

# 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 25 JANUARY 2021 at 7:00 P.M.

### MINUTES

**ROLL CALL:** Mayor Tommy Ortiz – Present

Alderman Mike Fernandez – Present

Alderman Sam Bluemel – Present

Mayor Pro-Tem Sam Smith – Present

Alderman Darin Frazier - Present

Alderman Selica Vera – Present

#### 1. **CALL TO ORDER:**

Mayor Ortiz called the regular city council meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

#### 2. **CITIZENS TO BE HEARD:**

Ruby Vera brought concerns about the US flag spotlights since they were not working. Assistant City Secretary Nikki Bermea said that we have already contacted someone to repair and or replace the light bulbs. Ms. Vera asked for the flags to come down at sunset and put back up in the morning. Secondly she was concerned with the dog kennels. She pointed out that the animals need to have a cement slab, proper slope, etc. and said the animals need to go back to where they belong.

#### 3. **CITY COUNCIL COMMENTS:**

Councilman Bluemel said many people are upset about the new NMDD building that was placed across the street. Mayor Pro-Tem Sam Smith reported the same. He also apologized for not being at the meetings the last couple of times. Councilman Frazier spoke about Gloria Vasquez who recently passed away and about how much she had done for this community. He discussed a flag raising and proclamation at the State Capitol, which Ruby Vera said she would take care of. Frazier also said he has fielded calls from concerned citizens about the NMDD building. He suggested it be put on the agenda for next month about fundraising for MDD and that both MDD and the City should work together. Councilman Fernandez said all knew it was going to be a portable building and that it would be skirted. He stated that council approved of the building and is now complaining about it. He thanked the Chief and his son for cleaning up Highway 471 last year. Fernandez asked chief to have the police report put in the Devine News. He expressed concerns about the dog kennel and with stray cats being fed that has become a nuisance. He stated there are no city limit signs or exit signs on the highway. Fernandez was also concerned with asphalt near Love's Gas Station due to large vehicles parking there and cutter ants on Palfrey & Miller. Councilman Vera stated that complaints about the MDD building should be addressed directly to them. She questioned if any minors had been stopped since the Ordinance for Juvenile Curfew was enacted, to which the Chief replied there had not been. Vera commented on the streetlights again and that she would call Hazel and that the lights needed to be fixed. The Mayor concurred about the MDD building and stated that people weren't aware of MDD or what they do. Frazier is glad MDD is trying to move out of City Hall and stated that this building is a steppingstone and that there is a process. Fernandez stated that people like to complain but don't like to get involved.

#### 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: 21 December 2020 Regular Meeting; 07 January 2021 Special Meeting
- b) Approval of the Financial Activity Report: December 2020
- c) Approval of the Utility Department Activity Report: December 2020
- d) Approval of the Municipal Court Activity Report: December 2020
- e) Approval of the Police Department Activity Report: Dec 2020 received late

Action: Alderman Fernandez made a motion approving all; Alderman Vera seconded the motion. Vote: Motion passed unanimously with a 5-0 vote.

## **5. STAFF REPORTS:**

- a) City Administrator/Secretary 1.) City Administrator Hinojosa gave an update on the FYE 09.30.2020 audit and stated it was scheduled for March 16, 2021. 2.) As an update for the building permits that took place in 2020, Hinojosa stated that there were 15 permits for single-family houses (attached and detached) and one two-family building, for a total of 16 new residential building permits issued. In addition, there were six Certificates of Occupancy issued for single family houses. There were also three Manufactured HUD inspected/mobile homes put into place in 2020. 3.) Hinojosa gave an update on the HOME Program. He stated that we now have three more homes that will be uploaded to the state for approval and one that already has all final documents done for a total of four homes. Langford Community Management Services will proceed to go out to bid on these homes in the next 2 or 3 weeks. One was already approved completed by August so Langford will get a contractor in place and proceed as soon as these homes have final documents. Construction should start no later than May. There are a few more possible homes that Langford is waiting on environmental clearance forms but these may come in late so they may have to be on the next round. There are also other homes that have not been included in this update because Langford works on these houses in groups, so if they did not make the cut off, they will be included in the next round. 4.) As a reminder, City Offices will be closed for Presidents' Day, Feb 15, 2021 and it was decided last month to move the City Council Meeting to Feb 22, 2021.
- b) Utility Director—Alderman Smith questioned if 7% water loss was acceptable, to which Art replied that it was.
- c) Chief of Police—Fleming stated that the police report has not been accurate, and that people may not understand the calls for service. Calls for service will be more accurately reported in the future to report both a call for service and any action resulting from such a call. He ventured to say that 80-90 calls per month may be more accurate. Chief Fleming stated that former Chief Rodriguez had the Police Department telephone forwarded to a reserve number and that is why they have not been getting calls. Fleming also reported the resignation of Reserve Officer Ivan Diaz.

