CITY OF LA MARQUE
CITY COUNCIL
SPECIAL MINUTES
of
August 5, 2025

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER
   Mayor Bell called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

2. ROLL CALL
   PRESENT:

Keith Bell	Mayor
Joe Compian	Mayor Pro Tem/District B
Kimberley Yancy	District A (arrived at 10:36 a.m.)
Joseph Lowry	District C
Tonia Griffin	District D

3. INVOCATION AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE
   Mayor Pro Tem Compian gave the invocation and City Clerk Kierra Nance led the pledge.

4. CITIZENS PARTICIPATION
   There was no citizen participation.

5. NEW BUSINESS

   5.I. Review And Discuss Proposed Fiscal Year 2025-2026 Departmental Budgets And All Funds
   Library Technician Tom Hansen shared that the county provides $32,000 to purchase library books and additional resources, clarifying that 50% is to be utilized on circulated items.
   Mayor Pro Tem Compian clarified that the library is a free Wi-Fi zone that residents can use at any time.
   Discussions regarding the air conditioning unit repair ensued where Mr. Hansen clarified that there are four air conditioning units at that facility. This led to a discussion on the possibility of shifting the funding for the repair from the general fund to American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding.
   Mr. Hansen shared that while the Summer Reading Program participation diminished this year, there were approximately 95 summer camp activities that averaged an attendance of 15 students. There had been discussions with the principal of Hayley Elementary about additional partnerships, leading to a conversation about a partnership between the summer camp and summer school.
   Mayor Pro Tem Compian shared the idea of a "municipal ID card", a discount card for residents.

Alec Luong of Project Luong gave a brief presentation regarding the Public Safety Building. He shared that his team went to the building known as Building A and discovered that it is designated as a Risk Category II, a non-critical structure, a standard building. However, in order to be a Public Safety Building, the building would need to be upgraded to Risk Category IV, a critical structure. This building would need approximately 50% more steel in order to be sufficient, and the building needs to be lifted approximately 6 inches. He explained the selective demolition process, and determined that this proposition would be a significant cost.
***Councilmember Yancy entered at 10:36 a.m.*
Mr. Luong spoke to the council's previous recommendation for a modular building, which was researched and, after speaking with experts, it was determined that there were concerns regarding hardening the building.
Discussions regarding lessening the footprint of the building ensued, taking an interest in reducing the size of the jail.
Councilmember Lowry stated that "this isn't rocket science" and the council has been talking about this for five years.
Mayor Pro Tem Compian identified that part of the reason this conversation has been so extensive is due to Councilmember Lowry, prior to the council, leading the charge for a tax rollback, which caused the council and administration to have to regroup and redirect their focus because he represented the sentiments of certain portions of the community. He shared that since Councilmember Lowry now supports the station, he believes that this process can move forward.
Mayor Bell shared his sentiments that this is something he and the council have been "banging this drum" for a long time, and he is glad the council is unanimous on this.
Councilmember Yancy stated that she is excited to move forward, and would like to see the building close to the high school so that a public safety internship program could be created with the building, but she does not want that to delay the process.
Mr. Luong asked for clarifications regarding whether the "soft costs" would be included in the bond. The council identified that he would need to partner with Interim City Manager Holly.

Shanna Lopez of Waste Management gave a brief overview of their processes this past year. She asked for clarity regarding BayouFest as she had heard that there may be some changes to the event and if that does not happen, then they would need to redirect that $50,000 donation.
Mayor Bell clarified that while there had been discussions about changing the date, it is not being canceled.
Ms. Lopez stated that moving forward a list of addresses with bulk and brush waste that is not picked up by Waste Management due to not having met the requirements so that Code Enforcement can get involved. A very lengthy discussion regarding bulk trash and storm debris ensued.
Councilmember Griffin shared that Ms. Lopez was very informative, but there were still holes in the process.

Mayor Pro Tem Compian requested a link to the Waste Management website regarding bulk trash pickup, Ms. Lopez stated that Waste Management would create a web page explicitly for the city.
Councilmember Lowry stated that Waste Management did not bid for this process last year, and there were other companies that were interested but were not given the opportunity. He believes that the city got "stuck" with Waste Management.
Mayor Bell stated that there are many in the community that are so invested in their own lives that they do not know what some of the requirements are. Most people cannot register what five cubic yards is, and they do not seek out and read the Waste Management website to figure it out. He believes that this could be resolved through proper communication, finding a way that is easier to say it, and committing it to memory to reduce this anger. Discussions regarding increased education ensued.
Discussions regarding the requirements of bulk pickup and the availability of landfill drop off occured.
Various Councilmembers shared specific areas of concern regarding bulk piles at various locations.
Councilmember Yancy stated that Waste Management has always been responsive, and she thanked Ms. Lopez for her cooperation.

