



**CITY OF LA MARQUE
CITY COUNCIL
REGULAR MINUTES
of
May 13, 2024**

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Mayor Bell called the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m.

2. ROLL CALL

PRESENT:

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

3. INVOCATION AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Councilmember Yancy gave the invocation and Councilmember Ross led the pledge.

4. PRESENTATIONS

This item was taken after item 7.1

4.I. Oath of Office - Keith Bell, Mayor

Judge Kerry Pettijohn administered the Oath of Office to Mayor Keith Bell. Mayor Bell gave brief comments thanking his family, team, and the citizens of La Marque for supporting the progress being made within the city. His priorities remain the same: to combat crime within the city, reduce property tax through increasing sales tax, improve infrastructure, and decide among the community if a new police department facility should be constructed. He thanked everyone for their vote of confidence and for allowing him to be Mayor.

4.II. Oath of Office - Kimberley Yancy, Council District A

Reverend Clint Yancy administered the Oath of Office to Councilmember Kimberley Yancy of District A.

Councilmember Yancy gave brief comments sharing that "this is our time" and "we are the city that everyone is watching." She agrees with the Mayor's priority of infrastructure. She looks forward to fighting for La Marque like on one else has to make sure we have the best here. Thank you District A "Let's go higher".

- 4.III. Oath of Office - Joseph Lowry, Council District C
Mrs. Sarah Lowry administered the Oath of Office to Councilmember Joseph Lowry of District C.
Councilmember Allred exited the meeting at 6:24 p.m. and Councilmember Lowry took the dias
Resident Kathy Herrin-Keith presented the newly cemented Councilmember with a lapel pin as a gift from the Brown family that once belonged to the late Councilmember Clent Brown.
- 4.IV. Proclamation - National Police Week (May 12-18)
Chief Randall Aragon received a proclamation celebrating National Police Week.
- 4.V. Proclamation - Public Works Week (May 19th - 25th)
Members of the Public Works Department received a proclamation for Public Works Week.
- 4.VI. Presentation - Community Policing Officer of the Year
Officer Rojas was awarded Community Policing Officer of the Year.
- 4.VII. Proclamation - National Cities, Towns and Villages Month
City Manager Cesar Garcia received a proclamation for National, Cities, Towns, and Villages Month.

5. CITIZENS PARTICIPATION

- Clarence Caldwell (3603 Prairie St) spoke to congratulate all the newly elected members of the Council. He asked for assistance with the potholes on Prairie St and Volney.
- Lester Johnigan (701 Roosevelt) spoke regarding trash pickup, predominantly brush pickup. He shared his concerns with the requirements for brush pickup, saying that it is a cumbersome expectation.
- Re'Chard Loftis (309 Johnson St.) spoke regarding code enforcement issues and the handling of the Request Tracker system. He requested that the update notifications be reinstated as they were in years past. He also shared concerns regarding drainage. He supported the drainage team but had "not seen that Gradall moving."
- Ginger Mannett (809 Grassy Knoll) spoke to say thank you for the sidewalk repair and welcome aboard all newly elected councilmembers.

6. OLD BUSINESS

- 6.I. Proposed Ordinance
Mayor Pro Tem Compian made a motion to approve Ordinance No. O-2024-0008. Councilmember Ross seconded.
Mayor Pro Tem Compian would like to include EDC. He asked for clarity regarding areas such as (pg. 5) appearing for the private interest, unduly influence, (pg. 6) roles and responsibilities to include in addition to the roles

and responsibilities included in the city charter. Amend conflict vii. To \$250.00 per calendar year, "official city letterhead, not pursuant to district letterhead."

James Osteen (2012 Jeridona) stated his opinion that these amendments cannot be made during first reading but must be made during second reading. It was clarified by City Attorney Knebel that the city has historically made any requested changes during the first reading as the second reading must be in its final form in order to allow the public to comment on it during the public hearing.

Councilmember Lowry requested that items regarding civility, interrupting and interfering, confidential information, shouting or threatening action, the personally offended section, respect in private conversations, attendance at city staff meetings, making no personal comments, and removing city clerks' findings from complaints (adding legal representation to be paid by the city at the councilmember's request) be stricken from the ordinance.