## **DISCUSSION/CONSIDERATION OF ACTION ITEMS:**

- 6. Discuss/Consider convening into Executive Session pursuant to Texas Government Code, Section 551.074, Personnel Matters, to discuss the City Administrator's Six (6) Month Evaluation.  
Action: Alderman Bluemel moved to convene into Executive Session; Alderman Vera seconded the motion. Vote: Motion passed unanimously with a 5-0 vote.

## **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

- 7. Executive Session: City Council adjourned into Executive Session at 7:38 pm pursuant to Texas Government Code, Section 551.074, Personnel Matters to discuss the following:
  - a) City Administrator Six (6) Month Evaluation.

## **REGULAR SESSION**

8. Regular Session: City Council reconvened into regular session at 8:38 pm, and if necessary, may take action on the items discussed in executive session.
- a) Mayor Pro-Tem Smith made a motion to remove City Administrator René Hinojosa from probation and increase salary by \$5,000; seconded by Alderman Vera. Vote: Motion passed unanimously by a 5-0 vote.
9. Discussion/Consider Action on an Ordinance; Entering into an Inter-local Agreement with the District Attorney's Office of the 454<sup>th</sup> Judicial District Court in compliance with Texas Code of Criminal Procedure Chapter 59 Civil Forfeitures, for a two-year period, beginning January 1, 2021 and ending December 31, 2022.
- Discussion: Fernandez stated that police shouldn't be on I-35. Frazier wanted to have a representative be here in order to discuss this agreement with them.
- Action: Alderman Frazier made a motion to table discussion to the next regular City Council meeting so that we could have a representative from the 454<sup>th</sup> Judicial District Court come here to discuss the agreement. Alderman Bluemel seconded the motion. Vote: Motion passed unanimously by a 5-0 vote.
10. Discuss/Consider adoption of Proclamation; proclaiming April as Fair Housing Month for the City of Natalia, Texas.
- Action: Alderman Fernandez made a motion to approve the proclamation as presented; Mayor Pro-Tem Smith seconded the motion. Vote: Motion passed unanimously by a 5-0 vote.
11. Discuss/Consider a COVID-19 Policy for the City of Natalia.
- Action: Alderman Frazier made a motion to accept the COVID-19 policy as presented; Alderman Bluemel seconded the motion. Vote: Motion passed unanimously by a 5-0 vote.
12. Discuss/Consider action on an Ordinance, an ordinance of the City Council of the City of Natalia, Texas amending the Code of Ordinances Chapter 22 Law Enforcement, Article II Police Dept.
- Action: Alderman Frazier made a motion to accept the COVID-19 policy as presented; Alderman Vera seconded the motion. Vote: Motion passed unanimously by a 5-0 vote.
13. Review/Discuss/Consider actions regarding the Natalia Little League 2021 Lease Agreement.
- Discussion: Members expressed concerns about renegotiating the contract. There were concerns about Little League not abiding by the contract and the contract not having any mechanism to force compliance. Councilmembers also wanted to have Little League here to discuss with them.
- Action: Alderman Fernandez moved to table discussion to next month. Mayor Pro-Tem Sam Smith seconded the motion. Vote: Motion passed unanimously by a 5-0 vote.
14. Adjournment. Alderman Vera motioned to adjourn at 8:57 pm, and Alderman Bluemel seconded the motion. Vote: Motion passed unanimously by a 5-0 vote.

**Passed and Approved this 15<sup>th</sup> day of March, 2021.**

Approval:

  
Tommy Ortiz, Mayor /or/  
Sam Smith, Mayor Pro-Tem

Attest:

  
René Hinojosa, MP/CA  
City Administrator/Secretary

