



**CITY OF LA MARQUE
CITY COUNCIL
REGULAR MINUTES
of
July 14, 2025**

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Mayor Bell called the meeting to order at 6:06 p.m.

2. ROLL CALL

PRESENT:

Keith Bell	Mayor
Joe Compian	Mayor Pro Tem/District B
Kimberley Yancy	District A
Joseph Lowry	District C
Tonia Griffin	District D

3. INVOCATION AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mayor Pro Tem Compian gave the invocation and Acting City Manager Amy Miller led the pledge.

4. PRESENTATIONS

4.1. La Marque Safe City Initiative Update

Chief Randall Aragon gave a brief history of the Safe City Initiative that began in 2021. The city projected to have nine (9) community policing districts at this time, but has surpassed that and now has fourteen (14). He spoke to the department's request for a full-time Gang Unit Officer. The city has a Certified Crime Analyst on staff, which most cities don't have, thanks to a grant the department received. The City's Special Response Team is active and has received requests for collaboration from other local agencies.

Public Works Director Shannon Breaux shared that there has been a collaborative project to improve lighting in the City, including the patrol officers reporting streetlights that they recognize as out of service.

Chief Aragon closed by stating that crime is on the decline as overall crime has been down seventeen percent (17%), violent crimes are down eight percent (8%) and property crime is down eighteen percent (18%). The city has what he considers "all the factors that contribute to crime" but the department is doing an amazing job.

The chief thanked the Mayor for the idea, and he believes that more cities should implement this program.

Councilmember Yancy requested that the convenience store summit happen again, as it was done in 2021, as she believes that is where a lot of crime happens.

Mayor Pro Tem Compian complimented the police department for their efforts,

especially in the property crime area. He also has heard positive public responses to the community policing program, as areas in his district have adopted the officers as family.

Councilmember Griffin thanked the chief and his team for the work they are doing in the community, and also for acclimating her to the inner workings of the police department.

Chief Aragon stated that there are thirteen (13) factors that influence crime. The city has them all, and even faced with that, the city is doing something amazing. Councilmember Lowry thanked the officers for the work that they do.

4.II. Proclamation: National Parks Month

Members of the Parks Board, including Chairperson Mike "Rock" Bock, Mike Wev, and Mary Limones, received a proclamation honoring July as Parks and Recreation Month.

5. CITIZENS PARTICIPATION

- David Hall (17th Ave N Texas City, TX) was invited by a Councilmember for their actions and words, including a statement that he would "kick (his) behind". He offered to wait in the parking lot for him.
- Robert Michetich (24 N Curlew) requested that the TIRZ Ordinance be tabled. He pulled his support from the Public Safety Building and asked for a delay as no bond would pass. He shared his displeasure with the timeliness of building and infrastructure projects in the city.
- Joe Abraham Hix Sr (Volney St) spoke in April about the lack of excavation of ditches, and was told that a second Gradall was purchased that would help. His is still clogged and will not flow south. He asked where the city started.
- Mark McGaffey (Downey) provided the council with a document and apologized if there were any misspellings. He pleaded with the Mayor and Council to not change Bayou Fest as it is an event for the residents.
- James Ross (Ave D) is here because he received a text from someone "posing as a journalist", and believed that in relation to a lawsuit he has against a Councilmember, he was doxed. He also shared his discontent with a staff member's address that was published by a Councilmember and residents.
- Carl Beard (*declined to give address*) spoke regarding "complexion for protection." He stated that he spent three hours in the county jail for a doxing charge against an individual that allegedly has done the same thing to a former councilmember. He accused the police department of failing to investigate misconduct, selectively releasing or sealing videos, and conducting illegal stops and searches, including one involving his daughter. He urged an official investigation into the police department's leadership and alleged that white supremacists have infiltrated local law enforcement.
- Judy Sturgeon (Melody Dr) called for a forensic audit of city government spending before any further actions are taken. She emphasized that despite ongoing scandals and repeated citizen requests, no audit has been conducted. She urges that the audit be performed by a state agency to determine financial accountability and identify who should remain or be removed from their positions.