Discussion ensued regarding Councilmember Lowry's requests, including the rationale behind removing the areas regarding civility, interrupting and interfering in a public meeting, and general conduct.

Mayor supported request for councilmembers to attend staff meetings with the invitation or previous discussion with the City Manager. He requested that this ordinance be reviewed six months from the date of the final passage.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

***Mayor Pro Tem Compian exited the meeting at 7:22 p.m. and returned at 7:28 p.m.*

6.II. Proposed Ordinance

Mayor Pro Tem Compian made a motion to approve Ordinance No. O-2024-0009. Councilmember Yancy seconded.

Mayor Pro Tem Compian questioned the section regarding critical customers. He asked if the city ever requested this information. If not, it should. He questioned the average daily water consumption. It was clarified that it is 5400-5500 per day. He questioned the consistency of the commercial marketing of water restrictions in the Gulf Coast Water Authority agreement.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

6.III. Appointing Associate Judge

This item was taken after executive session

Mayor Pro Tem Compian shared that there were outstanding candidates and made a motion to appoint Dick Greg III as the Associate Judge and Samantha Gonzales as the secondary Associate Judge. Councilmember Lowry seconded.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

6.IV. Linebarger Goggan Blair & Sampson, LLP

This item was removed from consideration.

6.V. Linebarger Goggan Blair & Sampson, LLP

This item was removed from consideration.

7. NEW BUSINESS

7.I. Proposed Resolution

This item was taken after Invocation and Pledge

Mayor Pro Tem Compian made a motion to adopt Resolution No. R-2024-0027. Councilmember Yancy seconded. **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

7.II. Proposed Resolution

Councilmember Lowry questioned the statistics to support the need for the grant. Chief Aragon responded, sharing that although crime is high, it is falling, and the city needs all the help it can get.

Mayor Bell questioned what happens after the grant funding is expended and what happens if the city is not able to support the position after the funding has subsided. City Manager Garcia is anticipating continued growth that will supplement the funding. Mayor Bell questioned the possibility of removing the position through attrition if there is no fiscal capacity to support the position after the suspension of the grant. It was clarified by staff that this is a possibility.

Mayor Pro Tem Compian made a motion to adopt Resolution No. R-2024-0028. Councilmember Ross seconded. **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

7.III. Proposed Resolution

Councilmember Ross requested that the "O Number" be added to the resolution to differentiate this item from other grants from the same funding source.

Mayor Pro Tem Compian made a motion to amend the Resolution and add the grant number. Councilmember Lowry seconded. **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Further discussion ensued regarding the cost of the grants. While no matching funds are required, a nominal fee is to be paid to the grant writer. This grant requests 13 vehicles, which would come equipped with everything except the radio and in-car camera system. It was questioned what the costs of supplying these additional outfits would be.

Councilmember Yancy made a motion to adopt Resolution No. R-2024-0029. Councilmember Ross seconded. **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

7.IV. Proposed Resolution

Staff explained that the purpose of this grant is to obtain up to 8 community policing officers. It was clarified that upon receiving the grant, the city would be required to retain officers for one year after the grant's termination.

Discussions ensued about the number of officers the city could reasonably accommodate to support after the grant was terminated.

Councilmember Yancy made a motion to adopt Resolution No. R-2024-0030 with an amendment to limit the request to two officers due to concerns regarding fiscal liability. Councilmember Lowry seconded. **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

