



**CITY OF LA MARQUE
CITY COUNCIL
REGULAR MINUTES
of
October 27, 2025**

[IGNORE_INDENT]

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Mayor Bell called the meeting to order at 6:02 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

3. INVOCATION AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mayor Bell gave the invocation and Councilmember Yancy led the pledge.

4. PRESENTATIONS

4.I. Proclamation: Randall Aragon

Mayor Bell presented Chief Randall Aragon with a proclamation celebrating his extensive career in public safety and honoring his retirement.

4.II. Proclamation: National Family Literacy Day

Dr. Melissa Duarte, Superintendent, and Ann Anderson, Executive Director of Curriculum and Instruction, representatives of the Texas City Independent School District, received a proclamation honoring National Family Literacy Day.

4.III. Presentation: WISE Awards

Mayor Pro Tem Compian shared that the city has received WISE awards from the Houston-Galveston Area Council for the city's "Arts in the Park" program and the Mahan Boat Ramp project.

4.IV. Presentation: Financial Update

Finance Director Worth Ferguson shared that the city has released the first batch of documents from fiscal year 2025, including budget to actual reports for all departments and funds, a series of reports, and the general ledger. He also shared that there is a summary document available that explains each report and what it is used for. He reviewed the new financial tracking sheet that is available for public view.

Mayor Pro Tem Compian asked clarifying questions regarding the information

posted online. However, some of the information is not visible in the correct spaces.

Councilmember Yancy asked for an additional summary regarding departmental overages that is easy for the public to track, as well as revenue tracking.

Councilmember Lowry initially thanked Director Ferguson for his community conversations, and he asked about what type of spending cuts are going to be required.

Director Ferguson stated that the city has not identified what those would be at this time as staff is still doing their due diligence.

Mayor Bell questioned if Director Ferguson felt that the council and community were provided with adequate information regarding the city's financial situation. Director Ferguson shared that due to his lack of faith in the information that is recorded in the city's financial software, he believes it would have been very difficult for the council and community to have been given adequate information. "It is very difficult to provide perfectly accurate information with bad data."

Mayor Bell questioned if Director Ferguson had found anything in his research and analysis of the city's financial health that would suggest anything other than mismanagement by staff members?

Director Ferguson clarified that while he has not at this point, he also has not "dug deep" and is still reviewing at a very high level. He also clarified that it "does very much appear" that there was a lack of control in the city's finances.

Mayor Bell's final question related to a statement regarding lending institutions requiring additional cuts in order to partner with the city. He clarified that these cuts would be administrative and at the direction of Interim City Manager Holly. Both City Attorney Gus Knebel and Interim City Manager Holly agreed that these would be administrative functions and not a function of the council.

5. CITIZENS PARTICIPATION

- Marcus Ball ***declined to give address*** shared his concerns with personal attacks from councilmembers. He shared that pointing at a Councilmember is what earned him a felony stop as a false report was made. He often defended this person in his home and the situation is unfortunate. He also thanked Mr. Ferguson for his efforts.
- Joshua Morris ***declined to give address*** spoke to the mismanagement in public safety.

***Councilmember Lowry exited the meeting at 7:07 p.m.*

- Robert Harvey ***declined to give address*** congratulated Chief Rodriguez, and stated that he will get to know him soon. Earlier in the day, he published a video of the crimes committed against him by a sitting Councilmember and their spouse. He has not yet reported them to the police department. He will be doing so later in the week. He asked that if a false report was made that the person be arrested and if the aforementioned felony stop was due to a simple hand gesture that is a first amendment right and should have never warranted a stop.

