CITY OF LA MARQUE
CITY COUNCIL
SPECIAL MINUTES
of
August 7, 2025

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER
   Mayor Bell called the meeting to order at 10:10 a.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
   Councilmember Yancy gave the invocation and Councilmember Griffin led the pledge.

4. CITIZENS PARTICIPATION
   James Ross (414 Ave D) spoke regarding 11 houses on Ave D that are located on three lots. He shared discontent regarding the taxation of the property believing that they are taxed below their value and there are discrepancies in valuations. One property has five homes on it and the appraisal district says there is only one. He stated that the city is leaving money on the table.
   James Osteen (2012 Jeridona) shared concerns with the city not having a finance director, meaning there is no investment officer. He has spoken with the current temporary department leadership, and they do not feel that they are capable of that responsibility. He also has concerns regarding the council not receiving check registers as of late, stating that he should not be the one enforcing the charter, the council should. He believes that the person in place should receive additional training. He is willing to help the city out through this hard time and work with whomever is in charge if they are willing to accept his help.

5. NEW BUSINESS

   5.I. Review And Discuss Proposed Fiscal Year 2025-2026 Departmental Budgets And All Funds
   Alex Sievers of Grantworks and Alice Ashley of Provisions Specialized Services appeared to answer any questions regarding grants.
   Mr. Sievers shared that he is working on four different grants. GLO C287, the Wisteria Drainage Improvements project, is nearing completion and expected

to be closed by the end of November. GLO D208, the sanitary sewer manhole cover project, has recently been able to increase the number of manholes. The city has a commitment of $75,000 that has not been paid. Mayor Pro Tem Compian questioned who the city commitment has to be paid to. It was clarified that it would be paid to the construction company. Interim City Manager Holly clarified that this payment is shown to come from American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding.

Mayor Pro Tem Compian requested a list of all manholes, which have been replaced, and which are still needing replacement. Public Works Director Shannon Breaux shared that a list had been provided previously. However, he is working to get an updated list to present in the near future.

He identified that the GLO D223 lift station project has a city match of $490,000 that has not been paid. Mr. Sievers has been working with Public Works Director Breaux to determine installments. Three lift stations are near completion and the wastewater treatment plant project has mobilized. Mayor Bell asked questions regarding the source of matching funds.

Alice Ashley of Provisions Specialized Services clarified that grants are paid through milestone billing. There are certain milestones at which contractors get paid. The GLO or funding agency will send the funds to the city and the city has approximately five to seven days to cut the check to the contractor.

A lengthy discussion regarding the Mahan Boat Ramp and it's opening ensued. Public Works Director Breaux and Assistant Public Works Director Amanda Hobby shared that this is expected to be opened to the public in approximately three weeks.

Mr. Sievers identified that the city match for all grants is a total of $640,000.00.

Alice Ashley is working with AARP for a Livable Communities certification, since over 45% of the community is over the age of 45.

Councilmember Griffin asked when the Oak Street Bridge project would begin. Staff did not have an answer. However, they would work to find out.

A lengthy discussion regarding the COPS grant and crime analyst grant funding ensued.

Discussions regarding the city's need or desire for nonprofit status and increased grant funding opportunities ensued.

A lengthy general discussion regarding grant timelines and storm reimbursements ensued.

Mayor Pro Tem Compian again reinforced his years-long plea for a more detailed disaster fund in the budget.

***Mayor Bell recessed for lunch at 12:47 p.m. and returned at 2:53 p.m. with Councilmember Yancy absent.*

Public Works Director Breaux stated that, in connection with the Finance Director, he was able to negotiate $111,000 in pay equity across all public works departments. He shared the accomplishments of the department staff, in which many of the staff members have made great strides in their certification and licensing, and increased communication within the organization.

Public Works Director Breaux gave a brief overview of the organization chart within the public works departments. He requested the elimination of the Water Operations Supervisor, stating that the position as the department currently operates isn't filled and if they did fill the position, he considered the position overpaid. He requested two positions: the Chief Wastewater Operator in Utility 24 and a Water Utility Supervisor in Utility 22. He later clarified are not necessarily increased staffing, but reclassification of current employees who currently carry these responsibilities. Both positions would be funded through utility funds.

***Councilmember Yancy returned at 3:04 p.m. and exited the meeting at 3:08 p.m.*

Director Breaux requested that the payroll for the Assistant Public Works Director and Administrative Assistant be transferred to the utility fund from the general fund which would ease the burden on the general fund.

Mayor Bell identified that unless the staff members are fully dedicated to utility work then they cannot be paid 100% from the utility fund. Discussions regarding a split payroll payment ensued.

Mayor Pro Tem Compian questioned what Fund 36 referenced. It was determined that this was the Ike Recovery Fund. This led to a discussion regarding identifying where the funding originated.

Director Breaux also requested a Public Works Administration line item stating that currently their costs are split across all public works departments, and it is difficult to see a true cost.

Mayor Pro Tem Compian shared his concerns that the transfer amount from the utility fund into the general fund has been a static dollar amount for many years and that is not appropriate. It should be adjusted to current needs.

Director Breaux stated that wastewater operations or Utility 24 is one of the healthier departments. He requested step up pay and certification pay for licensed operators. He stated that a lot of cities are fighting for licensed operations, and other than himself, all of the licensed operators in the city were trained within the city, which is unique. He is looking to keep those operators. He requested a certification pay policy because the previous administration "was throwing around money" and there had been significant pay differentials between operators with the same licensing.

