

**MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS
CITY COMMISSION
Tuesday, December 22, 2015**

Be it known that the City of La Feria City Commission met in Regular Meeting on **Tuesday, December 22, 2015 at 6:30 PM** in the City Commission Meeting Room, 115 E. Commercial Avenue, La Feria, TX 78559. The purpose of said meeting was to consider and take action on those items of City Business as was duly posted by agenda in accordance with State Open Meetings Law.

DETERMINE QUORUM PRESENT AND CALL MEETING TO ORDER - MAYOR

Mayor Gonzalez declared a quorum of the City Commission was present and called the meeting to order.

Attendee Name	Title	Status
John Betancourt	Commissioner Position 1	Present
John Hernandez	Commissioner Position 2	Present
Olga H. Maldonado	Commissioner Position 3	Absent
Julian Guevara Jr.	Commissioner Position 4	Present
Esmeralda Lozano	Mayor Pro-Tem/Commissioner Position 5	Present
Victor Gonzalez Jr.	Mayor	Present

Also present at the meeting were the following:

Mr. Sunny K. Philip, City Manager
 Mr. Richard S. Talbert, City Attorney
 Ms. Paula Rodriguez, Planning and Community Development Director
 Ms. Kin I. Mendoza, Finance Director
 Ms. Esmeralda R. Sánchez, City Secretary

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Mayor Gonzalez announced the public comment period open. Ms. Delores Fuller of 1000 S. Chelo Dr., La Feria, Texas addressed the Commission regarding grass, police, and Freedom of Information. Grass issue was addressed; she is concerned with police patrolling the newly annexed areas; she will continue to access information through the Freedom of Information Act. Ms. Fuller will continue to speak on behalf of other people and will continue to raise concerns about Innovative Block.

The Mayor then declared the public comments section of the meeting closed and stated no official action was required by the Commission.

REVIEW AND TAKE ACTION TO APPROVE MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE CITY COMMISSION HELD ON TUESDAY, DECEMBER 8, 2015.

RESULT:	APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Julian Guevara Jr., Commissioner Position 4
SECONDER:	John Hernandez, Commissioner Position 2
AYES:	Betancourt, Hernandez, Guevara Jr., Lozano
ABSENT:	Maldonado

WORKSHOP TO PROVIDE UPDATED INFORMATION REGARDING USE OF ACCELA LEGISLATIVE MANAGEMENT SOFTWARE.

Staff reviewed various features of Accela Legislative Management Software and facilitated use of such via individual tablets during the meeting. Additional guidance and review will be provided in future meetings and a formal session with Accela staff is to be scheduled for a future Commission meeting.

RESULT:	NO ACTION REQUIRED
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REVIEW TABULATION OF PROPOSALS RECEIVED, CONSIDER, AND TAKE ACTION TO AWARD A PROFESSIONAL SERVICES CONTRACT FOR OVERALL MANAGEMENT OF THE CITY OF LA FERIA HOME PROGRAM COMPETITIVE AWARD CONTRACT AND HOME RESERVATION CONTRACT FROM THE TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND COMMUNITY AFFAIRS FOR A TEXAS HOME PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM-HOMEOWNER REHABILITATION ASSISTANCE PROJECT AND COMPETITIVE AWARD CONTRACT.

Mr. Philip discussed the HOME program and gave a brief history of the City's involvement with the program. Four homes were built in La Feria in 2015 and five homes were built in 2014. Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs (TDHCA) administers funds for the HOME program. Changes to the program have made it highly competitive. Procuring a management professional will help the City's opportunity to secure funding. As a result, a request for proposals (RFP) was solicited. Only one proposal was received from Langford Community Management Services (LCMS) by the due date. LCMS was involved in securing funding in 2014 and 2015 and have a good working relationship with the City. Finance Director, Kin Mendoza works closely in administering this program with LCMS. A copy of the public notice, RFP, and proposal submitted by LCMS was provided to the Commission.

Following discussion, the Commission took action to award a professional services contract for overall management of the City of La Feria HOME Program Competitive Award Contract and HOME Reservation Contract from TDHCA for a Texas HOME Partnership Program Homeowner Rehabilitation Assistance Project and Competitive Award Contract as noted.

