

MAY 24, 2022

A SPECIAL MEETING OF THE CITY OF KINGSVILLE CITY COMMISSION WAS HELD ON TUESDAY, MAY 24, 2022, IN THE HELEN KLEBERG GROVES COMMUNITY ROOM, 400 WEST KING AVENUE, KINGSVILLE, TEXAS AT 4:00 P.M.

**CITY COMMISSION PRESENT:**

Sam R. Fugate, Mayor  
Hector Hinojosa, Commissioner  
Norma N. Alvarez, Commissioner  
Edna Lopez, Commissioner  
Ann Marie Torres, Commissioner

**CITY STAFF PRESENT:**

Mark McLaughlin, City Manager  
Mary Valenzuela, City Secretary  
Courtney Alvarez, City Attorney  
Kyle Benson, IT Manager  
Derek Williams, IT  
Ricardo Torres, Police Chief  
Emilio Garcia, Health Director  
Bill Donnell, Public Works Director  
Charlie Sosa, Purchasing Manager  
Susan Ivy, Parks & Recreation Manager  
Deborah Balli, Finance Director  
Uchechukwu Echeozo, Director of Planning & Development Services  
Kobby Agyekum, Senior Planner/HPO  
David Solis, Risk Manager  
Mike Mora, Capital Improvements Manager  
Diana Gonzales, Human Resources Director

**I. Preliminary Proceedings.**

**OPEN MEETING**

Mayor Fugate opened the meeting at 5:00 p.m. with all five City Commission members present.

**INVOCATION / PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE – (Mayor Fugate)**

The invocation was delivered by Ms. Courtney Alvarez, City Attorney, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance and the Texas Pledge.

**MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING(S)**

None.

**II. Public Hearing - (Required by Law).<sup>1</sup>**

None.

**III. Reports from Commission & Staff.<sup>2</sup>**

*"At this time, the City Commission and Staff will report/update on all committee assignments which may include, but is not limited to, the following: Planning & Zoning Commission, Zoning Board of Adjustments, Historical Board, Housing Authority Board, Library Board, Health Board, Tourism, Chamber of Commerce, Coastal Bend Council of Governments, Conner Museum, Keep Kingsville Beautiful, and Texas Municipal League. Staff reports include the following: Building & Development, Code Enforcement, Condemnation Update, Proposed Development Report; Accounting & Finance – Financial & Investment Information, Investment Report, Quarterly Budget Report, Monthly Financial Reports, Utilities Billing Update; Police & Fire Department – Grant Update, Police & Fire Reports; Streets Update; Public Works; Landfill Update, Building Maintenance, Construction Updates; Park Services - grant(s) update, miscellaneous park projects, Emergency Management, Administration –Workshop Schedule, Interlocal Agreements, Public Information, Health Department, Hotel Occupancy Report, Quiet Zone, SEP, Legislative Update, Proclamations, Employee Recognition, Health Plan Update, Tax Increment Zone Presentation, Main Street Downtown, Chapter 59 project, Financial Advisor, Wastewater Treatment Plant, Water And Wastewater Rate Study Presentation, Golf Course, Library Summer Programs, Grants Update. No formal action can be taken on these items at this time."*

Ms. Courtney Alvarez, City Attorney reported that there is a special commission meeting scheduled for Friday, June 3, 2022, at 9:00 A.M. The next regular scheduled meeting will be on June 13, 2022, with agenda items due on Friday, June 3, 2022.

**IV. Public Comment on Agenda Items.<sup>3</sup>**

1. Comments on all agenda and non-agenda items.



Mrs. Mary Valenzuela, City Secretary read the following public comments received from the following individuals: Josue Rodriguez; Pratesh Viswanda; Jeremiah Smith; Jonathan Lozano; Joe McDaniels; Krystal Emery; Rachel Mendoza:

Josue Rodriguez, 1213 Ranger, Kingsville, TX. I am embarrassed by the behavior of some of our elected officials last evening, particularly Commissioners Alvarez and Torres. I was visiting a family member near City Hall last night and witnessed Commissioner Alvarez following a gentleman to his vehicle and yelling in an unprofessional fashion. Commissioner Torres took to social media to paint a picture of a hostile environment and belittled the City Manager making comments about his military history and rank. As a veteran, she should understand why this is inappropriate and should hold herself to a higher standard. This is not how lasting change gets made, it only creates the hostile environment she wants to prevent.

Pratesh Viswanda, 825 E. Ailsie, Kingsville, TX. I am concerned by the video made on Facebook by Ann Marie Torres, I am careful to spell correctly. Many people commented about violence on the City Manager saying things like "want us to fight him?" and the like. The commissioner didn't challenge them or say they should be peaceful. She claims she was yelled upon but allows for threats of physical harm. This is saddening and reminds me of why I left Pakistan to better be free to speak my truth to those in power.

Jeremiah Smith, 2101 E. Trant, Kingsville, TX. Does the City of Kingsville have a social media policy, and if it does, does it not apply to elected officials? A city commissioner with an obvious personal ax to grind posted a video to social media which garnered comments regarding doing harm to a city employee and nothing was said to them. The same video also garnered personal attacks about the Public Works Director and other city employees and again nothing was said. Would this behavior be tolerated from a city employee if they posted a similar video regarding a commissioner? The public was not present for the alleged yelling and, absent any actual proof or sworn statements, the posting of the video suggests this is personal and political rather than professional. All of this over the paving of some parking spaces just to help a weak candidate run for County Judge. This is shameful. We should be better, but sadly this behavior is typical for the community lately. I'm not upset, I'm just disappointed.