***Councilmember Lowry returned at 7:12 p.m.*

- Nicholas Roque (Newman) stated that disagreements are part of democracy, but manipulation is not. He will not accept false narratives and asked that the city stop reducing serious discussions.
- Ted Hill (Texas City) is not concerned with the minutia of running government, but provided a copy of a message he received from the Lord for each of the councilmembers.
- John Brady (Volney) spoke to say "thank you" for taking care of lift station #18, it is a big help to the area. He is having a problem with four-wheelers in his area.
- Hugo Castro (La Marque property owner) is having an issue with trash on the lot next to a property he owns on State Highway 3.
- Re'Chard Loftis (La Marque) shared concerns regarding the Code Enforcement Division. He is almost to the point of taking matters into his own hands and cleaning up his neighborhood. He thanked Fire Chief Merryman for always answering his calls but he has no faith in some members of the department.
- Clarence Caldwell (La Marque) thanked the council for getting Newman Road opened. He also echoed the sentiments of a previous resident regarding the four-wheelers. He stated that the issue is that the city is giving warnings instead of fines. He questioned if the city is prepared for the increase of crime due to the government shutdown and loss of government assistance in the community.
- Audrey Cumby ***declined to give address*** gave a brief biography, and shared concerns regarding a situation shared at the last council meeting she believes that any sitting council member who harasses its own citizens has no business holding that office. She spoke to the accusations made against the City Clerk's Office regarding petition forms and shared a copy of what the forms should look like.
- Brandon Kantowski (Oaklawn) thanked Mayor Bell for listening to his complaints, as the city manager, previous city manager, and previous chief of police did not listen.
- Hayley Winkelmann ***declined to give address*** stated that she has uncovered collusion, conspiracy, and possibly even corruption.
- Devonya Greenwood ***declined to give address*** spoke regarding requested changes in the police department under the new police department leadership.

6. MINUTES

***Items 6.II and 6.III were pulled from consideration.*

Councilmember Griffin made a motion to approve minutes as submitted.

Mayor Pro Tem Compian seconded.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

6.I. Regular City Council Minutes 10.13.2025

6.II. Regular City Council Minutes 07.28.2025

6.III. Special City Council Minutes 07.21.2025

6.IV. Regular City Council Minutes 07.14.2025

6.V. Special City Council Minutes 02.10.2025

6.VI. Regular City Council Minutes 09.09.2024

7. OLD BUSINESS

7.I. Boards and Commissions Appointments

Councilmember Yancy nominated Jamie Ray Loftis for the Parks Board.

Councilmember Griffin seconded.

MOTION CARRIED WITH 4 AYES 1 ABSTENTION (LOWRY).

7.II. Amended Ordinance No. O-2025-0028

Mayor Pro Tem Compian made a motion to approve the amended Ordinance No. O-2025-0028.

***Mayor Pro Tem Compian withdrew the motion.*

Interim City Manager Holly thanked the Economic Development Corporation for their assistance.

Finance Director Ferguson stated that the payment terms had changed in a way that is beneficial to the city.

Mayor Pro Tem Compian clarified that the price is based upon fair market value whereas the initial asking price was from several years ago.

Councilmember Lowry questioned who determined what the fair market value is. He discussed a previous offer regarding the sale of this land that was not accepted.

Mayor Pro Tem Compian made a motion to approve the amended Ordinance No. O-2025-0028.

Councilmember Griffin seconded.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

8. NEW BUSINESS

8.I. Ordinance No. O-2025-0029

Finance Director Ferguson stated that this new policy is more aligned with best practices, assessing a flat rate depending on the size of the waterline and then assessing a value to usage. He stated that there will be informational sessions for the public regarding this change. He clarified that the new ordinance allows for \$1.50 rebate per 1000 gallons, noting that the first 1000 gallons is only \$2. Under this new model, "if you use more, you pay more."

Mayor Pro Tem Compian clarified that the base rate is currently \$12.50 and the new proposal increases the base rate for water connections of 3/4 and 1 inch lines, or single family residential homes, by \$2. The commercial rate would be increased from \$21.93 to \$25 for the 3/4 to 1 inch lines.

Mayor Pro Tem Compian asked for clarity regarding multifamily designations, questioning if any of those residents are seniors would get the senior discount. Unfortunately, if there is no individual, the discount would not apply as the city is unable to determine which usage is attributed to the senior.

Mayor Pro Tem Compian shared that the city historically did not pass on water increases to residents, and the fund was supported by the general fund.

A discussion regarding average usage ensued, followed by a brief discussion

regarding historical water loss and its impact on water purchase ensued. Councilmember Yancy made a motion to approve Ordinance No. O-2025-0029. Councilmember Griffin seconded. **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

8.II. Bid Contract Award

Mayor Pro Tem Compian requested that all American Rescue Plan Act purchases be notated on the agenda. He also clarified that there are approximately 7500 licenses for this program for a two year term.

Mayor Pro Tem Compian made a motion to approve a contract with AquaTrax for a Water Usage Customer Portal in the amount of \$54,000.

