



**CITY OF LA MARQUE
CITY COUNCIL
REGULAR MINUTES
of
May 11, 2026**

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Mayor Bell called the meeting to order at 6:03 p.m.

2. ROLL CALL

Present:

Keith Bell	Mayor
Joe Compian	Mayor Pro
Kimberley Yancy	Tem/District B
Joseph Lowry	District A
Tonia Griffin	District C
	District D

3. INVOCATION AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

All assembled stated The Lord's Prayer in unison and Councilmember Griffin led the pledge.

4. PRESENTATIONS

4.I. Oath of Office: Tonia Griffin - Councilmember District D

***This item was taken after item 8.II *** Mayor Bell administered the Oath of Office to Councilmember Tonia Griffin.

4.II. Presentation: BTR Bayou Fest

Daniel Guidry, Founder of Bon Temps Rouler (BTR), thanked everyone for their hard work, stating that over 12,000 people visited the City of La Marque sharing metrics, stating that all hotels and RV parks were full during the weekend and more than 11 different states were represented. He shared that there were a few obstacles that have already started to be addressed for future events. He commended the La Marque Police Department for their actions during the event. He stated that the organization is already fielding calls from individuals who would like to participate next year. 97% of the people polled stated that they would like to attend next year. He stated that La Marque is a beautiful city and can flourish. He hopes to see the event grow and expand.

Councilmember Yancy stated that she attended the event and had a great time, it was very professional, and she looks forward to the next year.

Mayor Pro Tem Compian congratulated the BTR team for their good work.

Councilmember Lowry thanked everyone for putting the event together, stating that everyone had a good time, and he looks forward to the next one.

Mayor Bell shared interest in Mr. Guidry's assertion that the city's flagship park is a quality festival destination, and would like to open this opportunity to other possible festivals. Mayor Bell believed since this has proven the concept that it should be moved with vigor, and led by the Texas City-La Marque Chamber of Commerce. Chamber President Tim Culp agreed that since the city and BTR have proven that this could be successful, there are great opportunities that could be explored. He believes that the Mac McGaffey Highland Bayou Park is a hidden gem that would be great for tourism. Mr. Guidry and the BTR team presented the three title sponsors, The City of La Marque, Waste Management, and the Texas-City La Marque Chamber of Commerce, with commemorative signed guitars to thank them for their participation.

4.III. Presentation: Aquatrax Demonstration

Amit Sharma, Founder and CEO of Aquatrax, shared a customer engagement portal that will be available to residents to view their bills, usage, and consumption data. He also presented an admin portal that can be used by staff to review customer data. Mayor Bell requested that Aquatrax be available virtually to present a demonstration to the residents.

Mayor Pro Tem Compian requested that a portion of this platform be dedicated to water conservation, and resources for water bill payment assistance. He shared concerns regarding the continuation of this program as the original agreement was only one year funded by the American Rescue Plan Act funding.

Councilmember Griffin asked clarifying questions regarding accessibility for the residents.

4.IV. Presentation: Brookswatson & Co. CPA - Annual Financial Audit

Mike Brooks of Brookswatson & Co. presented the final audited financial statements to the City Council. He identified that the city received a modified opinion, the second ranking just below an unmodified opinion, the highest ranking. He stated this is due to certain material grant revenue and receivables that could not be verified. He shared data that showed a net increase in governmental expenses of approximately \$4.4 million. He shared that the city ended the year with total assets exceeding liabilities by approximately \$35 million, with a deficit of approximately \$2.4 million. Mayor Bell asked clarifying questions to assess where the modified finding originated. A lengthy discussion regarding the city's grant policies and processes ensued. Mr. Brooks shared that typically a city's largest revenues would be property and sales tax and although the numbers may be a little elevated in this city,

public safety is typically the largest expense. Mr. Brooks stated that the city's largest concern is the budget overages. This could be resolved by additional reporting, as has been stated in the past, and attention at the department level.

Councilmember Lowry stated that "this is not a third party's issue. The city screwed up, and the city has a history of losing documents and playing the blame game."

Councilmember Yancy shared her disappointment in receiving a modified opinion.

Mayor Pro Tem Compian stated that this is an audit through September 2025, and the council had received information stating that there was approximately \$9 million in reserves, but since then the city has now been under professional management and is on a road to recovery. He noted that the challenge is that small cities are encouraged to utilize third parties in these areas, but the city cannot afford staff to handle these tasks. He is looking for a methodology for best practices, so the city could still pursue grants. He asked clarifying questions regarding the findings of the audit firm. ***Councilmember Lowry exited the meeting at 7:45 p.m. and returned at 7:48 p.m.***

Councilmember Griffin asked clarifying questions regarding the unspent bond proceeds.

Mr. Brooks shared that the bond expenditure tracking has not been adequately kept.

Councilmember Lowry shared that each year there are concerns regarding reconciliations, and it's hard to keep the books straight without reconciliations.

Councilmember Yancy stated her hope that the new financial software will hopefully alleviate some of these issues.

Mayor Bell stated that the council may request Mr. Brooks to revisit the council to discuss further.