Utility Billing Supervisor Venisha Henderson appeared for questions. Mayor Pro Tem Compian questioned the Customer Usage Portal implementation timeline.
Supervisor Henderson stated that the city is still in contract negotiations and estimated a launch date by the end of 2026. It was determined that this should be completed prior.
Mayor Pro Tem Compian questioned what happens when a resident has a water leak. Supervisor Henderson stated that there is an alert the department receives, and they contact the resident. During that contact, they inform the residents of their ability to potentially get a rate adjustment.
Mayor Pro Tem Compian shared his concerns regarding an issue with the online water bill payment portal.
IT Technician Avery Bowers shared that there is an online certificate that has expired that the department is working on to have the error message removed.
Mayor Pro Tem Compian requested that, after the initial two-year implementation period, that the city continue to utilize this service with funding from the utility fund. He also utilized this time to share that he does not support additional water rate increases.
Mayor Bell questioned how many people are supervised by Ms. Henderson. She identified that there is a billing analyst and three customer service reps, all of whom are CPR certified.
Councilmember Yancy asked what improvements have been made in the department. Supervisor Henderson stated that customer service has greatly improved along with communications with Waste Management.
Mayor Bell stated that these processes are usually hard on the Finance Director as the council combs through the numbers, and it is nothing against Finance Director Turner as she has done a "bang-up job".
Discussions regarding Utility Billing Professional Fees ensued. It was clarified that

this is where annual licenses are paid. Discussions regarding the purchase and lifespan of water meters ensued.
Mayor Bell identified that the city has very young but very gifted department heads and that is certainly unique in La Marque.

James Osteen (2012 Jeridona) questioned the utility fund. It shows an ending balance of $19,506,798, questioning if it is cash. Finance Director Turner stated that there could be a number of things. It is not all cash.
Mayor Bell asked for a breakdown of the line item for the afternoon session.
Mr. Osteen asked if the $2,196,030 ending balance of the Impact Fee Fund was cash, to which Director Turner shared that she would need to research. He also identified a $100,000 difference in the Utility Fund from the Summary of All Funds sheet to the Utility Funds Revenue page. He followed with a question about the fleet program being split into two different areas. It was determined that this is because it is paid from two different funds.
***Mayor Bell recessed for lunch at 12:30 p.m. and returned at 2:09 p.m.*

Court Administrator Stacy Froeschner shared that the department has done an Omnibase cleanup, is 90% paperless, added additional dockets, implemented a text system to communicate with defendants, strengthened fines and documents compliance and introduced video magistrate. She shared her goals, including the Traffic Safety Incentive Award, additional certifications for staff, a sync of the court and police department software, and additional clean-up in the department software.
Discussions regarding the Juvenile Diversion Program the Municipal Judge is looking to implement ensued.
City Marshall Russell Washington shared his experience working with the Teens and Police Service (TAPS) Academy.
Discussions regarding the Court Administrator Certification process ensued, and Mayor Pro Tem Compian suggested that the council consider reinstating certification pay for the department.
*** Councilmember Yancy exited the room at 2:33 p.m. and returned at 2:49 p.m.*
A discussion regarding court-ordered community service, the Keep La Marque Beautiful Saturday cleanups, and the limitations ensued.
Mayor Pro Tem Compian recommended that the municipal court be involved with the Youth Advisory Council.
Discussion regarding the courts' text message notifications and legislative changes that allow for email correspondence ensued.
The professional services line item is utilized for the municipal court include Tyler Technologies, Brazos software, video magistrate, Transunion, Linebarger, and Omnibase. Ms. Froeschner shared that the court technology fund has approx $24,000, some of which is earmarked to purchase ticket writers for the police department.
Discussion regarding the juvenile court fund, as well as the former juvenile case manager ensued with Ms. Froeschner stated that the fund is intended to be utilized for the new juvenile diversion program, as it was previously used for the juvenile case manager. However, she believed that the city does not have enough juvenile