- 7.V. Proposed Resolution
Councilmember Ross made a motion to adopt Resolution No. R-2024-0031.
Mayor Bell seconded the motion. **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**
- 7.VI. Lease Agreement
Questions relating to the associated nonprofit, Culture Corp. ensued.
Discussions relating to the financial responsibility of the lease ensued.
Mayor Pro Tem Compian made a motion to establish an agreement between
the City of La Marque and Ignite Community School Mainland for the use of
space for summer camp activities. Councilmember Lowry seconded. **MOTION
CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**
- 7.VII. Memorandum of Understanding
Mayor Pro Tem Compian questioned if this item is better suited for the
Economic Development Corporation.
Councilmember Ross abstained from the vote due to his associations with the
VFW.
Councilmember Yancy made a motion to approve a Memorandum of
Understanding with the Richard A. Kirsten VFW Post 8248. Mayor Pro Tem
Compian seconded. **MOTION CARRIED WITH 4 AYES AND 1 ABSTENTION
(ROSS).**
- 7.VIII. Boards and Commissions
***Mayor Pro Tem Compian exited at 9:15 p.m.*
After discussion to clarify membership totals and requirements, no action was
taken on this item.
- 7.IX. Budget Calendar
***Mayor Pro Tem Compian returns at 9:18 p.m.*
Councilmember Yancy made a motion to approve the proposed budget
calendar. Councilmember Ross seconded. **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**
- 7.X. Cancellation of Meeting
Councilmember Yancy made a motion to authorize the cancellation of the
regular City Council meeting on May 27, 2024, due to Memorial Day.
Councilmember Ross seconded. **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**
- 7.XI. Reschedule of Meeting
Councilmember Yancy made a motion to reschedule the regular City Council
meeting from June 10, 2024, to June 3, 2024. Councilmember Ross seconded.
MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

8. CITY MANAGER REPORT

- 8.I. March 2024 Municipal Court Statistics
Questions regarding some of the categories shown in the report ensued.
Stood as submitted.

- 8.II. March 2024 Quarterly Investment Report
Stood as submitted.
- 8.III. April 2024 Sales Tax Revenue Report
Stood as submitted.
- 8.IV. Letter of Intent - Houston-Galveston Area Council (H-GAC) Livable Centers planning studies
Councilmember Yancy shared her excitement to see the application.
Stood as submitted.
- 8.V. Vital Water Line Replacement Projects Grant Award
City Manager Garcia announced a no-match 2 million dollar grant to support waterline replacements in District D.
Stood as submitted.
- 8.VI. Community Events/Items for the Good of the Order
City Manager Garcia announced community events such as the Catalytic Converter Event on May 15, 2024, the Memorial Day Closure on May 27, 2024, the Juneteenth Art Contest, and Heroes Village survey. He also congratulated Deputy City Manager Joshua Pritchett for being named a finalist for Citizen of the Year.

9. REQUESTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Councilmember Lowry thanked the community and the Brown family for the lapel pin bestowed upon him. He looks forward to working with everyone.

Councilmember Ross shared the definition of a Home Rule City, asked about the mosquito truck operations, solicited volunteers for the May 25th Memorial Day flag event, invited all to the VFW on Memorial Day at 6:00 a.m. for tolling of the bells. He requested that anyone who has information regarding any La Marque residents that had died in Foreign Wars to contact him so they can be included in the list. He also stated that there would be a flag retirement ceremony at 6:30 p.m. on June 14th, including a vendor fair and kids carnival.

Councilmember Yancy wished a Happy belated Mother's Day to all, and thanked Councilmember James Ross for the \$500 donation to Stop the Violence. On June 8, there would be a Juneteenth Gospel Choir event, and requested a \$500 donation to VFW in October. She encouraged the establishment of the Red Cross babysitter certification program in the city, and asked for beautification events on both Cedar and Main. Congrats to all for Citizen of the Year nominations. She looked forward to summer and the summer camp. She will be attending the LMHS Awards night on Wednesday, May 15.

Mayor Pro Tem Compian thanked the City Manager and Public Works team for their assistance at the Great American Clean-Up. He really enjoyed the event. He requested an update from TxDOT on their construction projects. He requested weight limits on the highways and clearly delineated hazardous material routes.

Mayor Bell shared that the night had been a productive meeting. The previous Wednesday, at the Galveston County Mayor and Council Associate, Commissioner Apffel invited every city to participate in the countywide bond referendum; he also shared his

support for a public safety building bond referendum. He shared some concerns with the agenda, questioning the absence of the election of a Mayor Pro Tem, not that he wishes to remove Mayor Pro Tem Compian from the position. He shared that he was 31 when he joined the council and former Councilmember Osteen gave him great advice about councils: "we are one." This was a great start to a new council.

10. EXECUTIVE SESSION

***This item was taken after item 6.I*

***Mayor Bell recessed the Regular Meeting and entered into Executive Session at 7:43 p.m. and reconvened at 7:55 p.m.*

10.I. Section 551.074 (Personnel Matters)

11. ADJOURNMENT

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

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

***Meeting was adjourned at 9:58 p.m.*