5. CITIZENS PARTICIPATION

- Hayley Winkelmann (**no address) invited the public to an information session on Tuesday, May 19, 2026 from 6:30-7:30 p.m. regarding home buying down payment assistance. She encouraged the council to visit O'Fayes.
- James Ross (Ave D) shared his concerns regarding the Vision2050 plan's recommendation to turn a large densely populated portion of the city into light industrial and the implications on appraisals.
- Re'Chard Loftis (Johnson St), he stated that when there is chaos in the city, good staff leaves. This has caused an impact on the Keep La Marque Beautiful

Commission meeting. He spoke of infrastructure work needing to be done across the city.

- Robert Michetich (N Curlew) thanked Finance Director Ferguson for his Budget Talks sessions over the previous week. He stated his disbelief in some of the financial information given to the public. He told the council to watch their budget and go to the very minimum and stated that the city does have all the grant information.
- Clarence Caldwell (Prairie St) spoke about vagrancy in his neighborhood. He was also disappointed in the vote totals. He concluded by stating that nothing gets done in a state of confusion.
- Minh Kim Bui (Texas Ave) asked if assistance could be received on the water bill at their business, Pilgrim's Cleaners, as their water bill has doubled since the rate increase.
- Brandon Kantowski (**no address) quoted James 3:16. He asked questions regarding code enforcement policies and accountability.
- Robert Harvey (**no address) congratulated Councilmember Griffin on her election. He spoke of altercations with a certain councilmember, stating that if he would "just behave and act like an elected official for two weeks" he would not have a reason to attend the meetings. He spoke of the Councilmember repeatedly calling him a pedophile online.

6. CONSENT AGENDA

***Item 6.IV was pulled for discussion.*

Mayor Pro Tem Compian made a motion to approve the consent agenda.

Councilmember Griffin seconded. **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

6.I. Special City Council Minutes 04.27.2026

6.II. City Council Minutes 04.13.2026

6.III. City Council Minutes 03.23.2026

6.IV. Interlocal Collection Agreement

Mayor Pro Tem Compian asked clarifying questions regarding the location of the Public Improvement District. Mayor Pro Tem Compian made a motion to authorize an Interlocal Collection Agreement with the Galveston County Tax Assessor Collector for collection of La Marque Public Improvement Districts. Councilmember Griffin seconded. **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

7. OLD BUSINESS

7.I. La Marque Vision 2050

Mayor Bell requested that the recommendations of both the Finance Committee and the auditors be committed to the financial piece of the La Marque Vision 2050 Plan. He also asked for considerations regarding modernizing infrastructure, primarily the city's digital infrastructure and Public Works department. He believes that a city of this size should focus on the 3-4 things it does well and do that.

Mayor Pro Tem Compian reiterated that some of the plans in the plan were the recommendations of the agency, not necessarily that of the council.

Councilmember Griffin made a motion to focus on the financial and infrastructure pieces of the La Marque 2050 Plan. Mayor Pro Tem Compian seconded. **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

7.II. Legal Services

Councilmember Lowry stated that he believes it is time to move in a different direction.

Councilmember Yancy made a motion to retain Mills Shirley as primary legal council and also engage Boroquez Law Firm as a secondary firm for one year's time.

Mayor Pro Tem Compian shared that he believes the city needs a change.

Councilmember Lowry asked to make a friendly amendment to retain MillsShirley for a 90-day period and then transition.

Councilmember Yancy declined the amendment.

Councilmember Griffin stated that everyone has talked about change, she is looking for change.

Mayor Bell stated that he understands the desire for change, but the city is in a period of transition with high level directors recently transitioned, a senior level city clerk transitioning within days, and a city manager who would be transitioning in a few months. He believed that "in a sea of change, Mills Shirley has been stable." He believes that Mills Shirley is being blamed for actions that are not assigned to them. Change is also on his mind, but he values stability, at least for the next year.

Councilmember Lowry spoke regarding his heartburn with the city's current legal representation.

Motion dies for lack of second

Councilmember Lowry made a motion to hire Bojorquez Law Firm for a term to begin August 1, 2026. Mayor Pro Tem Compian seconded.

Mayor Bell reflected on the turmoil in 2021, when the city lost a city manager and 6 high-level officials. He believes that in the midst of the turnover, the city needs stability. **MOTION FAILED WITH 2 AYES (COMPIAN/LOWRY) 3 NAYS (BELL/GRIFFIN/YANCY)**

Councilmember Lowry stated "he's not good for the city."

Attorney Knebel clarified that he does not have any supervisory authority, all he can do is provide advice.

