the City Manager, Finance Director, and City Clerk, Councilmember Yancy made a motion to adopt Resolution No R-2025-0029. Councilmember Ross seconded. **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

9.II. Resolution R-2025-0030

Mayor Pro Tem Compian made a motion to adopt Resolution No R-2025-0030. Councilmember Ross seconded. **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

9.III. Public Safety Building

Mayor Pro Tem Compian made a motion to approve the Public Safety Building Conceptual Design Proposal from Project Luong in the amount of \$40,000. Councilmember Ross seconded. **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

9.IV. Texas Health Benefits Pool

Human Resources Manager Mikala Halbrook proudly announced that the city only saw a 2% increase, whereas other cities have seen up to 11% increases.

Mayor Pro Tem Compian made a motion to approve the City Manager to sign the Renewal Notice and Benefit Verification Form for the Fiscal Year 2026 benefits term. Councilmember Ross seconded. **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

9.V. Economic Development Corporation

Mayor Bell stated that at least once a year a joint workshop is held in public with the Economic Development Corporation (EDC). He is not looking for any particular items, just possible dates to send to the EDC.

Mayor Pro Tem Compian asked for a date range.

Mayor Bell requested that the meeting be set approximately within the next 45 days.

Councilmember Yancy requested that the meeting take place before a council meeting.

Mayor Bell recommended June 23 or July 28 at 1 p.m. in Council Chambers. He requested a list of agenda items presented by the EDC to be sent to the Mayor and City Manager prior so that they could be placed on the agenda.

NO ACTION TAKEN.

9.VI. Street Plan

Mayor Bell announced that the May election has passed and the county bond for street repair and maintenance was passed by the voters. He asked Mr. Pritchett to name streets addressed by county bond. He followed with the statement that this leaves "a whole lot of streets" for the council to determine how to provide resources to address the rest of the street maintenance issues. The city has equipment, human resources, and approximately 1 million dollars in the street

maintenance budget, but has a need to determine what the annual street maintenance program looks like.

Mayor Bell proposed that whichever date is not chosen by the EDC for a joint workshop is used for this item.

City Manager Pritchett listed the streets included in the county bond as Moss St., Rosewood St., Meadow Ln., Norman St., Acres St., Azelia Courts, Nanlee St., Corbett St, Bellview St., and Fleming St.

Mayor Pro Tem Compian asked for clarity regarding the bridge project at Flemming. It was determined that while the bridge repair at Flemming is a separate project, they will be conducted together.

Councilmember Lowry requested what districts the roads are in be brought back to council at the next meeting.

City Manager Pritchett requested that this item be coupled with the meeting requested in item 9.VII.

NO ACTION TAKEN.

9.VII. Special Meeting

City Clerk Nance shared that there would need to be a special meeting in order to canvass the election from June 7, 2025. She recommended that the meeting be held on June 16, 2025, at 6:00 p.m. in order to comply with election law.

Mayor Pro Tem Compian made a motion to approve a Special Meeting on June 7, 2025, at 6:00 p.m. as recommended. Councilmember Lowry seconded. **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

10. CITY MANAGER REPORT

The City Manager's Report stood as submitted.

10.I. 2024 La Marque Police Department Annual Report

10.II. April 2025 Municipal Court Stats

10.III. April 2025 Council Finance Report

10.IV. May 2025 Sales Tax Revenue

10.V. April 2025 Stormwater Report

10.VI. Items For The Good Of The Order

City Manager Pritchett announced that Wednesday, June 18th, 2025 is the City's Annual Juneteenth Gala 6:00 p.m. at McKinney Memorial United Methodist. The Texas City-La Marque Chamber's Business Showcase would be held on Wednesday, June 11, 2025, to which the city is a Platinum Sponsor. He invited all businesses, big and small, to participate. On the previous Saturday, the grand opening of HotWorx on 1765 was held and he extended a welcome to HotWorx.

He shared that additional Court dates will be added throughout the remainder of the year to reduce length of court sessions.

There were many important meetings scheduled for the upcoming week such as with the United Way Board of Directors, as well as Texas New Mexico Power and Centerpoint Energy.

He also announced that an intergovernmental Interlocal Agreement is in progress with Galveston County Drainage District #2.

He closed with the announcement of Library Director Amy Miller as step up Deputy City Manager.

11. EXECUTIVE SESSION

Councilmember Lowry declined to enter into executive session.

11.1. For the purpose of hearing a complaint or charge against an officer or employee: Councilmember District C -District A/ District D

12. ACTIONS TAKEN FROM EXECUTIVE SESSION

Since Councilmember Lowry declined to enter into Executive Session, Mayor Bell reiterated the rules for discussion, citing that the complaint would be read in full without interruption, then the person who received the complaint would be given the floor. From that point the councilmembers can ask questions or comment, and if necessary a vote will be held after. He stated that if any disruptions occur during this process he will request twice for the individual to adhere to the rules for discussion, before escalating the situation, which could include mics being muted, or removal from the meeting.