RESULT:	APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Esmeralda Lozano, Mayor Pro-Tem/Commissioner Position 5
SECONDER:	John Betancourt, Commissioner Position 1
AYES:	Betancourt, Hernandez, Guevara Jr., Lozano
ABSENT:	Maldonado

WORKSHOP REGARDING CITY OF LA FERIA YOUTH PROGRAMS.

Mr. Philip reviewed the information provided to the Commission regarding the youth program finances, timeline's, and fees for the football, basketball, and baseball/softball leagues. The information is a draft and will be reviewed and critiqued by staff for further discussion with the Commission. Overall, the youth programs are subsidized by the City, with all programs reflecting a loss of revenue. The greatest loss seems to be from the baseball/softball program. Several critical points have been identified which may be too costly when considering the total expense for those items, such as the concession stand. The City runs the concession stand for football and baseball/softball programs. The La Feria Independent School District runs the concession for basketball season. Possible avenues for future program revenue include league tournaments. The City has tried to offer programs for our children without raising fees. Items to consider in determining fees include the cost of uniforms, insurance, official's, field preparation, league fees, and equipment. Costs have increased and volunteers for these programs have diminished. An effort to secure sponsors for the each team is underway to offset some of the associated team costs.

It is important to have an opportunity for the children in the Community to engage in such activities. The process is underway to review current sports and indoor recreation center programming leading to improvements across the various sports programs and enhancement and development of programming for the indoor recreation center.

A follow-up workshop will be held during the second January 2016 City Commission meeting to provide updated information and further discuss developments.

RESULT:	NO ACTION REQUIRED
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WORKSHOP TO DISCUSS UPCOMING CITY OF LA FERIA GENERAL ELECTION OF MAY 7, 2016 AND TAKE POSSIBLE ACTION FOR THE CONDUCT OF ELECTION.

A copy of the notice posted regarding the filing timeline for the May 7, 2016 general election was distributed. The Mayoral Position, Commissioner Place 1, and Commissioner Place 2 will be considered in the upcoming election. The La Feria Independent School District (LFISD) is considering a bond election on May 7th, thus there exists the possibility of a joint election utilizing the Cameron County Department of Elections. The City has historically administered elections locally, incurring costs for renting machines, printing ballots, notices, supplies, and salaries for election workers on election day and during the absentee voting period. The cost of renting

machines alone is between \$6,000 to \$7,000. The County may be able to administer the election for approximately \$9,000. The County's actual cost is determined by the number of elections, polling places, workers, and voting hours. Remi Garza is the new County Election Administrator and his experience brings integrity and credibility to the Department. If the LFISD and the City hold a joint election, the associated costs of shared polling places and workers will provide a cost savings opportunity for the City. The approved fiscal year budget does include a line item for the general election.

If the County is contracted, the City will comply with the Home Rule Charter regarding all election proceedings. The County also offers a unique opportunity for our voters to visit one polling place with the convenience of electronic voter list to facilitate the experience.

Staff will provide additional information regarding administration of the general election in future meetings for the Commission to review and consider.

RESULT: NO ACTION REQUIRED

EXECUTIVE (CLOSED) SESSION PURSUANT TO THE PROVISIONS OF THE OPEN MEETINGS LAW CHAPTER 551, GOVERNMENT CODE, IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE AUTHORITY CONTAINED IN SECTION 551.072 TO DISCUSS PROPOSED PURCHASE/SALE/DONATION OF REAL ESTATE BY THE LA FERIA INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION/THE LA FERIA ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION/CITY OF LA FERIA; SECTION 551.087 TO DISCUSS ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT NEGOTIATIONS; SECTION 551.074 TO DISCUSS PERSONNEL; SECTION 551.074 TO DISCUSS THE DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE CITY MANAGER

Mayor Gonzalez declared the meeting in Executive (Closed) Session at 8:20 PM. The Commission returned from Executive Session to resume the open meeting at 8:57 PM.

RESULT: NO ACTION REQUIRED

CONSIDER AND TAKE ACTION DEEMED NECESSARY AS THE RESULT OF EXECUTIVE (CLOSED) SESSION DELIBERATIONS.

Mayor Gonzalez declared no action was needed as a result of Executive Session.

RESULT: NO ACTION REQUIRED

FINANCIAL REPORT FOR THE MONTH OF NOVEMBER

- Sales Tax
- Property Tax

- Franchise Tax
- Performance Indicators

Mr. Philip reviewed the financial reports provided to the Commission for the month of November. Following discussion of monthly and year-to-date figures, grant payments, investment report, tax collection, court fines, comptroller's summary and library line items, Mayor Gonzalez declared the reports to be filed for audit.

