

CITY OF NATALIA

2078 State Hwy. 132 N. • P.O. Box 270 • Natalia, TX 78059-0270
(830) 663-2926 • Metro (830) 665-2206 • Fax (830) 663-3806

REGULAR CITY COUNCIL MEETING
CITY HALL COUNCIL CHAMBERS
2078 STATE HWY 132 NORTH, NATALIA, TEXAS 78059
23 MAY 2022 at 7.00 P.M.

MINUTES

ROLL CALL: Mayor Samuel Bluemel – Present
Alderman Mike Fernandez – Present
Alderman Tommy Ortiz – Present

Mayor Pro-Tem Sam Smith – Present
Alderman Darin Frazier - Present
Alderman Selica Vera – Present

1. **CALL TO ORDER:**

Mayor Bluemel called the regular city council meeting to order at 7:08 pm; followed by the Pledge of Allegiance lead by Alderman Vera and Invocation by Mayor Bluemel.

2. **CITIZENS TO BE HEARD:**

Ruben Juarez discussed an incident that occurred at his residence. He stated that he tried to get a hold of a police officer to report that an officer drove on his property chasing a stray dog. Ruben Juarez stated that the incident should be addressed. Mayor Bluemel explained that personnel matters cannot be discussed but that would meet with Mr. Juarez if he would like to make a written formal complaint.

3. **CITY COUNCIL COMMENTS:**

Alderman Sam Smith inquired on where the easement ends in front of the mattress factory and reminded the utility workers do not need to mow the grass past the city easement. Alderman Mike Fernandez questioned why 18 wheelers are parking in Mustang Estates. Alderman Fernandez requested trees be trimmed on Highway 132 N to uncover the speed limit sign across from the mattress factory. Alderwoman Vera wanted to know the status of the no parking signs on FM 471 and Highway 132. It is dangerous.

4. **CONSENT AGENDA:**

All of the following items are considered to be routine by the City Council, there will be no separate discussion on these items and will be enacted with one motion; unless removed by any Council Member to discuss and consider separately by making such request prior to a motion and vote.

- a) Approval of the Minutes: 23 May 2022 Regular Meeting
23 May 2022 Joint NMDD/City Council Workshop meeting
- b) Approval of the Financial Activity Report: May 2022
- c) Approval of the Utility Department Activity Report: May 2022
- d) Approval of the Municipal Court Activity Report: May 2022
- e) Approval of the Police Department/Code Enforcement Activity Report: May 2022

Action: Alderman Fernandez made the motion approving the consent agenda, and Alderman Smith seconded the motion. Vote: 5-0; motion carried.

5. **INFORMATIONAL ITEMS:**

- a) City Administrator/Secretary
 - i. The Chief is still reviewing the police department policy manual and it will be submitted to the council for review and approval as soon as possible.

- ii. The office positions and utility position have been filled by Nicole Cummings and Willa Keith
- iii. Loves owner will be in town on June 7th.
- iv. Kennels from Lytle animal control are too large for our facility.
- b) Chief of Police, Valerie Naff reported that she and Officer Lee will be in training in June. Officer Lee will be attending the Natalia ISD band trip to Washington, DC. Alderman Frazier suggested there be an awards system in place for crime. Alderman Ortiz stated that the squatters have been addressed but crime continues to increase, and he suggests the council consider hiring additional officers. Alderman Fernandez has concerns about the city carrying commissions for reserve officers and the liabilities it may bring.
- c) Utility Director – Art Smith – absent
 - i. Mayor Bluemel reported he is waiting on pricing for purchase vs. lease from Ford and will present to the city council once he receives.

DISCUSSION/CONSIDERATION OF ACTION ITEMS:

6. Judge Richard Loza explained the Superior Courts ruling on in person hearings for municipal courts. Judge Loza stated the ruling is due to be reviewed on June 1, 2022, and may change. In the meantime, we will continue to have zoom hearings until the ruling changes. Once the ruling has changed, we will need a Bailiff again and (2) people to handle the paperwork and processes. We will also need to submit a COVID safety protocol plan and have the judge, bailiff and clerks protected by a clear barrier, possibly a portable plexiglass barrier. No action.
7. Alderman Fernandez made a motion to accept NMDD Board of Director / Vice Chair Patrick Bourcier resignation. Alderman Ortiz seconded the motion. Motion carried 5-0. No discussion.
8. Discuss/Consider amending the current Natalia Municipal Development District By-Laws. No action.
9. Discuss/Consider amending Zoning Ordinance 18-0905-2. No action. Discussion of NMDD Board members and City Council members to attend future training.
10. Discuss/Consider action on request from AEP to remove or possibly relocate palm trees within the city limits of Natalia. No action. Item moved to the June 28, 2022 meeting.
11. Natalia Little League president Edward Castro thanked the city for replacing the wood on the bleachers. The board appreciates the effort. Alderman Smith stated that the home side of the fields need shade. Alderman Ortiz reminded everyone that the Little League is run by the International Little League, and it is not a city function. Concerns were discussed about the overgrowth along the drainage area on highway 132, some minor house keeping issues that needs to be addressed by the little league board and parking along by the lift station. Chief Naff explained that there are no parking signs, but attendees ignore the sign and continue to park unlawfully. Chief Naff stated that cars will be towed in the future if parked in a no parking area. Mr. Castro discussed the public has been using the dumpster and they need a lock. Nikki will contact Republic to have a lock bar installed. Mr. Castro explained the need to have an additional set of keys. Currently the board has two sets however they are not always available should another board member need to enter the facilities. Nikki will contact the lock smith to have an additional set made and the little league will pay the costs. Mr. Castro stated that no surrounding little leagues require security during games and requested that security not be required for little league functions. Alderman Fernandez made a motion to amend the contract not requiring security during little league functions. Alderman Smith seconded the motion. Motion carried 5-0. Board member Roseann Castro thanked the council and utility workers for replacing the wood on the bleachers. Ms. Castro also stated about the public using the dumpster and they need a lock. Ms. Castro requested that the police not have lights on during a game as it's a safety issue when the kids are playing a game.

12. Linda Morales from the Devine housing authority explained to the city council what the interlocal agreement would entail. Ms. Morales stated that she has been helping Natalia residents with vouchers, however this is limiting the help she can give to Devine residents. She is requesting the interlocal agreement between the Devine housing authority and the city, so she can receive additional vouchers. Alderman Frazier had some concerns regarding the reason to have an interlocal agreement if vouchers are already being given to Natalia residents now without the interlocal agreement. Alderman Smith has the same concerns. Alderman Frazier suggests we contact the city attorney before deciding on the matter. Alderman Fernandez made a motion to accept the interlocal agreement pending the city attorney's review of the agreement. Mayor Bluemel will contact the city attorney. Alderwoman Vera seconded the motion. Motion carried 5-0.

13. Alderman Fernandez made a motion to pass a resolution authorizing approval for the management contract award for the HOME program through the Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs for the RSP HOME (HRA) Agreement Contract. Alderman Ortiz seconded the motion. Motion carried 5-0.

14. Alderman Fernandez made a motion to move the June regular meeting from Monday June 20th to Tuesday June 28th, 2022. Alderman Smith seconded the motion. Motion carried 5-0.

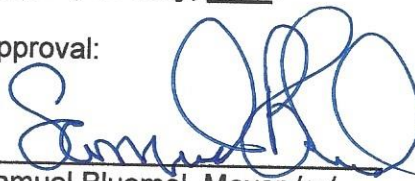
15. Mayor Samuel Bluemel explained to the council that there will be vacation bible school at the First Baptist Church of Natalia June 13-17th, 9:00 am – 11:30 am. Due to safety issues he is requesting the block of Pearson between 3rd & 4th street be temporarily closed during the hours of 9:00 am – 11:30 am. Alderman Fernandez made a motion to temporarily close the street portion. Alderman Smith seconded the motion. Motion carried 5-0. Alderwoman Vera requested that the school be notified due to summer school.

16. The SRO officer Christopher Lee will be traveling to Washington D.C. with the NISD band for the Memorial Day Parade for (6) six days. The school district will cover the hotel and some food expense for the trip. Alderman Fernandez made a motion to give officer Lee a \$400 travel stipend. Alderman Smith seconded the motion. Motion carried 5-0.

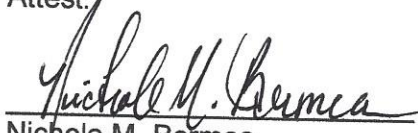
17. Adjournment. Alderman Fernandez motioned to adjourn at 8:40 pm, and Alderwoman Vera seconded the motion. Motion carried; 5-0.

Passed and Approved this 18th day of July, 2022.

Approval:


Samuel Bluemel, Mayor /or/
Sam Smith, Mayor Pro-Tem

Attest:


Nichole M. Bermea
Interim City Administrator/Secretary