Discussions regarding the need for 24-hour monitoring systems ensued, with Interim City Manager Holly declaring that this is a priority project.

Mayor Pro Tem Compian questioned the $400,000 shown in the Republic Waste Lechate line item, stating that he does not like seeing round numbers as he knows they are not exact.

It was determined that the 24-hour monitoring system would cost the city approximately $500,000.

Public Works Director Breaux shared that the wastewater operations division Utility 24 is one of the least staffed departments with only four employees. He clarified that the city needs at least three employees to do repair work, and that is problematic. He is requesting one additional person for this team.

Assistant Director Hobby stated that since the department is doing more repair work, their on-call requests have reduced drastically, much to the appreciation of the telecommunicators.

Director Breaux requested a new sewer line camera system that would cost approximately $7,000 to 18,000, which will not only increase efficiency in line replacements, but reduce the reliance on contractors to perform this service. Councilmember Lowry asked for follow-up regarding call-outs and the cost. It was determined that the city does approximately 10 call-outs a year that range between approximately $800-$1,200 that is charged to the utility fund. The department is requesting a camera line with a range of at least 600 feet. Mayor Pro Tem Compian recommended charging a fee for services, to which Interim City Manager Holly stated that the city is precluded from doing that per Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ).
Public Works Director Breaux stated that the water utilities division, Utility 22, is another healthy department that includes the meter technicians who previously were a part of the utility billing department. He is requesting 4" and 6" trailer-mounted de-watering pumps. Director Breaux stated that these are rented by the week, and they run approximately $1,500. Discussion regarding security for equipment ensued.
Director Breaux shared that stormwater utilities or Utility 27 now include mosquito control. He is looking for a new equipment operator, but he is looking for the perfect fit. It would either be someone with operator experience, or he will be training and promoting someone from within. He shared that Galveston County Drainage District #2 gave the department a compliment the previous week, and he was excited to share. Discussions regarding mosquito control operations ensued, with Director Breaux stating that in the future he would like to include a part-time position as this operation is done for approximately four hours a night, a few days a week. Director Breaux requested a "combo vac/hydro excavator truck" for Utility 27 in the amount of $70,000-$100,000.
Councilmember Lowry stated that the price estimate seems rather low. Assistant Director Hobby shared that the current equipment is approximately $500,000. The quote received is for a compact unit on a F55 chassis. Questions regarding the titling of the utility funds ensued, with council requesting a simplified naming system as the current one could be confusing. Director Breaux requested two dump trailers for stormwater grading, which cost approximately $10,000 - $15,000 each.
The street maintenance team, which is a general fund department, has 10 employees that cover traffic technicians, street repairs, and mowing. He stated that this department needs at least three additional staff members ($17 /$106,080 total increase). He requested a milling matching and hot mix asphalt truck which would total $160,000 and $200,000 respectively. He also requested a regenerative air street sweeper, sharing that mechanical street sweepers just move everything around and do not actually pick up the debris. This would cost approximately $250,000-$300,000. The current street sweeper cannot be repaired but has lasted for at least 15 years. The next request was for a tractor with bating mower attachments, costing an estimated $90,000. It was clarified that this equipment is for both ditch work and field work.
Director Breaux stated that the parks department, funded through the general fund, has a third maintenance worker position that was asked not to be filled,

and he requested that the department be able to retain that position.
There is currently no lead mechanic in the shop and building maintenance division. Director Breaux is requesting oversight in this area. He also requested that the tool barn be torn down as it cannot be used. A lengthy discussion identifying this building as a liability ensued. He shared a future plan for equipment needs for the next two to three years for the council to consider.
He recommended reinstating an equipment replacement program. He stated that the department has a lot of equipment that could have been auctioned long ago to partially fund the replacement program. He also recommended a process to utilize these funds, such as council approval and signature of the Public Works Director, Finance Director, and City Manager "before a penny can be spent." Assistant Director Hobby stated that there previously were two replacement funds, one for vehicles and another for replacement, but the funding was borrowed for the general fund and never replaced.
Mayor Pro Tem Compian thanked both Director Breaux and Assistant Director Hobby for their presentation. It was very informative.
Mayor Bell, for Councilmember Griffin, asked how Director Breaux felt about a grapple truck. Director Breaux stated that it is not currently a priority as he does not have the staffing to utilize it. He felt that for the price and current operations, it is not necessarily a priority. However, he stated that in the discussions with Galveston County Drainage District #2 to propose an Interlocal Agreement that would include usage of their grapple truck services.
Mayor Bell proposed the public works department drive each district once a month to remove large piles of trash. Director Breaux stated that they cannot pick up any of the piles until code compliance has investigated it.
Assistant Director Hobby stated that her objection to the grapple truck is because she knows that this will eventually turn into a full sanitation operation that the department cannot handle at this time.
Discussions regarding illegal debris and illegal dumping as it related to Public Works ensued.
Councilmember Lowry thanked the public works department for their hard work.

6. EXECUTIVE SESSION
THERE WAS NO EXECUTIVE SESSION.

7. ACTIONS TAKEN FROM EXECUTIVE SESSION
NO ACTION TAKEN.

8. ADJOURNMENT
Councilmember Lowry requested a discussion regarding the properties on Ave B, previously discussed in the meeting. This request was supported by Councilmember Griffin.
Mayor Pro Tem Compian made a motion to adjourn. Councilmember Lowry seconded.
MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.
***Meeting was adjourned at 5:01 p.m.*