12.1. For the purpose of hearing a complaint or charge against an officer or employee: Councilmember District C -District A/ District D

Councilmember Ross made the initial complaint concerning an email sent by Councilmember Lowry to the Economic Development Corporation Director, City Manager and City Clerk regarding a potential business situation. He shared his disapproval with the email, and asked for a censure due to a Councilmember attempting to "decide" what businesses come to La Marque.

Councilmember Lowry stated that it is highly inappropriate to "coordinate an attack on a sitting elected official". He also called it highly unethical for a person who is currently suing him, to bring an ethics complaint against him. He believes that he does have the right to decide, as both an elected official and constituent. He voiced that he thinks his "lego idea" is the "dumbest thing (he's) ever heard" and also stated "there's a lot of questionable things around you and children in my opinion" to Councilmember Ross.

Mayor Bell asked the council to refrain from personal attacks and stated that he would not allow for criminal allegations against anyone on the dias to be made in this setting. He believed that Councilmember Lowry had the capacity to defend himself, without making those types of accusations.

Councilmember Lowry responded that Councilmember Ross had attacked his business and he responded. He also stated that it was very unprofessional, disgusting, and inappropriate for him to receive the complaints with the agenda. He asked for "more professionalism" out of the City Attorney and City Clerk.

Mayor Bell stated that each time a complaint has been lodged against him, he has seen it as part of the agenda, and he has never had the opportunity to see them prior. He also, as a point of information, pointed out that while Councilmember Lowry has taken the position that it is unethical for a person who is suing him to bring forward an ethics complaint, Councilmember Lowry has made several

complaints against Mayor Bell and Councilmember Yancy, who he is in active litigation with.

Councilmember Lowry stated that the complaints were brought to him, and he was the "voice for the constituents". Everyone just assumed it was him, so he "got the attack back there".

Councilmember Yancy questioned Councilmember Lowry if the email was actually from him, to which he confirmed. Councilmember Yancy read the email into the record. The email reads, "I am concerned about the Economic Development Corporation giving grants or brakes on a lease for James Ross. James Ross does not have the mental capacity to do research and realize that a Lego store is not going to work with our demographics. We are a very poor community with high crime and nobody's going to come here to buy Legos from James Ross when they can buy them at the dollar store. Many citizens are concerned that the Economic Development Corporation might get duped into giving him money or even a break on a lease. I hope the Economic Development Corporation can see that nobody's going to buy Legos from James Ross when they can buy them on eBay Amazon or even the local dollar store. James Ross said his store is set to open in October I hope there is no truth to that if the taxpayers are footing the bill." She apologized to Councilmember Ross for the email, and felt that this was inappropriate. She stated that the council has requested that if there is a disagreement between one another that they speak one-on-one, to which she asked Councilmember Ross if that had happened.

Councilmember Ross stated that the only conversation that was held was Councilmember Lowry asked him when his business would be opened, to which he responded October. However, he clarified that he has a couple of different ventures in progress citing a change in the Texas Cottage Bakery Law.

Councilmember Yancy questioned if the Economic Development Corporation has provided incentives in the past, it was confirmed.

Councilmember Lowry clarified his belief that it is highly inappropriate for a Councilmember to set up a business prior to leaving council, stating that "it reeks of corruption".

Councilmember Yancy asked City Attorney Knebel if it was against the law to receive an incentive from the Economic Development Corporation at this juncture.

City Attorney Knebel stated that he would have to defer the response to the Economic Development Corporation's legal advisor.

Mayor Pro Tem Compian shared that he has set a standard when looking at complaints. Social media is not an evidentiary complaint, they have been discussed previously. However, the standards do include documents, and this item does bother him. Questioning Councilmember Ross's mental capacity is "a bridge too far" and he hoped Councilmember Lowry would apologize. He believes the other submitted complaints are at best misinformation.

Mayor Bell recognized that the email is not a social media issue, but is inside the vein of the City of La Marque. He believed Councilmember Lowry has the capacity to represent the residents of District C "without all of this", and he looks forward to that day. He acknowledged Councilmember Lowry's laughter, and stated that it is not a joke, even though the Councilmember may think it is, others in the

community do not. He believes that the Councilmember has a right to his opinion, he gets that, but what is being asked is that he not continue the part where it goes beyond that and becomes about the person, and not the issue.

Councilmember Ross affirmed to Councilmember Lowry that he did not have the right to discuss any of his personal financial business.

Councilmember Lowry in an effort to "save everybody's time", declined to apologize. He has every right to an opinion as it is his First Amendment right, but he will entertain the circus.

