



**CITY OF LA MARQUE
CITY COUNCIL
REGULAR MINUTES
of
April 8, 2024**

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Mayor Bell called the meeting to order at 6:13 p.m.

2. ROLL CALL

PRESENT:

Keith Bell	Mayor
Joe Compian	Mayor Pro Tem / District B
Kimberley Yancy	Councilmember District A
Melanie Leyva Allred	Councilmember District C
James Ross	Councilmember District D

3. INVOCATION AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mayor Bell gave the invocation and Mayor Pro Tem Compian led the pledge.

4. PRESENTATIONS

4.I. Presentation - All America City 2024

Executive Assistant Mikala Hallbrook gave a brief overview of the All-America City Award, proudly announcing that the City of La Marque has been named one of twenty finalists competing for one of ten coveted All-America City designations for the year.

4.II. Presentation - Habitat for Humanities : Heroes Village

Executive Director Megan Scheffer introduced a new concept, the Heroes Village, which is a cluster development of ten or more homes dedicated to veterans. She stands before the community today to share an interest survey to help prepare for this development, which is still in the research phase.

4.III. Presentation - Community Health and Resource Management (CHARM)

Amanda Cain of Texas A&M Agriculture Life spoke to inform the community of the upcoming Community Health and Resource Management (CHARM) Workshop on April 18, 2024.

4.IV. Proclamation - Fair Housing Month

Mayor Bell acknowledged a proclamation issued for Fair Housing Month.

- 4.V. Proclamation - Autism Acceptance Month
Mayor Bell acknowledged a proclamation for Autism Acceptance Month.
- 4.VI. Proclamation - National Library Week (April 7th -13th)
Library Director Amy Miller accepted a proclamation celebrating National Library Week.
- 4.VII. Proclamation - National Public Safety Telecommunicators Week (April 14th - 20th)
Representatives of the La Marque Police Department's Telecommunication Division received a proclamation celebrating National Public Safety Telecommunicators Week.
- 4.VIII. Proclamation -Work Zone Awareness Week (April 15th - 19th)
Public Works Director Rick Sailer and representatives of the Public Works Department received a proclamation celebrating Work Zone Awareness Week.

5. CITIZENS PARTICIPATION

- Michael Sartor (1808 Howell) thanked the Public Works Director for assisting him with a street issue. He also requested that the city work to repair Howell Ave.
- Joseph Lowry (2503 Cedar) shared his dismay with the denial of his request to utilize a city facility for campaign purposes.
- ReChard Loftis (309 Johnson) spoke to say that for the past three (3) years, the city has done a good job, although it's not the best, but some people are constantly admonishing them and could potentially become a part of the organization.

6. PUBLIC HEARINGS

***Mayor Bell recessed the Special Meeting and entered into Public Hearings at 7:03 p.m.*

- 6.I. Ordinance No. O-2024-0005
There was no public participation.
- 6.II. Ordinance No. O-2024-0006
There was no public participation.
- 6.III. Ordinance No. O-2024-0007
There was no public participation.

7. OLD BUSINESS

***Mayor Bell closed the Public Hearings and reconvened the Regular Meeting at 7:05 p.m.*

- 7.I. Ordinance No. O-2024-0005
Mayor Pro Tem Compian made a motion to adopt Ordinance No. O-2024-0005. Councilmember Ross seconded. **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

- 7.II. Ordinance No. O-2024-0006
Mayor Pro Tem Compian made a motion to adopt Ordinance No. O-2024-0006.
Councilmember Ross seconded. **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**
- 7.III. Ordinance No. O-2024-0007
Mayor Pro Tem Compian made a motion to adopt Ordinance No. O-2024-0007.
Councilmember Ross seconded.
Chief Aragon made a plea to the Council not to forget about the police department, as at the last meeting the allocations for the police station were removed.
Mayor Pro Tem Compian shared that the council is aware of ongoing maintenance issues. He requested to see additional financial statements to see what could be done for the department.
Mayor Bell believes the city needs to work harder to communicate the plight of the police department to the community, and they will then be compelled to agree to support the department via voter-approved debt. If the general obligation bond fails, the city manager should bring a plan to the council on how to move forward to address the needs of the department.
City Manager Garcia reminded the council that there is approximately \$500,000 allocated through the 2017 CO bond to improve the current facility. The City is currently looking to address HVAC and ventilation systems within the current station.
Councilmember Ross questioned some of the allocation years. It was clarified that all money will be allocated in the current fiscal year. The years reflected in the attachment are estimates.
Extensive discussions relating to the previously removed police station funding, the 2017 Certificate of Obligation funds allocated to the police department, and possible future funding opportunities ensued.
MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

8. NEW BUSINESS

- 8.I. Proposed Resolution
Mayor Pro Tem Compian requested that staff review Jersey Mike's as a possible grant source.
Councilmember Ross made a motion to adopt Resolution No. R-2024-0022.
Councilmember Leyva Allred seconded. **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**
- 8.II. Proposed Resolution
Mayor Pro Tem Compian made a motion to adopt Resolution No. R-2024-0023.
Councilmember Ross seconded. **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**
- 8.III. Bid Advertisement
Mayor Bell questioned if there is a fish cleaning area, covered tables, lighting, and potential kayaking rentals in the plan. City Manager Garcia responded that there are tables and lighting, and space for kayak rental and fish cleaning are good concepts not previously thought of.
Mayor Pro Tem Compian made a motion to authorize the release of bid

documents for the construction of the Mahan Park Boat Ramp Project. Councilmember Ross seconded. **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

