



**CITY OF LA MARQUE
CITY COUNCIL
SPECIAL MINUTES
of
August 11, 2025**

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Mayor Bell called the meeting to order at 10:05 a.m.

2. ROLL CALL

PRESENT:

Keith Bell	Mayor
Joe Compian	Mayor Pro Tem/ District B (arrived at 10: 58 a.m.)
Kimberley Yancy	District A
Joseph Lowry	District C
Tonia Griffin	District D

3. INVOCATION AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mayor Bell gave the invocation and IT Technician Avery Bowers led the pledge.

4. CITIZENS PARTICIPATION

James Ross (414 Ave D) spoke on behalf of the Richard Kirsten VFW regarding the Veteran's Breakfast event. He requested \$300 to be budgeted for this event, as that is what it has cost in the past.

David Pennington (924 Cypress) spoke as Chair of the Building Standards Commission. He spoke regarding a demolition order for a property that was quoted at approximately \$65,000 three years ago. He stated that there are additional properties on the demolition list one of which being an issue of health and safety. He is requesting an increase in the demolition line item, and potentially "rolling over" this year's balance.

5. NEW BUSINESS

5.1. Review And Discuss Proposed Fiscal Year 2025-2026 Departmental Budgets And All Funds

Economic Development Chair Gene Smith and Director Alex Getty shared a document that clarifies the uses of each line item which is not included in the budget book. Director Getty shared that the Corporation was conservative in their projections as they have been in years past, but this projection is approximately 85% percent of what they anticipate receiving. He shared that there is an increase in the professional services line item and potential real estate deals. He closed his introduction by stating most of the budgeted items are standard, and both the EDC account and Revitalization accounts carry a healthy fund balance.

Mayor Bell questioned how the Revitalization account is funded. Director Getty stated this is funded through what in the private sector would be considered profits. This is interest, rental revenue, and any proceeds made from land sales.

Councilmember Yancy requested beautification projects and signage on Highway 3 and FM1765.

A brief discussion about positions supported by the Economic Development Corporation ensued. These positions include accounting services, the city clerk, information technology, facilities maintenance.

Discussions regarding expanding the Eyes on La Marque Camera Grant program ensued.

Mayor Bell requested a "bonafied plan" for revitalizing the Highway 3 corridor. Director Getty stated that the revitalization committee has approved \$15,000 towards a study of the area.

A discussion regarding the partnership with Retail Strategies ensued.

***Mayor Pro Tem Compian arrived at 10:58 a.m.*

A lengthy discussion regarding obtaining a grocer in the city ensued.

Board Member James Osteen stated that he had a comment that would not necessarily be popular with the council. However, he felt compelled to say that one of the hurdles the city faces is the unrest on the council. He believes it would be easier to bring in developers if everyone got along.

***Mayor Pro Tem Compian exited the meeting at 11:06 a.m.*

Code Compliance Supervisor Jose Hernandez and Fire Chief David Merryman presented for the Code Compliance Division. Chief Merryman stated that for the past two years the department has been working to rebrand the code compliance division. The department received approximately 92% compliance through education. All employees are certified and are trained in traffic incident management safety. He presented the division's annual statistics, which led to a lengthy conversation regarding what constitutes a "closed case".

***Mayor Pro Tem Compian returned at 11:21 a.m.*

Chief Merryman spoke regarding code revenues, stating that they were below the previous year and attributed this to certain game rooms being shut down for nefarious activity. A short discussion regarding rental registration followed.

***Councilmember Lowry exited the meeting at 11:28 a.m. and returned at 11:33 a.m.*

Chief Merryman requested an Environmental Crimes Deputy to focus on illegal dumping, hazardous waste violations, public education, and to support the efforts of code compliance and public works.

***Mayor Bell exited the meeting at 11:48 a.m. and returned at 11:52 a.m.*

Mayor Bell requested additional funding in the demolition line item.

***Mayor Bell recessed for lunch at 12:04 p.m. and reconvened at 2:08 p.m. with Councilmembers Lowry and Yancy absent.*

Chief Merryman opened with the La Marque Fire Department accomplishments, including obtaining Galveston County's first accelerant Detection K9, community outreach such as the Easter event for the visually impaired, and

increased staffing.

Additional discussions regarding community outreach opportunities ensued. Department revenue has exceeded the previous year in all areas except plan review, but that is due to a very large project that was reviewed last year. Chief Merryman made a request for six additional personnel and additional medical unit equipment.

Mayor Pro Tem Compian questioned the availability of fire department grants and the possibility of enlisting volunteers within the department. It was determined that due to the training required to be a volunteer firefighter, it is just as lengthy as the paid commission. He also explained that volunteer fire departments in the area either have paid positions or are limited in their volunteers.

Chief Merryman and Mayor Bell briefly explained the necessity of adequate staffing and equipment to obtain a better rating from the Insurance Safety Organization (ISO). The city currently has a 2 rating and is working towards a 1 rating, which is the best rating.

Discussions regarding staffing ensued.

Mayor Pro Tem Compian questioned what the fire department's professional fees are. Chief Merryman stated that they are for the programs that the department uses, inventory logs, TCFP, potential legal services, medical director fees, and firefighter certifications.

Mayor Pro Tem Compian questioned line item increases across the department budget.

Mayor Bell believes that the overtime budget is something that should be addressed, as police and fire have exceeded approximately \$1 million. Both Chief Merryman and Mayor Bell believe this may be addressed through increased personnel.

After questioning by Mayor Bell, Chief Merryman shared that the increase in the furniture and fixtures line item is due to projected costs for replacing the bay doors and air conditioning units.

Mayor Pro Tem Compian requested an updated organizational chart.

The council recommended a later presentation of the Emergency Management budget.

6. EXECUTIVE SESSION

There was no executive session.

7. ACTIONS TAKEN FROM EXECUTIVE SESSION

No action was taken.

8. ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Pro Tem Compian made a motion to adjourn. Councilmember Griffin seconded. **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

***Meeting was adjourned at 3:51 p.m.*