Councilmember Yancy made a motion to retain Mills Shirley and invite Bojorquez to engage as a legal vendor in their areas of expertise. Councilmember Griffin seconded. **MOTION CARRIED WITH 4 AYES AND 1 NAY (LOWRY).**

8. NEW BUSINESS

8.I. Ordinance No. 2026-0010

Finance Director Ferguson stated that the updated ordinance reduces sewer rates for consumption over 6000 gallons. After a lengthy discussion, Mayor Pro Tem Compian made a motion to approve Ordinance No. O-2026-0010. Councilmember Griffin seconded. **MOTION CARRIED WITH 4 AYES AND 1 NAY (LOWRY).**

8.II. Resolution No. R-2026-0012

This item was taken before Presentations

Mayor Pro Tem Compian made a motion to adopt Resolution No. R-2026-0012. Councilmember Lowry seconded. Mayor Bell congratulated each person who put their name forward in this election as it is a difficult thing to do. **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

8.III. Resolution No. R-2026-0013

Mayor Pro Tem Compian made a motion to adopt Resolution No. R-2026-0013. Councilmember Lowry seconded. **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

8.IV. Change Order Authorization

Councilmember Yancy made a motion to approve Change Order No. 1 for the 12" Water Distribution Line from Newman Road to Stonewall Street Project in the amount of \$25,457 increasing the total contract amount from \$1,398,471 to \$1,423,928. Councilmember Lowry seconded. **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

8.V. Final Audit for Fiscal Year 2024-2025

Mayor Pro Tem Compian made a motion to approve the final audit for fiscal year 2024-2025. Councilmember Griffin seconded. **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.** Mayor Bell stated that the ultimate responsibility for the city's finances rests with the council, and the council "dropped the ball." This action publicly acknowledges the consequences of the council's distraction.

9. CITY MANAGER REPORT

9.I. Citywide Sanitary Sewer Rehabilitation Project (D208) Update

Public Works Director Shannon Breau acknowledged that there is a map of the project and the project did not include pre-bid televising which is why it was not done prior.

9.II. Illegal Dumping Cleanup Operations and Public Works Resource Allocation Update

Public Works Director Shannon Breaux presented this item. Councilmember Griffin thanked Shannon Breaux for the report. She shared her pleasure with spending 3 months at a time in each district and hopes that this is reflected in other maintenance items.

Councilmember Yancy asked questions regarding illegal dumping.

9.III. Street Division Update: Pavement Assessment, Rehabilitation Planning, and DuraPatcher Daily Maintenance Program

Councilmember Yancy requested that the city use everything they have to ensure La Marque is a priority. Councilmember Griffin asked clarifying questions regarding the report presented.

9.IV. Budget Talks Recap
Stood

9.V. City Manager Search Update
Stood

9.VI. Finance Report
Stood

9.VII. City Clerk's Report

Mayor Pro Tem Compian in connection with City Clerk Nance presented a brief presentation showing a grading of the city of La Marque as a B as ranked by niche.com.

9.VIII. Items for the Good of the Order

National Policw Week, Hurricane Huddle 5/16/26, Budget talks have concluded. KLMBC is gold status, she gave a brief update of the transformations made in the La Marque Public Library. Summer internships start in June. No meeting at the end of the month due to Memorial Day.

10. EXECUTIVE SESSION

There was no executive session.

11. ACTIONS TAKEN FROM EXECUTIVE SESSION

No action was taken.

12. REQUESTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Council member Griffin requested community room reservations, and asked if the Garden club meeting could be posted on the city's calendars. She spoke of needed updates on the city's websites. She has identified classes through the Texas Municipal League that she would like to attend. She spoke of updates she had received from Interim City Manager Holly regarding historical issues plaguing District D.

Councilmember Lowry congratulated Councilmember Griffin on her reelection. He also spoke of a resident's sewage issue. He requested a discussion on Halo Laws. He requested a pickle festival to be held at Mac McGaffey Highland Bayou Park. He does not understand why Main St. is not fully operational. He stated that Omega Bay is requesting additional law enforcement presence.

Councilmember Yancy thanked staff who participated in Bayou Fest. Happy Mother's Day to all who celebrated, and gave congratulations to KLMBC for their gold star. She thanked staff for the 4-way stop sign on Delany and announced that Minister J Bass received the first posthumous degree from College of the Mainland. She thanked TxDot for finally removing debris from in front of a local church. She requested an e-games tournament at the library, an update on street signs, and an All America City flag pole. She requested a shop local campaign for Life and Liberty week, and asked to revisit naming the library after Mayor Geraldine Sam.

Mayor Pro Tem Compian spoke regarding termites, and invited everyone to a senior lunch at Queen of peace the following Wednesday. He reminded everyone to submit their tax appraisal protest forms by May 15.

Mayor Bell acknowledged the service of the La marque police department during police week. He believes the La Marque police department is the best department in the State of Texas. Happy belated Mother's Day. We honor those veterans who have passed on this Memorial Day and thanked their family unit. Congratulated Councilmember Griffin on her reelection, and looks forward to the runoff between Mayor Pro Tem Compian and Sade Williams. He announced Hurricane Huddle on 5/16/26. He requested amendments to the citizen's participation language. He announced that this was the last official meeting that City Clerk Nance would attend. He thanked her for her service.

13. ADJOURNMENT

Councilmember Griffin made a motion to adjourn. Councilmember Lowry seconded. **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

***Meeting was adjourned at 10:26 p.m.*