- Mike Bock (Longridge) requested that Bayou Fest remain on the third Saturday of October. He questioned why the staff was so quick to publish a calendar before the Special Events Committee was formed. He made recommendations for the calendar.
- Richard Holcomb (*declined to give address*) requested that the chain be removed from the boat ramp. He shared his support for keeping the Mayor Pro Tem as is. He stated, "Y'all have a stirred-up hornet's nest right now," and he hoped that it would be resolved.
- Clarence Caldwell (Prairie St) spoke regarding sewage at Newman Road and a pile of wood on Prairie Street that has been there for six (6) months with no citations. He thanked Chief Aragon for his assistance.
- Hayley Winkelmann (Bowie St) thanked public works for addressing graffiti, blocked drains, tree limbs, and trash cans in the community. She then raised concerns about the police chief, noting he lacked a valid TCOLE license for 167 days and allegedly violated reporting and ethics guidelines. She presented stacks of documents showing numerous incident reports and criminal investigations involving a councilmember from 2021 to 2025, questioning whether recent conduct correlates with certain events like Citizens Police Academy participation or the chief's license reinstatement. She also notes ongoing community needs, including blue reflectors for firefighters and a fence around a new playground.
- Re'Chard Loftis (Johnson St) offered a challenge to the council and citizens, to try to work together. It is ridiculous what has been happening for the last four (4) years. "Do you love La Marque or do you love to see La Marque fail? Choose one."
- Kathy Hernandez (788 Bay Crest Ct) ***declined to speak***
- Sharon Boulton (1905 Howell) found out today that the residents are being charged two dollars (\$2.00) on water bills for park fees. She feels that the senior citizens of La Marque have probably lived here for a long time and have paid a lot of taxes. She believes that senior citizens should be exempt. She asked the citizens to pray for her husband as he was about to have surgery.
- Tykisha Murphy (2604 Cedar) shared her praises of Chief Aragon's engagement with the community. She encouraged the community to join community awareness groups to be more informed. She loves La Marque and has no plans of leaving. If you say you love La Marque, you have to show your love for La Marque.

***Mayor Pro Tem Compian exited the room at 7:13 p.m. and returned at 7:15 p.m.*

- Laura Divine (Merry Ln) is saddened by the events of the last few days. She is hurt that the city has become the laughingstock of the county. She questioned how the town could have such a bad representation. She asked each and every Councilmember to stop all the hatefulness. She asked where the times went where people could agree to disagree. She also reminded the council that she spoke up against the process of Chief Aragon's appointment at the time it happened. It wasn't anything personal, just an issue with the process. She asked everyone who has a problem with the police department to call and schedule a

meeting with the Chief. He would love to hear from you. She offered scripture in closing: 1 John 3:18, 1 Thessalonians 5:11.

- James Osteen (2012 Jeridona) spoke regarding the contract with N Zone Sports, as there are no insurance certificates included in the proposal, nor is there a termination clause. He also spoke to mosquito control provisions, and marketing requests. He asked that the attorney be allowed to review the contract before approval. He just wants the city protected.
- Amber Ferguson (Austin) questioned if the council loved America or La Marque, and if "we are all in this together." She spoke to a Councilmember accusing her of "indoctrinating" children. She fervently disagreed and stated that she taught all of her children to lead by example. She requested that the council lead with love, and to stop calling residents "thugs". She asked the council representatives to work with the council and stop the foolishness. She asked the council to be the change they want to see and the change they are speaking about.

6. MINUTES

Councilmember Yancy made a motion to approve all minutes as submitted. Councilmember Griffin seconded. **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

6.I. Regular City Council Minutes 04.14.2025

6.II. Special City Council Minutes 12.05.2024

7. OLD BUSINESS

7.I. Boards and Commissions Appointments

Councilmember Griffin nominated Vincent Mitchell to the Youth Advisory Council. Councilmember Yancy nominated Jade Bailey to the Youth Advisory Council. Mayor Pro Tem Compian nominated Emery Guajardo to the Youth Advisory Council. Mayor Bell nominated Daiona Hill to the Youth Advisory Council. Councilmember Lowry seconded all Youth Advisory nominations. **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Mayor Bell nominated Daniel Guidry to the Special Events Committee. Mayor Pro Tem Compian requested that this item be deferred until more information is provided.

