

CITY OF NATALIA

2078 State Hwy. 132 N. • P.O. Box 270 • Natalia, TX 78059-0270
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REGULAR CITY COUNCIL MEETING CITY HALL COUNCIL CHAMBERS 2078 STATE HWY 132 NORTH, NATALIA, TEXAS 17 AUGUST 2020 at 7:00 P.M.

MINUTES

1. **Call to Order:** Mayor Tommy Ortiz – Present
Alderman Mike Fernandez – Present
Alderman Sam Bluemel – Present
Mayor Pro-Tem Sam Smith - Absent
Alderman Darin Frazier - Present
Alderdwoman Selica Vera – Present
Mayor Ortiz called the regular city council meeting to order at 7:00 pm; followed by the Pledge of Allegiance by Alderdwoman Vera and Invocation by Alderman Bluemel.
2. **PUBLIC COMMENTS:**
Ruby Vera informed the Council that the NMDD had four bids for demolition and removal of present building located at 2079 State Hwy 132 N. They would be reviewing bids on 18 August at 6.30 pm. She informed the Council about AACOG assistance provided to seniors (60+) residing in the Alamo area. She furthermore bemoaned the lack of local resident participation in the 2020 Census, which currently stands at about 24% for Natalia.
3. **PUBLIC HEARING ITEMS:**
 - a) Fiscal Year 2020-2021 Proposed General and Utility Fund Budgets
As there were no public comments, Alderman Bluemel made a motion to close discussion. Alderman Frazier seconded. The motion passed unanimously by a 4-0 vote.
4. **CITY COUNCIL COMMENTS:**
Alderman Frazier commented about the USPS grand re-opening and thanked the City Administrator and City Staff in their efforts. He also suggested to check on availability of COVID-19 funds from the county. Alderman Fernandez passed out a list of streets to pave and submitted them to Utility Director Art Smith. Alderdwoman Vera commented that she was excited to have the USPS open again and questioned about the Little League. Mayor Ortiz responded that the locks were cut because neither the Police nor Fire Departments had keys to the property and that this was a hazard in case of emergency. Mayor Ortiz emphasized the need for all departments to be readily able to recognize fellow City employees and to be ready to help each other out. Mayor Ortiz introduced the following:
 - a) Introduction of newly appointed Chief of Police, James V. Fleming II
 - b) Introduction of the newly hired Police Officer, Justin Fonseca
5. **CONSENT AGENDA:**
All of the following items were considered to be routine by the City Council. There was no separate discussion and these items were enacted with one motion.
 - a. Approval of the Minutes: 20 July 2020 Regular Meeting and 24 July 2020 Special Meeting
 - b. Approval of the Financial Activity Report: July 2020
 - c. Approval of the Utility Department Activity Report: July 2020
 - d. Approval of the Municipal Court Activity Report: July 2020

e. Approval of the Police Department Activity Report: July 2020

Action: Alderman Fernandez made a motion approving all; Alderman Bluemel seconded the motion.
Vote: Motion passed unanimously by a 4-0 vote.

DISCUSSION/CONSIDERATION OF ACTION ITEMS:

6. Discuss/Consider amendments, postponement, or adoption of Fiscal Year 2020-2021 Proposed Budgets.

Roll call vote to adopt the Fiscal Year 2020-2021 Proposed Budget is as follows:

Mayor Tommy F. Ortiz, non-voting

Alderman Bluemel, Aye

Alderwoman Vera, Aye

Alderman Smith, Absent

Alderman Frazier, Aye

Alderman Fernandez, Aye

The motion passed unanimously by a 4-0 vote and one absent.

7. Discuss/Consider the variance request submitted by Maria Neaves-Aguilar to rezone from R1 to R2 to comply with Sec. 44-81 District R-2. Medium Density Single-Family Residential, the location being Block 139, Lot 33, 401 Aubrey St., Natalia, TX 78059.
Discussion: Ruberta Vera discussed the R1 to R2 variance request which allows the lot to be a residential single-family home duplex.
Action: Alderman Bluemel made a motion accept the variance as long as all the appropriate paperwork is filed with the relevant offices and that Ms. Neaves-Aguilar abides by the R2 requirements, including all applicable building zoning specifications and setback requirements. Alderman Fernandez seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously 4-0.
8. Discuss/Consider Resolution 20-08; Adopting the Natalia Municipal Development District Proposed Budgets for Fiscal Year 2020-2021.
Action: Alderman Fernandez made a motion approving the NMDD Proposed Budgets for Fiscal Year 2020-2021; Alderwoman Vera seconded the motion. Vote: Motion passed unanimously by a 4-0 vote.
9. Discuss/Consider action of Resolution 20-09; Appointing one (1) Board of Director: Beatrice Morales to the Natalia Municipal Development District for the completion of a two-year term expiring February 2022.
Action: Alderman Frazier made a motion to appoint Beatrice Morales to the NMDD for the completion of a two-year term expiring February 2020; Alderwoman Vera seconded the motion. Vote: Motion passed unanimously by a 4-0 vote.
10. 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 2020-2021.
Action: Alderman Frazier made a motion to accept the MOU 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 2020-2021 ; Alderwoman Vera seconded the motion. Vote: Motion passed unanimously by a 4-0 vote.
11. Discuss/Consider setting a Proposed Tax Rate for Tax Year 2020; and setting a date, time, and place for the public hearings and adoption of the tax rate.
Action: Alderman Fernandez made a motion to set the Proposed Tax Rate for Tax Year 2020 at \$0.8255 per \$100 valuation for Fiscal Year 2020-2021 and to schedule a public hearing and set the

