

CITY OF NATALIA

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**REGULAR CITY COUNCIL MEETING
CITY HALL COUNCIL CHAMBERS
2078 STATE HWY 132 NORTH, NATALIA, TEXAS 78059
16 AUGUST 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 lead by Alderman Vera and Invocation by Alderman Bluemel.

2. CITIZENS TO BE HEARD:

None

3. CITY COUNCIL COMMENTS:

Ald. Bluemel said all is looking good and gave thanks to all municipal employees. Ald. Frazier reiterated the comments and gave thanks to all municipal employees. Ald. Fernandez questioned the paving on 8th St and Hwy 471, to which City Administrator said that the County would be unable to do at this time due to time constraints. He suggested hiring an outside contractor to complete 8th street from Hwy 471 to Miller (two blocks). Ald. Frazier noted that if the cost does not exceed \$25,000 then council approval would not be required. Ald. Fernandez notified the council that National Night Out had been cancelled due to the surge in coronavirus cases and the delta variant that is spreading. Ald. Vera expressed concerns about the Natalia Little League parking and that vehicles do not respect the no parking signs that are in place and the caution tape is continually taken down. City Administrator Hinojosa stated that the caution tape does not need to be up, and the police should enforce the no parking signs with no need for caution tape. She noted that evening tournaments are especially bad. The mayor said he will remind NLL about contractual agreements.

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: 19 July 2021 Regular Meeting

30 July 2021 Special Meeting

b) Approval of the Financial Activity Report: July 2021

c) Approval of the Utility Department Activity Report: July 2021

d) Approval of the Municipal Court Activity Report: July 2021

e) Approval of the Police Code Enforcement Activity Report: July 2021

f) Approval of the Police Department Activity Report: July 2021

Action: Alderman Fernandez made the motion approving the consent agenda, and Alderman Bluemel seconded the motion. Vote: 4-0; Motion carried unanimously.

5. INFORMATIONAL ITEMS:

- a) City Administrator/Secretary
 - i. Medina County has finished road work for phase one: 3rd and Bartlett
 - ii. Phase Two of road work started: Two blocks on 8th St between Kearney and Miller
 - iii. COVID-19 Policy has been updated to comply with State regulations
 - iv. Last day for applications for place on ballot was today at 5 pm. Write in candidates can still file until 5 pm on Friday, 20 August 2021.
 - v. A HOME Program update was provided to Council. Five homes have already been completed, 4 are to be built imminently, and a further 4 are also in line to be built. There are other applications in the queue.
 - vi. The City received a notice of garbage rate increase of 3.45% from Republic Services. Accordingly, this agenda includes an action item to in turn increase garbage rates to our customers.
 - vii. ePay and eBill is under consideration for the next fiscal year.
 - viii. An update with the loan from Government Capital was given. The documents had been received on Friday, August 13 and sent back to them today, on Monday, August 16. Hinojosa noted the close date was August 26 and assured council that this was a normal timeline according to Government Capital.
- b) Utility Director
 - Public Works have taken possession of two weed eaters, a chainsaw, and a compressor. They are still waiting on another weed eater and a generator. This was the smaller purchase that was authorized by Council.
- c) Interim Chief of Police
 - Absent.

DISCUSSION/CONSIDERATION OF ACTION ITEMS:

- 6. Introduce Valerie Naff as Chief of Police for City of Natalia Police Department
The Mayor administered oath of office to Valerie Naff and was introduced to the City Council and all present. She will be reporting for duty as of Thursday, 19 August 2021.
- 7. Discuss/Consider medical insurance for Municipal employees.
Discussion: The Council discussed the various insurance options and asked how we felt about our current plan. City Administrator Hinojosa noted our plan replacement for next year increased by about 12% and noted there are various other alternatives, including from United, Blue Cross, and TML. Alderman Frazier asked what the employees thought about the plans, to which Hinojosa replied that all had been given the spreadsheet of various alternatives and solicited written comments. Two were receive indicating they preferred to remain on the same plan. The council noted that no action was needed from them and would prefer to leave the decision to City Administrator Hinojosa.
Action: No action taken.
- 8. Discuss/Consider Action on the City awarding a construction contract for the Texas Community Development Block Grant (TxCDBG) Contract № 7219309 for the Natalia Water Treatment Plant Clarifier Improvements Project, and a tentative Notice to Proceed date.
Discussion: Nicole Stevenson from M&S Engineering addressed the Council and stated that two bids were submitted, with RGV Industrial having submitted the lowest bid at \$189,000 for the project. She recommended that the contract be awarded to RGV Industrial for the amount of the base bid.
Action: Alderman Frazier made a motion to award RGV Industrial the contract for the amount of the base bid of \$189,000. Alderman Fernandez seconded the motion. Vote: 4-0. Motion carried unanimously.
- 9. Discussion/Consider an Ordinance adding two stop signs on 7th St. at 7th and Aubrey (Mayor Ortiz).