RESULT: NO ACTION REQUIRED

REPORTS BY STAFF AND DISCUSSION WITH CITY COMMISSION

- Update on Drainage Improvement Project
- Water and Wastewater Systems Improvements Project
- Status of Safe Rooms (Domes) Construction Project
- Update on Unger Park Project
- Christmas Parade and Winter Festival
- Annual Christmas Party
- Fire Station Expansion & Substation

Mr. Philip provided an update on various projects. The Drainage and Water/Wastewater Improvement projects continue to progress. The safe rooms are approximately one month away from completion. An extension will be requested from the State to allow for close-out procedures and final construction activities. Unger Park is still under construction. Concerns about people utilizing the park although it is not yet complete were addressed with the Contractor, requesting appropriate signage and material to block entrances. Attire and safety of workers is the ultimate responsibility of the Contractor as defined in the executed contract. Concerns regarding safety measures, fencing, signs, etc... are typically identified in the construction contract. The City will review these items during pre-construction meetings to bring the Contractor's attention to such items. Although the soccer area of the park has fencing, a request was made for taller fencing to prevent balls from being kicked out of the park. An Ordinance regarding speed limits in the surrounding area will be addressed in a future meeting. Completion, including landscaping is expected within 2-3 months. The Christmas Parade was successful. Positive comments were made about the parade, including it being the longest Christmas parade. Although the rain impacted the Winter Festival a bit, overall the events were enjoyed by the public. The Christmas Party was a well attended and successful event. People seemed to enjoy the entertainment, dinner, and prize drawings. The Fire Station Expansion and Substation is well under construction. Although the foundation for the expansion was poured, after review and discussion with the engineers and contractor, they decided to break-up the foundation and re-pour as originally designed rather than compromise the foundation. A time extension may be needed to allow the contractor additional time for construction after re-pouring the foundation. The site in Bluetown has passed all of the required foundation testing allowing construction to continue.

RESULT: NO ACTION REQUIRED

CONSIDER AND TAKE POSSIBLE ACTION ON ATTENDANCE STATUS OF MAYOR AND/OR COMMISSIONERS FOR DECEMBER 8, 2015 MEETING AND DECEMBER 22, 2015 MEETING.

Action was taken separately to excuse absences from the December 8, 2015 and December 22, 2015 meetings, as noted.

ATTENDANCE DECEMBER 8, 2015

Following discussion, the Commission approved to excuse the absences of Commissioner Betancourt and Commissioner Lozano from the December 8, 2015 City Commission meeting as noted.

RESULT:	APPROVED [3 TO 0]
MOVER:	Esmeralda Lozano, Mayor Pro-Tem/Commissioner Position 5
SECONDER:	Julian Guevara Jr., Commissioner Position 4
AYES:	Hernandez, Guevara Jr., Lozano
ABSENT:	Maldonado
AWAY:	Betancourt

ATTENDANCE DECEMBER 22, 2015

Following discussion, the Commission approved to excuse the absence of Commissioner Maldonado from the December 22, 2015 City Commission meeting as noted.

RESULT:	APPROVED [3 TO 0]
MOVER:	John Hernandez, Commissioner Position 2
SECONDER:	Julian Guevara Jr., Commissioner Position 4
AYES:	Hernandez, Guevara Jr., Lozano
ABSENT:	Maldonado
AWAY:	Betancourt

ACTION FOR ADJOURNMENT


Action was approved to adjourn the regular meeting as noted.

RESULT:	APPROVED [3 TO 0]
MOVER:	Esmeralda Lozano, Mayor Pro-Tem/Commissioner Position 5
SECONDER:	Julian Guevara Jr., Commissioner Position 4
AYES:	Hernandez, Guevara Jr., Lozano
ABSENT:	Maldonado
AWAY:	Betancourt

ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Gonzalez adjourned the regular meeting of the City Commission at 9:24 PM.

APPROVED:



Victor Gonzalez, Jr., Mayor

ATTEST:



Esmeralda R Sánchez, City Secretary

These minutes were prepared and filed with the City of La Feria at 8:00 PM on January 9, 2016, as official record.



Esmeralda R Sánchez, City Secretary