Minutes of Regular Meeting held January 9, 2006

Regular meeting with the following present: Mayor Horace Fincher; Aldermen Gerry Elias, Mark Bowen, Ruble Farmer, Sam Cortez, Erik Dahler; City Secretary Josie Campa; Director of Public Works James McGrath; City Attorney Tom Cate; Police Chief Richard Priest.

Visitors: Natalie Spencer, JoAnn Null, Kurt Kastner.

APPROVE MINUTES AND APPROVE PAYMENT OF BILLS
Alderman Farmer made the motion Council approve the minutes of regular meeting held November 14th and payment of the bills, as presented. Seconded by Alderman Cortez. Passed unanimously.

HEAR FROM CITIZENS
Alderman Dahler said he thought that the stop sign at the intersection of Laredo Street and Somerset Street needs to be discussed. It was agreed to have this item on the February agenda.

CONSIDER PROPOSALS FOR MUNICIPAL COURT
Mayor Fincher told Council that he and Alderman Elias had put together a proposal for alternating as judge and for holding night court. After discussion, Alderman Dahler made the motion that Council approve the proposal, as presented. Seconded by Alderman Cortez. Passed unanimously.

CONSIDER STREET LIGHT SURVEY
Mayor Fincher asked Alderman Farmer to conduct a street light survey, and Mr. Farmer agreed. Alderman Bowen made the motion that Council allow Alderman Farmer to conduct a street light survey. Seconded by Alderman Elias. Passed unanimously.

CONSIDER APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS TO MUSEUM BOARD
Mayor Fincher asked each Councilman to appoint two (2) members to the museum board. The appointments were as follows:

- Alderman Bowen appointed JoAnn Null and Rick Smith;
- Alderman Cortez appointed Guadalupe Castro and Jesse Camarillo;
- Alderman Dahler appointed Margaret Trouart and Bob Roberts, Jr.;
- Alderman Farmer appointed Beverly McCune and Rose Lynn; and
- Alderman Elias appointed Juan and Nora Garcia.

Alderman Elias made the motion that Council approve the above named people to the museum board. Seconded by Alderman Farmer. Passed unanimously.

CONSIDER HIRING CONSULTANT FOR GAS SYSTEM
City Secretary Josie Campa told Council that since all the Public Works' personnel are very inexperienced with the gas system and recommended Council hire a consultant. Ms. Campa explained the items that are in need of attention and presented a proposal from Simon Pena on most of these items as well as the hourly rate. After discussion, Alderman Dahler made the motion Council authorize City Attorney Tom Cate to prepare a contract with Simon Pena as per the services and rate schedule presented by Mr. Pena. Seconded by Alderman Bowen. Passed unanimously.
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CONSIDER HIRING PUBLIC WORKS’ EMPLOYEES
Director of Public Works James McGrath told Council that he and Mayor Fincher had interviewed four applications and recommended Council hire Jay West, Samuel Lowe and Fred Schilling at $6.50 per hours contingent upon satisfactory background checks, physicals and drug test. After discussion, Alderman Bowen made the motion that Council hire the above mentioned as per Mr. McGrath’s recommendation. Seconded by Alderman Cortez. Passed unanimously.

CONSIDER SIGNS FOR NEW SKATING RAMP
Mayor Fincher told Council that the new skating ramp at the park has been completed, and suggested signs be posted at this ramp calling for extreme caution, proper gear, etc. Council discussed this matter, then Alderman Farmer made the motion that Council authorize the City Attorney to research a skating ramp ordinance. Seconded by Alderman Elias. Passed unanimously.

Mayor Fincher announced at 7:01 p.m. that Council would go into closed session as allowed in Chapter 551.071 Subchapter D of the Government Code. The meeting was reopened at 7:26 p.m. Mayor Fincher announced that Council discussed a matter with the City Attorney and no action needs to be taken.

CONSIDER RENEWAL OF DELINQUENT TAX COLLECTIONS CONTRACT
Alderman Elias made the motion that Council renew the delinquent tax collections contract with Tom Cate. Seconded by Alderman Farmer. Passed unanimously.

CONSIDER ANNUAL CITIZENSHIP AWARD
Mayor Fincher told Council he was recommending that the annual citizen award be presented to Jesse Camarillo, John McGinnis and Wayland Simmons for the work they have done to help the Fire Department get back on track. The Mayor asked Council if they had any nominees for this award. Alderman Elias made the motion that the annual citizenship award be presented to the Mayor’s nominees. Seconded by Alderman Cortez. Passed unanimously.

PUBLIC WORKS’ DIRECTOR’S REPORT
Public Works’ Director James McGrath reported on the following items:
1-several water leaks fixed over past months;
2-worked half a day on a sewer main stoppage on Gray Street;
3-put up Christmas lights and worked Hayride;
4-fixed five gas leaks over the last few weeks;
5-gas leak survey conducted at H.R.B. showed nine gas leaks;
6-crew is fixing pot holes;
7-have worked on drainage project area;
8-fixed motor at booster pump station and then shaft on other pump and both are now working;
9-TCBQ is reviewing plans for booster pump station;
10-Railroad Commission will be here this week for annual inspection; and
11-water line at Lake Shore Estates has been inspected.

POLICE CHIEF’S REPORT
Police Chief Richard Priest reviewed his written report with Council. The Chief told Council December was not that bad.

CITY SECRETARY’S REPORT
City Secretary Josie Campa reported on the following items:
1-current tax collected in December was $14,624.33 which brings the fiscal year total to $196,122.73;
2-delinquent taxes collected in December totaled $626.55;
3-mortage tax collected for first quarter totaled $8,528.73;
4-franchise tax for first quarter totaled $26,780.25;
5-sales tax collected in December totaled to $32,580.02;
6-City received an insurance refund from TML totaling $2,718.00;
7-James McGrath received his "D" license in water in December;
8-Alice Perez will be attending a court clerk seminar;
9-City Secretary will be attending an election seminar;
10-people interested in Texas Capital Fund grant have backed out for now; and
11-will be working on getting prices to remove underground storage tanks for either the February or March meeting.
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MAYOR'S REPORT
Mayor Fincher reported on the following items:

1-skate ramp at park looks really good;
2-precoat paving being done on FM 3175;
3-a contract for lights at FM 3175 and FM 2790 intersections on IH 35 are being let;
4-Mr. Gidley will sell water for $2,000.00 per acre foot next fiscal year and this will be on next agenda;
5-Rendon property will be coming up for annexation very soon;
6-city had another good year; and
7-holidays went alright.

Meeting adjourned at 7:51 p.m.

Mayor

City Secretary