Councilmember Griffin seconded the nomination. **MOTION CARRIED WITH 3 AYES (Bell/ Griffin/ Yancy) 1 NAY (Compian) and 1 ABSTENTION (Lowry).**

7.II. Special/ Joint Meetings Scheduling

Mayor Bell identified that the purpose of this meeting would be to conduct a review of the city's street programming and identify funding mechanisms. Mayor Bell requested July 21, 2025. However, Public Works Director Breaux is out of office that week but would be willing to allow Assistant Public Works Director Amanda Hobby to present in his place. Mayor Pro Tem Compian made a motion to schedule meetings for Monday, July 28th, 2025, meeting with Public Works at 1:00 p.m. and the Economic Development Corporation at 3:00 p.m. Councilmember Griffin seconded. **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

7.III. Special Events

Mayor Bell believed that over the past several years the city has struggled with planning events. It is his belief that this document was the administration's first draft. He is willing to allow the committee to schedule the events. However, his concern is Bayou Fest as it has not been as successful as in years past. Bayou Fest was successful under the administration of former Mayor Bobby Hocking, but Mayor Bell has different strengths, as he is more Public Safety focused.

Council discussed the draft special events calendar for fiscal years 2025-2026, focusing primarily on Bayou Fest and the need for improved event planning and organization. The Mayor emphasized that the calendar serves as a flexible planning tool rather than a finalized schedule, and highlighted the creation of a special events committee composed of representatives from the Parks Board, Keep La Marque Beautiful, Economic Development Corporation, Administration, Finance, Communications, the Mayor and Mayor Pro Tem, Emergency Services, and two at-large residents.

Concerns were raised regarding the past challenges of Bayou Fest, including funding, organization, and staff support. The Mayor noted the need for additional partnerships to ensure the event's continued success. Mr. Daniel Guidry and representatives from Bon Temp Rouler (BTR) presented their experience in organizing large events, including fundraising, ticket sales, and volunteer management. BTR expressed willingness to collaborate with the city to enhance Bayou Fest without replacing or diminishing the original event.

Discussion included potential date adjustments for Bayou Fest and other city events, including "Fair on the Square," with considerations for community tradition, seasonal scheduling, staffing, safety, and city expenditures. Council members debated whether to maintain Bayou Fest in October or move its name and associated activities to March, with attention to volunteer and staff support. The Mayor and committee emphasized collaboration and maintaining both events while balancing city resources.

Mayor Pro Tem Compian made a motion to schedule the Bayou Fest event for the third Friday and Saturday in October, and allow the Special Events Committee to schedule other events. Councilmember Lowry seconded. **MOTION FAILED WITH 1 AYE (COMPIAN) 2 NAYS (BELL/YANCY) AND 2 NON-VOTES (GRIFFIN/LOWRY).**

Councilmember Yancy made a motion to move Bayou Fest in conjunction with Bon Temp Rouler to Spring 2026 with the caveat of Fair on the Square to be held on the third Friday and Saturday of October, including a Tejano night to be hosted by the Special Events Committee. Councilmember Griffin seconded. **MOTION CARRIED WITH 3 AYES (BELL/GRIFFIN/YANCY) 1 NAY (COMPIAN) AND 1 ABSTENTION (LOWRY).**

8. NEW BUSINESS

8.I. Amended Ordinance No. O-2025-0010

Mayor Pro Tem Compian made a motion to approve the amended Ordinance No. O-2025-0010. Councilmember Yancy seconded.

Mayor Bell shared that he believed this is a good thing. However, he always votes against Certificates of Obligations because he believes that all large purchases should be conducted by voter approval. He respects his colleagues, but that is his

belief.

MOTION CARRIED WITH 3 AYES (COMPIAN/GRIFFIN/YANCY) AND 2 NAYS (BELL/LOWRY).