date to vote on the tax rate for September 21, 2020 at 7 pm. Alderman Bluemel seconded the motion. Vote: Motion passed unanimously by a 4-0 vote.

12. Discuss/Consider Resolution 20-10 regarding the statement of intent to increase rates submitted by West Texas Gas, Inc. to suspend West Texas Gas Inc.'s proposed effective date of its proposed increase in rates for the statutorily allowed period.

Action: Alderman Bluemel made a motion to accept Resolution 20-10 as presented and suspend West Texas Gas, Inc.'s proposed effective date for its proposed increase in rates for ninety days beyond September 11, 2020. Alderman Frazier seconded the motion. Vote: Motion passed unanimously by a 4-0 vote.

13. Discuss/Consider Resolution 20-11 to approve membership and participation in the Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts Cooperative Purchasing Program (aka Texas SmartBuy Program).

Action: Alderman Frazier made a motion to approve membership and participation in the Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts Cooperative Purchasing Program (aka Texas SmartBuy Program) through Resolution 20-11 as presented. Alderman Bluemel seconded the motion. Vote: Motion passed unanimously by a 4-0 vote.

14. **STAFF REPORTS:**

a) City Administrator/Secretary Reports:

a. Update on the Downtown Revitalization Project / Variance application

Lone Star Sitework welders have been onsite recently to make alterations to the handrails. It is our understanding all other punch list items have been completed with the only exception being the counter slope condition at the bottom of the curb ramp just south of the City Hall entrance. M&S submitted a variance application (and agreed to foot the bill for this) last week to TDLR for this condition and will update all parties once a response is received. Texas Department of Licensing and Regulation anticipates approximately 3 weeks to process the variance request. If the request is denied, we will still have to demonstrate compliance with ADA. The most feasible option will be to have the curb ramp removed as it is currently providing access from a non-ADA-compliant parking area and would require extensive grade adjustments.

b. COVID-19 Testing in Natalia

The City of Natalia has partnered with the Center of Advanced Wellness in order to host COVID-19 testing for the community and surrounding areas. There is no out of pocket charge and a photo ID is required. Testing is to place starting at 9 am on 22 August 2020 in the City Hall Council Chambers. Facial coverings are required and social distancing restrictions are in place. Testing is open to all and no appointment is necessary

c. Medina County Burn Ban in Effect

A burn ban is in effect as of August 3, 2020 for ninety days.

d. WWTP Clarifier Update

We are about a month out from bids.

b) Public Works Director:

i. Field report for July 2020

c) Police Chief

i. Staffing Update

There are five full time positions that have been filled. Linda Rodriguez has retracted her resignation and decided to continue working. Code Enforcement Officer (TJ Richardson) is on his last month on the job. To date there is one application received and one in process.

15. Discuss/Consider convening into Executive Session to discuss personnel matters.

Action: Alderman Bluemel made a motion to go into Executive Session at 7.55 pm pursuant to Texas Government Code, Section 551.074, Personnel Matters to discuss personnel matters; Alderwoman Vera seconded the motion. Vote: Motion passed unanimously by a 4-0 vote.

16. **EXECUTIVE SESSION:** The City Council met in Executive Session Pursuant to Section 551.074, Personnel Matters, of the Texas Government Code, to discuss the following:
- a. §551.074; Personnel Matters: City Administrator Employment & Contract.
17. **REGULAR SESSION:** The City Council reconvened into Regular Session at 8.35 pm and took action on the item discussed in Executive Session.
- a. §551.074; Personnel Matters: City Administrator Employment & Contract
Alderman Frazier made a motion to retroactively hire René Hinojosa as of July 13, 2020 and extended a two-year contract to him at the current salary and subject to any salary increases. Alderman Fernandez seconded the motion. Vote: Motion passed unanimously by a 4-0 vote.
18. **ADJOURNMENT**
Alderman Frazier motioned to adjourn at 8.36 pm. Alderman Fernandez seconded the motion. Vote: Motion passed unanimously by a 4-0 vote.

Passed and Approved this 21st day of September, 2020.

Approval:

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

Attested by:

René Hinojosa, MPA

City Administrator/Secretary