

CITY OF NATALIA

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REGULAR CITY COUNCIL MEETING CITY HALL COUNCIL CHAMBERS 2078 STATE HWY 132 NORTH, NATALIA, TEXAS 17 MAY 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 – Absent

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; followed by the Pledge of Allegiance by Alderman Vera and Invocation by Alderman Bluemel.

2. **CITIZENS TO BE HEARD:**

Ruby Vera informed the Council of the Memorial Day Ceremony at 7 pm on Sunday, May 30 at the Veteran's Memorial. She also took the opportunity to remind the Council about the NMDD Market Day and Community Wide Garage Sale on Saturday, 22 May 2021, weather permitting. She also informed the Council that she plans to have NMDD vacate the City Hall before the end of the month and move into the new NMDD building across the highway. Dorothy Woodson from NMDD stated they have 12 vendors and have placed ads in Devine News and that banners and flyers have been circulated.

3. **CITY COUNCIL COMMENTS:**

Ald. Fernandez aired concerns about Little League and them coordinating events with the police, to which Administrator Hinojosa stated that it is the Little League's responsibility to reach out to ensure proper security, especially if the City does not have a schedule. Fernandez also expressed concerns about the curb in front of City Hall and that he would like to see it painted red to avoid having people park in front of it. Administrator Hinojosa stated that there are two no parking signs in front of City Hall and that if people chose to disobey the signs, then they risk being ticketed by an officer. The Mayor expressed his support for NMDD Market Day and reiterated that the sale of soft drinks and water there will support the library and that donations are appreciated.

4. **PRESENTATIONS**

a. Certificates of Recognition to Powerlifting Team Members who placed within the Top 3 at State.

- Jiselle Gonzales—1st
- Jasmine Ramon—1st
- Meg Martinez—2nd
- Gabriela Munoz—2nd
- Jalesca Schorchs—3rd

The Mayor presented each of the ladies with Certificates of Recognition and stood for a brief photo opportunity.

5. **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: 15 April 2021 Regular Meeting
- b) Approval of the Financial Activity Report: April 2021
- c) Approval of the Utility Department Activity Report: April 2021
- d) Approval of the Municipal Court Activity Report: April 2021
- e) Approval of the Police Code Enforcement Activity Report: April 2021
- f) Approval of the Police Department Activity Report: April 2021

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

DISCUSSION/CONSIDERATION OF ACTION ITEMS:

6. Introduction of newly hired regular, full-time police officer, Christopher Lee. (Mayor Ortiz to administer ceremonial Oath of Office.

Administrator Hinojosa stated that Mr. Lee fills the last paid position with the City, with the exception of the Chief of Police position which is currently vacant. Mr. Lee took the Oath of Office.

7. Discussion/Consider opportunities for coordination with Keith Lutz, Emergency Management Coordinator for Medina County.

Discussion: Mr. Lutz stated that there was a delay in receiving resources due to the statewide crisis. Had the winter storm been merely a localized emergency, resources would have been readily available. He assured the Council that Natalia was not left out and that the City received resources as soon as they were available. Ald. Frazier expressed concerns about forward deployment of resources. Mr. Lutz stated that there are normally only two pallets of water stored in Hondo. He stated that it is most cost effective to utilize resources such as the Red Cross during times of disaster. Mr. Lutz stated he is up and at the ready during storm crisis. Ald. Smith brought up the sirens during tornado watches to which Mr. Lutz stated there was no reason to set off the sirens unless there was a credible threat of a direct hit to the city. Natalia did not qualify to have the sirens set off during the recent tornado warnings. Mr. Lutz stated that silent tests are conducted because previous mayors did not want alarms going off. This was done on the first Tuesday of the month. Frazier asked for a report of the testing to be sent to the City Administrator. Ald. Vera asked about police access to set off the alarm. Mr. Lutz stated they did or should have access but recommended against having police set off the alarms since it is a serious decision and must only be set off when necessary. Lutz recommended only Emergency Management have access to set off the sirens also in order to avoid frequency jams if the police and EM tried to set the siren off at the same time. He reiterated that redundancy is important and that sirens are only meant to be heard outside, not indoors. Ald. Vera asked about emergency planning. Lutz said exercises can be done but that plans change in crisis.

8. Discuss/Consider Action on a resolution of the City of Natalia, Texas, awarding a contract for the Texas Community Development Block Grant (TxCDBG) Contract № 7219309 for the Natalia Clarifier Improvements Project; issuing Contractor notice to proceed; and providing for an effective date. Discussion: None.

Action: Ald. Frazier made a motion to table the item to the next special or regularly scheduled meeting. Ald. Bluemel seconded the motion. Vote: 5-0.

9. Discuss/Consider convening into Executive Session pursuant to Texas Government Code, Section 551.074, Personnel Matters.

Action: Ald. Vera made a motion to convene into executive session. Ald. Bluemel seconded the motion. Vote: 5-0.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

10. The City Council shall meet in Executive Session pursuant to Texas Government Code, Chapter 551 to discuss the following:
- a. §551.074; Personnel Matters: Update on applicants and deliberation regarding hiring of a Chief of Police

REGULAR SESSION

Regular Session: City Council reconvened into regular session at 8:30 pm, and if necessary, may take action on the items discussed in executive session. No action taken.

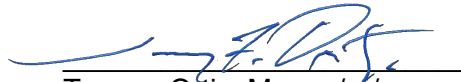
11. INFORMATIONAL ITEMS:

- a) City Administrator/Secretary
 - i. Road Work by County to begin in two phases. 3rd and Bartlett first; to be followed by 8th Street later.
 - ii. Eight houses approved for HOME Program
 - iii. Congressman Gonzales to be in Natalia at the Council Chambers on May 19 from 1 to 3 pm for residents to come in to discuss local concerns. Administrator Hinojosa clarified that Congressman Gonzales himself would not be present, but rather, an aide, Marshal Hoak.
 - iv. NMDD Market Day and Community Wide Garage Sale is on May 22.
 - v. City Offices Closed on Monday, May 31 for Memorial Day
 - vi. Available position for Utility Serviceman.
- b) Utility Director
- c) Interim Chief of Police
 - i. Police Officers staff update

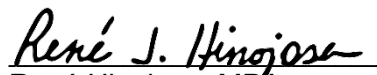
12. Adjournment. Alderman Fernandez motioned to adjourn at 8:43 pm, and Mayor Pro-Tem Smith seconded the motion. Vote: Motion passed unanimously by a 5-0 vote.

Passed and Approved this 21th day of June, 2021.

Approval:


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

Attest:


René Hinojosa, MPA
City Administrator/Secretary