8.II. Ordinance No. O-2025-0014

Doug Boudoin, Chairman of the TIRZ #2 Board, shared the board's support of the ordinance, "for the most part". He stated that the board understands that tax dollars cannot be used on private property, resulting in an edit in the language. Councilmember Yancy made a motion to approve Ordinance No. O-2025-0014. Councilmember Griffin seconded. **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

8.III. Authorization to Solicit Bids for Existing Wastewater Treatment Plant

Rehabilitation - Headworks and Disinfection System Improvements

Mayor Pro Tem Compian made a motion to authorize the public advertisement and solicitation of competitive bids for the rehabilitation of the wastewater treatment plant. Councilmember Griffin seconded. **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

8.IV. Texas Water Development Board

Public Works Director Breaux clarified that the city received seven (7) submissions – two (2) were disqualified and five (5) were graded. He stated that based on the grading process, he recommended moving forward with Adico, LLC.

Mayor Pro Tem Compian made a motion to award the Request for Qualifications for Engineering/Architecture/Surveying Services regarding the Texas Water Development Board loan to Adico, LLC. Councilmember Yancy seconded. **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

8.V. Texas New Mexico Power

Councilmember Griffin made a motion to have Mayor Pro Tem Compian and Mills Shirley LLP collaborate to negotiate the electric franchise agreement with Texas-New Mexico Power Company. Councilmember Yancy seconded. **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

8.VI. Partnership with N Zone Sports

Savannah Romero, owner of N Zone Sports Houston Bay Area, stated that her certificate of obligation was presented to the city previously. She is looking to expand the franchise from their League City location into La Marque. Her expectation was that the city and N Zone Sports would sit down to negotiate the contract after the council approved the item tonight.

Parks Board Chairperson Michael "Rock" Bock recommended that the city enter into the partnership.

Councilmember Yancy made a motion to have the City Attorney negotiate a partnership agreement with N Zone Sports. Councilmember Lowry seconded. **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

8.VII. Drug Testing Policy

Mayor Pro Tem Compian questioned the drug testing process. Specifically, he asked if an employee changes positions within the organization, would they be retested?

Human Resources Manager Mikala Halbrook stated that the rules within the

Employee Handbook are not clear in terms of retesting. She shared an exception where an employee transferring from a non-safety position to a safety sensitive position must pass a pre-employment drug screen before performing in their new role. She noted that the Handbook does not define safety sensitive positions versus non-safety sensitive positions.

Mayor Pro Tem requested to see the whole Human Resources Manual.

Councilmember Lowry asked if the city is still doing hair follicle testing and is there random drug testing of employees?

Human Resources Manager Halbrook responded that for all new employees, the hair follicle test is still happening.

She shared that in the event of a workplace accident, a hair follicle and urine test are required, but not testing at random.

Councilmember Lowry shared that there was discussion about stopping the hair follicle testing. However, he believed that this form of testing is harder to create a false positive.

NO ACTION TAKEN.

8.VIII. Council Retreat

Councilmember Yancy made a motion to schedule the Council Retreat for July 22, 2025 at 10:00 A.M. Councilmember Griffin seconded. **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

8.IX. Mayor Pro Tem

Councilmember Yancy asked the council to raise the standard and hold each other accountable. She stated that the Mayor and Mayor Pro Tem have worked together great in the past.

Councilmember Yancy made a motion to nominate Mayor Pro Tem Compian.

Councilmember Griffin seconded the motion.

Councilmember Griffin echoed the calls from the public for peace. She has plans to work with everybody on the council as this city is in dire straights.

Councilmember Lowry called this item "a political attack."

Mayor Bell stated that he and Mayor Pro Tem Compian had been friends for a long time, and it is not easy to hold a council together and move it forward, especially in critical times. He feels that they can work together better, but they are attempting to lead by example.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

9. CITY MANAGER REPORT

***Items 10.III, 10.IV, and 10.V were pulled for discussion.*

9.I. May 2025 Library Statistics

Stood as submitted.

9.II. June 2025 Economic Development Corporation Monthly Report

Stood as submitted.

9.III. June 2025 Mosquito Spraying Report

Councilmember Yancy stated that she has received complaints of mosquito trucks driving too fast.

Public Works Director Breaux stated that if you see a City of La Marque truck speeding, please let him know, but for the public to ensure that it is a City of La Marque truck.

Mayor Pro Tem Compian questioned if the city had any interlocal agreements regarding mosquito spraying equipment and questioned if the county could help supply the city with equipment since the city is assisting them.