Councilmember Lowry then made a motion to censure himself for exercising his first amendment right. Councilmember Ross seconded.

Councilmember Ross stated that Councilmember Lowry is not a "free speech person". He is a "Joseph Lowry says it, so that's what it is" person.

Councilmember Yancy added that the First Amendment does not give you the right to harass. She feels that it is sad that the member of council cannot model the expectation of professionalism, and just apologize. This is not something the council takes pleasure in.

Councilmember Lowry disagreed. He is just here "for the will of the people". He stated that this is a waste of time because "next week, and tomorrow, and the day after that I'm going to say something and I don't care if you agree with it or not".

He stated that he will continue to fight corruption and expose things. It's not going to stop. The council can censure him every meeting; it doesn't do anything.

Councilmember Yancy requested an amendment to remove the first amendment statement.

Councilmember Lowry declined the amendment.

MOTION FAILED 2 AYES (COMPIAN/ LOWRY) AND 3 NAYS (BELL/ ROSS/ YANCY)

Councilmember Ross made a motion to censure Councilmember Lowry for trying to disrupt a small business from being established in La Marque. Councilmember Yancy seconded. **MOTION CARRIED 4 AYES 1 NAY (LOWRY).**

City Attorney Knebel advised against discussion on the second complaint formed, as it is part of a demand letter that the city just received.

Councilmember Lowry requested to read the complaint into record.

City Attorney Knebel again advised against it, but informed the council they were free to not take the advice.

Councilmember Lowry shared his contempt for this decision.

Mayor Bell, as the presiding officer, declined to move forward with the second complaint at the recommendation of the City Attorney.

13. REQUESTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Councilmember Lowry stated he is having a hard time communicating with the City Manager, and he requested to be informed about meetings with constituents. He feels that a brick wall has been put up regarding communication. He stated that drainage in his district is really important, and the previous city manager was doing an excellent job.

Councilmember Ross congratulated Ms. Miller, announced a community yard sale on the following Saturday at the V.F.W. He said that it had been a pleasure, and he still had a few fights left in him, such as learning more about the situation on Avenue B.

Councilmember Yancy has enjoyed serving with Councilmember Ross, and apologized for him not being able to finish. She has spoken to many elected officials and they have

assured her that they have never seen climates such as this. She brings great news from Washington D.C. where work is being done to protect federal funding in the area in the face of DOGE cuts. Government is about trying to develop and bring opportunities to the city. She requested an ordinance or ruling regarding entities that apply for Section 3 a community liaison posts the position in places where students and recent grads can apply. She has been visiting sister cities to show that La Marque is welcoming and requested to be kept informed about Houston-Galveston Area Council activities. She thanked City Manager Pritchett for the interlocal agreement discussions with Galveston County Drainage District #2. She asked for the City Manager to look into the creation of a Generator Program, where residents could get discounted generators. She encouraged everyone to take care of themselves and she is looking forward to Juneteenth Gala and Life & Liberty.

Mayor Pro Tem Compian congratulated Ms. Miller, an excellent choice, stating that it's good to have diversity. He wished Councilmember Ross well. He informed the City Manager that Main Street is overgrown, and it is not a pretty smell there. He knew this would take collaboration with Texas Department of Transportation. He reminds members of the Council and the public to go to the Texas General Land Office website and submit comments on the state's action plan. They are looking for project-ready projects.

Councilmember Yancy congratulated Finance Director Christine Turner for the award she received, 2025 Greater Houston American Society of Public Administration's Public Interface Award, and congratulations to Ms. Miller.

Councilmember Lowry recognized June as Mens Mental Health Awareness Month, citing that he lost his brother to suicide a year ago. He asked everyone to reach out to their friends, and maintain communication. He informed the community that the Galveston County Sherrifs Office has a hotline.

Mayor Bell reiterated that the Juneteenth Gala is Wednesday, June 18th. This is important to the county, as this is the birthplace. This is especially important because, in collaboration with the federal government, a freedom trail is being constructed. It is important to acknowledge what this community did to move humanity forward. "If you don't care about any of that, it brings economic impact to the community". He requested a stormwater and storm readiness report. He also requested a report on Heroes Village. He again congratulated Shannon Breaux, one of the nicest people he has ever met. The sky is the limit. He congratulated Ms. Miller in her new position, and requested clarification regarding the "step up" designation. He congratulated Councilmember-Elect Tonia Griffin, and thanked each person who appeared on the ballot. He hoped that this would not be the last time they volunteered for the City of La Marque. He shared some of the positive achievements of Councilmember Ross, including the diligent work he did regarding water rates. He wished every father in the community a Happy Father's Day.

14. ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Pro Tem Compian made a motion to adjourn. Councilmember Ross seconded.
MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

***Meeting was adjourned at 8:40 p.m.*