8.IV. Memorandum of Understanding

Library Director Miller shared that the library provides space for parenting and early childhood classes, similar to what has been done in other local libraries. Councilmember Yancy made a motion to approve a Memorandum of Understanding between the City of La Marque and Depelchin Children's Center. Councilmember Ross seconded. **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

8.V. Memorandum of Understanding

City Manager Garcia and Police Chief Aragon shared that this is a partnership to provide an additional location for community resources during emergency events in conjunction with the city's emergency management operations, as well as a partner for public safety classes and events within the community. Councilmember Yancy made a motion to approve a Memorandum of Understanding between the City of La Marque and McKinney United Methodist Church. Councilmember Ross seconded. **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

8.VI. Memorandum of Understanding

It was determined that the purpose of this item is for the senior camera installation in regard to Eyes on La Marque.

Councilmember Leyva Allred made a motion to establish a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the City of La Marque and Habitat for Humanities. Councilmember Ross seconded. **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.** Councilmember Yancy thanked the staff for their dedication to memorializing these Memorandums of Understanding and requested a list of MOUs.

8.VII. Consulting Services Agreement

Katie Biggers of HDL Companies gave a brief overview of the services the company could provide for the City.

***Councilmember Leyva Allred exited the room at 8:00 p.m. and returned at 8:01 p.m.*

Mayor Pro Tem Compian questioned some of the terminology used in the presentation, as well as HDL and the State Comptroller's roles in this process. HDL would oversee the city's data and if anomalies are found, or if companies are not paying their taxes appropriately, they will refer the item to the Comptroller's office, which is the only agency that is allowed to perform an audit.

Extensive discussions regarding the sample reports provided ensued. It was determined that while the city sales tax collections may be down for the month by approximately 0.3 percent, the city has collected approximately \$88,000 more year-to-date than the previous year.

Mayor Pro Tem Compian made a motion to approve a consulting services agreement with HDL Companies for sales tax audit and reporting services. Councilmember Ross seconded. **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

8.VIII. Water Utility Reimbursement

Mayor Bell shared that previously it was disclosed that due to realizing a 20% water loss, the City received a rebate from the Gulf Coast Water Authority of approximately \$175,000. Since then, some residents have requested that a rebate to utility billing customers be considered.

City Manager Garcia identified that one of the possibilities initially discussed was utilizing any savings to assist with payments for waterline projects and potentially projects related to streets.

Mayor Pro Tem Compian shared his sentiments that we should not let a one-time success deter the city from the mission: "We have won a battle, but we still have not won the war". He shared his support for reinvesting the funds.

Councilmember Ross shared his support for reimbursement being reinvested into the pipe system as originally planned. He also pointed out that two years ago, the City was subsidizing everyone's water bills, and has now received a rebate. That is an impressive change over two years.

When asked, City Manager Garcia shared that he is looking to allocate these funds to some of the ongoing waterline projects the city is undertaking.

Mayor Bell made a motion to provide for a reimbursement to the utility billing customers to reflect the \$175,000 rebate received from Gulf Coast Water Authority as a result of reduced water usage. Councilmember Yancy seconded.

MOTION FAILED WITH 2 AYES (BELL/YANCY) AND 3 NAYS (COMPIAN/LEYVA ALLRED/ROSS).

9. CITY MANAGER REPORT

- 9.I. Public Works Statistics
Stood as submitted.

- 9.II. City of La Marque Retention Report
The City currently sits at over 90% retention. The city has had a downward trend since 2022.
Mayor Pro Tem Compian stated that the statistics reflect the quality of applicants received lately, and people want to apply.
City Manager Garcia shared that there are currently thirteen (13) city positions open, and he hopes to be under ten (10).

- 9.III. Items for the Good of the Order
Stood as submitted.

10. REQUESTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Councilmember Leyva Allred shared that the Galveston County Fair and Rodeo started this week and asked the community to go support.

Councilmember Ross reiterated the Spring Clean event, May the 4th event at the Library, and the Flag Day event at VFW on June 14.

Councilmember Yancy announced Stop The Violence Week would be held April 14th-20th, and pledged to donate \$500 towards Eyes on La Marque.

Mayor Pro Tem Compian shared that construction has not stopped the "speed demons". Mayor Bell stated that the city is a nationally recognized city. Programs within the city,

such as the Safe City Initiative, LMTV, and the Capital Improvement Committee process as led by City Manager Garcia, have received national acclaim for innovation and effectiveness. He identified that a street department is being created along with parenting classes, grant applications, and a partnership with HDL for a potential sales tax audit. He stated that the Gulfway Plaza community is hurting due to the I45 expansion and encouraged Small Business Saturdays in Gulfway Plaza. He closed thanking everyone for their time and diligence tonight.

11. EXECUTIVE SESSION

There was no executive session.

12. ACTIONS TAKEN FROM EXECUTIVE SESSION

No action was taken.

13. ADJOURNMENT

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

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

***Meeting was adjourned at 9:00 p.m.*