9.IV. 2024-June 2025 Comprehensive Storm Water Report

Councilmember Griffin asked if the locations were based on residents' requests. Public Works Director Breaux indicated that there was a mixture of requests and what was found through operations. The main focus was high flood areas, and in the last two (2) major weather events there was no flooding in this area.

Mayor Pro Tem Compian asked what is a channel clean?

Public Works Director Breaux responded that a channel clean is a clearing of a ditch, regrading is digging in the ditch, and a culvert cleaning is where the culverts are flushed out.

9.V. Mahan Park Boat Ramp Update

Public Works Director Breaux stated that physical construction is complete, and the windstorm certification is in review. Once that process is done, there will be a big grand opening event.

9.VI. La Marque High School Update

Development Services Director Jason Ellison gave an update via zoom call. He shared that the new building is roughly sixty percent (60%) complete, and still on target for March 2026. The new stadium and concession area is roughly twenty percent (20%) complete, and the baseball and softball fields have received civil permits.

9.VII. Items for the Good of the Order

Acting City Manager Miller shared that Budget Workshops are coming up in early August, Small Business Series continues at the La Marque Library on August 11th, and the La Marque Summer Camp is in its final week and wrapping up on July 17th.

10. EXECUTIVE SESSION

***Mayor Bell recessed the Regular Meeting and entered into Executive Session at 9:58 p.m.*

10.I. Section 551.074 Personnel Matters

10.II. Section 551.074 Personnel Matters

10.III. Consultation with Attorney

11. ACTIONS TAKEN FROM EXECUTIVE SESSION

***Mayor Bell closed the Executive Session and reconvened the Regular Meeting at 11:38 P.M.*

11.I. Section 551.074 Personnel Matters

Mayor Pro Tem Compian made a motion to authorize the Mayor and Mayor Pro Tem to engage companies that provide interim municipal services on Monday, July 21, 2025, at 6:00 p.m. Councilmember Lowry seconded the motion.

Mayor Bell shared that his thoughts and prayers are with the family of Mr. Pritchett, his wife & children, as well as the staff, and the good people of this city.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

11.II. Section 551.074 Personnel Matters

Mayor Pro Tem Compian made a motion to instruct the city clerk to provide a timeframe on pending work activities within the position. Councilmember Griffin seconded. **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

11.III. Consultation with Attorney

Mayor Pro Tem Compian made a motion to authorize a settlement with Texas City Terminal Railway Company in accordance with the settlement agreement presented to council with corrected dates. Councilmember Yancy seconded.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

12. REQUESTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Councilmember Griffin stated that it has been an exciting three to four (3-4) weeks on council. She has audited District D, and has met with almost every department except Public Works and Legal. She will soon be providing the council and community with her proposed projects.

Councilmember Lowry was excited to work with Councilmember Griffin and thanked Ms. Miller for stepping up and filling some big shoes.

Councilmember Yancy had an amazing time at the Life and Liberty event. She toured the new high school facility and gave praise. She requested a meeting with the drainage district and stated that she was going to miss Ms. Miller.

Mayor Pro Tem Compian stated that the Texas General Land Office has announced its 2024 Disaster Homeowner Assistance Program for any damages sustained during Hurricane Beryl. He announced that Ms. Miller was exceptional, and he appreciates that she brings a sense of calm. He apologized to the citizens and residents of La Marque and vowed that everyone would work together moving forward. He requested a follow-up conversation regarding the City Manager, and a consultation with an attorney regarding the weakness in the city manager selection process.

Mayor Bell shared that Life & Liberty was a success and congratulated the Fire Department for beating the Police Department in the baseball tournament. He believed that the event was a success because it was a family environment. He believes the event is growing into something that will be really great for the community. He asked City Attorney Knebel to get a better understanding of the process that was taken with N Zone Sports. He spoke praises to Ms. Miller, stating that he is proud of her and the work she has done in the community. The Library is a better place and will continue to flourish because of the path she has led them down.

13. ADJOURNMENT

Councilmember Yancy made a motion to adjourn. Councilmember Lowry seconded.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

*****Meeting was adjourned 11:57 p.m.***