Councilmember Griffin seconded.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

8.III. Amendment to Wastewater Treatment Plant Rehabilitation Contract - Addition of Alternate Item #1 (Well Cleaning)

***Councilmember Lowry exited at 8:42 p.m. and returned at 8:46 p.m.*

Director Breaux stated that funds are coming from the 2020 Certificate of Obligation funds.

Mayor Pro Tem Compian made a motion to amend the contract award for the Wastewater Treatment Plant Rehabilitation of Headworks and Chemical Storage.

Councilmember Griffin seconded.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

8.IV. FY2026 Water Pollution Control and Abatement Contract with Galveston County Health District

***This item was pulled from consideration.*

8.V. Hiring Position

***This item was pulled from consideration.*

8.VI. Appointed Position Evaluations

***Mayor Pro Tem Compian exited at 8:47 p.m. and returned at 8:51 p.m.*

Mayor Bell stated that this process usually happens the afternoon of the first meeting in December.

City Clerk Nance identified that this would be December 8th, with Mayor Bell recommending that the reviews potentially begin at 1 p.m.

Mayor Pro Tem Compian declared that he would likely not be in person but could attend virtually.

NO ACTION TAKEN.

9. CITY MANAGER REPORT

The City Manager's Report stood as submitted.

9.I. September 2025 Municipal Court Monthly Stats

Mayor Pro Tem Compian asked clarifying questions regarding the "disposed cases" and "inactive cases" designations.

9.II. Financial Report

9.III. Items for the Good of the Order

Interim City Manager Holly stated that there was a great Trunk or Treat event the previous week. She thanked Director Ferguson for the community discussions regarding the forensic audit and announced the upcoming discussions regarding water rates. She announced the Veterans Day Breakfast, Fall Sweep, and a Meet and Greet event for Interim Police Chief Gilberto Rodriguez. She closed by stating that the city is still in very tough economic times, and every dollar is being analyzed.

10. EXECUTIVE SESSION

There was no executive session.

11. ACTIONS TAKEN FROM EXECUTIVE SESSION

No action was taken.

12. REQUESTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Councilmember Griffin was glad to see the meetings with the Finance Director and hoped the residents are utilizing this time. She is excited about the finance committee kicking off and is looking forward to the Youth Council kickoff. She announced the Thanksgiving Drive on Saturday, November 15, starting at 12 noon.

Councilmember Lowry stated for the record that he is 100% legal to be in his position. He requested to start the city manager search stating that the city is spending a lot of money on the Interim City Manager and the city needs to be more responsible with its money. He spoke regarding a benefit on December 13 for a La Marque Police Officer who is fighting cancer. He spoke regarding ditches being cleaned out in all districts except for District C, and questioned who stopped the progress in his district, making a claim that it is illegal and a form of oppression. "Don't punish them because people don't like me."

Councilmember Yancy shared that she had a great opportunity to attend the WILA awards, and was grateful to see two of our staff members get recognized. She asked for something to be done for staff before the holidays, to show that the council appreciates their hard work and efforts. She asked that everyone be careful as the "kiddos" are out for Halloween this weekend. She asked for consideration to be given to the entrance at Delany Cove regarding traffic safety. She asked to take a tour of District A with staff to address some of the concerns presented earlier in the meeting. She requested a formal position from the City regarding an issue of convictions as presented by a resident.

Mayor Pro Tem Compian sent his condolences to the family of Deputy Chief Waggoner. He shared common causes of fires during the cold season. He also echoed sentiments regarding considerations of traffic near Delany. He requested the Texas Department of Transportation appear before the council at a future meeting. He will also be attending the Texas Municipal League Conference.

Mayor Bell had a great time at the Trunk or Treat event, and had a great turnout. He wished everyone a Happy Halloween, and asked the community to slow down and watch for children during this time. He requested that the zoom issues be corrected, an update on the civic academy project, and an update on Heroes Village. He also welcomed and congratulated Interim Chief Rodriguez, sharing that the Interim Chief has his support because he knows that the Interim Chief believes in a "clean police

department." He looks forward to all the wonderful things he will do in the department.

13. ADJOURNMENT

Councilmember Yancy made a motion to adjourn. Mayor Pro Tem Compian seconded.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

***Meeting was adjourned at 9:24 p.m.*