Jonathan Lozano, 410 E. Ave. A, Kingsville, TX. I am sad to see and hear that our city is being led by individuals who sink to the level of yelling and mud raking when someone doesn't agree with their point of view. My children are better behaved, and they are in grade school.

Joe McDaniels, 1331 W. Santa Gertrudis, Kingsville, TX. I want to commend the City Manager for consistently putting things in the best interest of the city ahead of political gestures. Unfortunately, too few are willing to put requirements and needs ahead of their personal wants and desires. Parking at softball fields is objectively less critical than a staging area for supplies and equipment in the event of an emergency. If we are hit by a hurricane, I doubt very many people will be thanking God for convenient parking at the fields while the community struggles to get supplies. The city can do both projects in time, but one is more significant than the other and should be prioritized. The City Manager understands this as an experienced leader and is doing what he believes is in the best interest of the community. Since the commission likes to discuss military careers, I would like to offer a piece of advice from mine: "Lead, Follow, or Get Out Of The Way." The City Manager has chosen to lead, that leaves two options for all others involved.

Krystal Emery, 1620 South 11<sup>th</sup>, Kingsville, TX. My name is Krystal Emery, and I reside at 1620 South 11th, Kingsville, Texas 78363. I am currently serving as the president of the Rotary Club of Kingsville, which celebrates its 99th year this coming Thursday. Today at Rotary, we listened to a presentation on children's mental health in our community from Linda Ramos-Perez, the Director of Coastal Plains Community Center in Kingsville. Their center services nine counties, including Kleberg, which is currently ranked #2 for their requests for mental health services. The nine counties served are Aransas, Bee, Brooks, Duval, Jim Wells, Kenedy, Kleberg, Live Oak, and San Patricio. Through their partnerships with CPS, school districts, and other community health organizations, they can identify and treat children who require mental health services. The mean age of these children is 12, and their issues can range from depression and anxiety to suicidal ideations and substance abuse. The Coastal Plains also offers services to adults and military veterans with coordinators in Kingsville. If you or someone you know is struggling, please contact them toll-free at 888-819-5312 or their 24/7 crisis hotline at 800-841-6467. One in four people suffers from a mental illness, so please check in on your friends and family. You never know who may be suffering in silence.

Rachel Mendoza, 1212 E. Caesar, Kingsville, TX. As a female military retiree, I would like to say that members of this commission's recent comments on Facebook showed



a lack of respect to the community of female veterans and the progress we worked hard to make. I have been yelled at by many men in positions of authority and I have been harassed within the military and civilian employment. I dealt with it through proper channels within the organization rather than airing grievances in a public forum with no authority to address the grievances. Lodging complaints in public rather than privately dealing with them through the appropriate channels makes female veterans seem like weak people who whine when they aren't given their way. It was also mentioned that the commissioner's husband doesn't even yell at her in public. Does he in private? Is she upset with her husband's behavior and projecting her feelings onto the City Manager? I believe there are more important issues to deal with than parking for a softball team or someone being mean to an adult. I will pray for all the commissioners.

End of public comments read by Mrs. Valenzuela, City Secretary.

V.

### **Consent Agenda**

#### **Notice to the Public**

*The following items are of a routine or administrative nature. The Commission has been furnished with background and support material on each item, and/or it has been discussed at a previous meeting. All items will be acted upon by one vote without being discussed separately unless requested by a Commission Member in which event the item or items will immediately be withdrawn for individual consideration in its normal sequence after the items not requiring separate discussion have been acted upon. The remaining items will be adopted by one vote.*

#### **CONSENT MOTIONS, RESOLUTIONS, ORDINANCES AND ORDINANCES FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS:**

*(At this point the Commission will vote on all motions, resolutions and ordinances not removed for individual consideration)*

**Motion made by Commissioner Lopez to approve the consent agenda as presented, seconded by Commissioner Hinojosa. The motion was passed and approved by the following vote: Hinojosa, Alvarez, Lopez, Torres, Fugate voting "FOR".**

**1. Motion to approve final passage of an ordinance amending the City of Kingsville Code of Ordinances Chapter VII, Article 5, Traffic Schedules, setting the speed limit at 45 mph on US Highway 77 By-pass southbound frontage road from 702 feet south of FM 1356 (General Cavazos Blvd.) to the southern city limits of Kingsville. (Pursuant to TxDOT study) (City Engineer).**

**2. Motion to approve final passage of an ordinance amending the Fiscal Year 2021-2022 budget to accept and expend donations for recreational programs and league sponsorship. (Parks Director).**

**3. Motion to approve final passage of an ordinance amending the Fiscal Year 2021-2022 budget to expend Tourism ARP funding for the Train Depot to be painted. (Tourism Director).**

**4. Motion to approve final passage of an ordinance amending the Fiscal Year 2021-2022 budget to appropriate an additional cash match due to rising costs of equipment covered by the Criminal Justice Division Grant for body worn camera for hardware and software for downloading and storing camera footage. (Police Chief).**

### **REGULAR AGENDA**

#### **CONSIDERATION OF MOTIONS, RESOLUTIONS, AND ORDINANCES:**

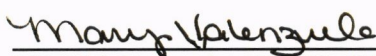
VI. Items for consideration by Commissioners.<sup>4</sup>

VI. Adjournment.

There being no further business to come before the City Commission, the meeting was adjourned at 4:11 P.M.

  
Sam R. Fugate, Mayor

**ATTEST:**

  
Mary Valenzuela, TRMC, CMC, City Secretary