cases for this position to be necessary at this time.
Ms. Froeschner shared information regarding the security fund, stating that those monies could be utilized to add security to city hall as the court is housed there. She shared some concerns regarding her access to her department's general ledgers.
Mayor Pro Tem Compian asked Interim City Manager Holly to consider improvements in the department's accessibility to their financial availability.
Discussions regarding City Marshall service and subpoenas ensued, with City Marshall Washington clarifying that he does not have to "knock on doors" as often due to the additional communications that the court clerks have implemented. He spends a lot of time transporting individuals to and from the court, as he now has the ability to pick up individuals and "work with them" and keep them out of the jail. These individuals are nonviolent and have class c violations, which are typically traffic infractions.
A discussion regarding the city's municipal court's designation as a Safe Harbor Court ensued. City Marshall Washington shared that the move to City Hall has been a huge help because it was difficult to explain to individuals that they could come in and not be arrested when they were housed in the police department.
A discussion regarding Linebarger and the city's collections efforts ensued.
***Mayor Bell recessed the meeting at 3:42 p.m. and returned at 3:59 p.m.*

Development Services Director Jason Ellison and Permit Specialist Cassandra Gutierrez shared that when their department is fully staffed it includes a director, permit coordinator, two full-time permit clerks, a part-time permit clerk, and a building inspector. The department also uses SafeBuilt, formerly known as BB&G, for inspections, and ADICO for engineering services. Director Ellison believes that his payroll line item should not be the $196,000 as reflected in the proposal but closer to $400,000. The council was hesitant regarding such a significant increase.
***Councilmember Griffin exited the meeting at 4:09 p.m.*
Discussions regarding staffing concerns in this area ensued, followed by discussions regarding phone calls and the possibility of a phone tree. Ms. Gutierrez shared that there is a concern with the phone tree as most individuals would rather speak to someone in the department instead of just a general member of staff.
Interim City Manager Holly asked about the department personnel's certifications, and informed the council that she would be willing to do an assessment of the department as she is an urban planner by trade.
Discussions regarding departmental revenues ensued with the council asking for clarifications as there is only a line item for plan review fees and not inspections. However, there is at least one project within the city that has reportedly paid close to one million dollars in plan review fees. Interim City Manager Holly identified these would be classified under the building permits revenue line item. However, the amount reflected should still be reviewed.
A lengthy discussion regarding contractor licenses, plan reviews, and the types of construction require permitting ensued.
Discussions regarding the potential desire to hire a city engineer ensued. Interim City Manager Holly shared that having a contracted city engineering firm is more cost-effective as it is not just one person, they are a team and those individuals

are not utilized eight hours a day.
Mayor Bell stated that this would be an ongoing discussion in order to continue to strengthen the department.

Finance Director Turner answered the questions posed earlier in the day. She began by breaking down the Impact Fee account, stating that the consolidated cash amount is $2,652,530.47. This is composed of monies collected since 2020. The impact fees revenue for 2025 is $395,495.30. The city has transferred $238,994.00 to the utility fund for utilities-funded projects. This collectively creates a fund balance of $2,496,029.17. When asked to clarify what cash was on hand, it was stated that the $2,652,530.47 amount was cash on hand.
Mayor Pro Tem Compian asked for clarified information on what impact fees can be utilized for.
Mr. Osteen questioned if the impact fee money has been collecting interest.
Interim City Manager Holly stated that impact fees can only be used to increase capacity, not to repair or replace.
Mayor Pro Tem Compian asked for a review of all grants and projects related to increasing city capacity.
Finance Director Turner shared that the $19,506,798 shown in the proposal is the cumulative total of funds 2,3,40, and 47.
Finance Director Turner shared that there was a salary adjustment done across certain departments, including finance, human resources, and municipal court. It was clarified that the council showed interest in a 2% cost of living increase for all non-collective bargaining employees as a response to inflation.
Budget Coordinator Monica Veliz clarified that the finance department's professional fees include Beatty Consulting, which helps with bank reconciliations and assists with journal entries. Mayor Bell shared his desire for the city to separate from this consulting firm as they have been with the city for a little over two years, and it is time for this to be handled in-house. Additional services include HDL Consulting, Galveston County Appraisal District, and the city's auditing services.

6. EXECUTIVE SESSION
   There was no Executive Session.

7. ACTIONS TAKEN FROM EXECUTIVE SESSION
   No action was taken.

8. ADJOURNMENT
   Councilmember Yancy made a motion to adjourn. Councilmember Griffin seconded the motion.
   ***meeting was adjourned at 5:32 p.m.*