Mayor Ortiz addressed the Council concerning a stop sign petition. He spoke about the concern for the safety of residents because too many people speed down 7th Street and the noise they make. Ald. Frazier asked about how much it would cost the City. Utility Director Smith replied that two stop signs were taken down last month from another street, so we have those two available. All we would need to get are the posts to put the stop signs up. Administrator Hinojosa suggested the council consider at a further time regulation concerning the petitioning of stop signs as there have been several inquiries regarding this.

Action: Alderman Fernandez made the motion approving an Ordinance for a three-way stop at 7th and Aubrey. Alderman Vera seconded the motion. Vote: 4-0; Motion carried unanimously.

10. Discuss/Consider an Ordinance; Amending the Garbage Rates, and providing for an effective date.

Discussion: Hinojosa explained that the City had received a notice of increase from Republic Services for 3.45% beginning the next fiscal year. He noted that Republic has the option to increase prices from the CPI based on the Water/Sewer/Trash index up to a maximum of 4%. Alderman Frazier asked if we were still under contract with Republic Services, to which Hinojosa replied that we were. Alderman Frazier noted that the City had no say in the 3.45% and saw the need to, in turn, raise the rates for the residents.

Action: Alderman Fernandez made a motion approving an ordinance, and Alderman Vera seconded the motion. Vote: 4-0; Motion carried unanimously.

11. Discuss/Consider agreement terms between the City of Natalia and the Natalia Independent School District for the employment of a School Resource Officer commissioned by the Natalia Police Department for School Year 2021-2022.

Discussion: Alderman Frazier asked if the contract came from the school or the City. Assistant City Secretary Bermea noted that traditionally the request came from the school. Hinojosa noted that the terms of the contract largely remained the same with a few minor changes at the request of the school and noted that the salary is not the subject of the agreement as that is subject to change based off rates provided by our health insurance and other rates that may still change.

Action: Ald. Fernandez made a motion to accept the SRO Contract. Ald. Bluemel seconded the motion. Vote: 4-0. Motion carried unanimously.

12. Discuss/Consider ordering the General Election for the City of Natalia, Texas to be held on November 2, 2021 for the purpose of electing a Mayor and two (2) Aldermen.

Discussion: Hinojosa noted that today at 5 pm was the last day to apply for a place on the ballot, however, write-in applications were still accepted until Friday at 5 pm. Legally, the City needed to order the election, and if no further applications were received, it could be cancelled at the next meeting.

Action: Alderman Bluemel made a motion approving the Order of Election, and Alderman Fernandez seconded the motion. Vote: 4-0. Motion passed unanimously.

13. Discuss/Consider setting a date, time, and place for a Public Hearing on Fiscal Year 2021-2022 Proposed Budgets.

Action: Alderman Vera moved to set the Public Hearing for FY 2021-2022 Proposed Budget for September 20, 2021 at 6.45 pm and to discuss/consider adopting the budget at that time or to postpone consideration. Alderman Bluemel seconded the motion.

Vote:

Mayor Tommy Ortiz – Present; not voting	Mayor Pro-Tem Sam Smith – Absent
Alderman Mike Fernandez – Yes	Alderman Darin Frazier - Yes
Alderman Sam Bluemel – Yes	Alderman Selica Vera – Yes

14. Discuss/Consider setting a Proposed Tax Rate for Tax Year 2021-2022; and setting a date, time and place for the public hearings and adoption of the tax rate.

Action: Alderman Vera moved to set the proposed tax rate for FY 2021-2022 at \$0.7162 per \$100 and to schedule a public hearing and date to vote on the tax rate for September 20, 2021 at 7.00 pm. Alderman Fernandez seconded the motion.

Vote:

Mayor Tommy Ortiz – Present; not voting Mayor Pro-Tem Sam Smith – Absent

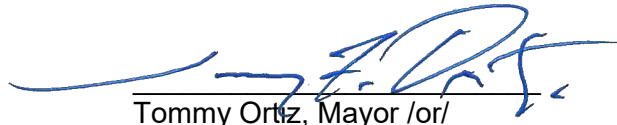
Alderman Mike Fernandez – Yes Alderman Darin Frazier - Yes

Alderman Sam Bluemel – Yes Alderman Selica Vera – Yes

15. Adjournment. Alderman Fernandez motioned to adjourn at 7.51 pm, and Alderman Vera seconded the motion. Vote: Motion passed unanimously by a 4-0 vote.


Passed and Approved this 20th day of September, 2021.

Approval:



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

Attest:


René Hinojosa, MPA
City Administrator/Secretary

