Minutes of Regular Meeting held February 8, 2021

Regular meeting held with the following present: Mayor Ruben Gonzalez; Aldermen Jerry Stone, Sam Cortez, Guadalupe Castro, Charles Cate, Laura Reyna; City Secretary Josie Campa; Public Works Director James McGrath; Police Chief Richard Priest; Fire Marshal Matt Dear; Police Officer David Lopez; Code Compliance Officer Scott Traeger; City Attorney Tom Cate.


CALL TO ORDER AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE
Mayor Ruben Gonzalez opened the meeting at 6:38 p.m. and led everyone in the Pledge of Allegiance.

VISITORS/CITIZENS' COMMENTS
Mark Lovelace, Lytle Chamber of Commerce President announced that the new Tejas County Crossing Patio & Grill, formerly Southside Bar will be having its grand opening on Friday, February 12th. Mr. Lovelace told everyone this restaurant would serve American and Tex-Mex food.

Mr. Lovelace also reminded everyone that the Chamber would be holding its Farmers Market from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. on Saturday, February 13th.

RECOGNITION OF FORMER MAYOR AND ALDERMAN MARK BOWEN
Mayor Gonzalez presented former Mayor Mark Bowen with a plaque for his service to the city as an Alderman from 1994 to 2008. He then presented the former Mayor with a desk set for his service as Mayor from 2008 to 2020. Mayor Gonzalez then read some of the city’s accomplishments during Mayor Bowen’s tenure with the city.

PRESENTATION OF 2020 ANNUAL DANIEL J. MCGRATH, D.V.M. CITIZENSHIP AWARD
Mayor Gonzalez had James McGrath present the annual Daniel J. McGrath, D.V.M. Citizenship Award to former Mayor Mark Bowen for his twenty-six and one-half (26 ½) years of service to the City of Lytle. Mayor Gonzalez thanked Mr. Bowen for his many years of service and gave a bouquet of flowers for Mrs. Bowen. Mr. Bowen thank Council for this award and for the years of their service to the city and serval others for their help during his years with the City.

PRESENTATION OF PROCLAMATIONS TO PIRATE CROSS-COUNTRY SENIOR RUNNERS AND COACHES
Mayor Gonzalez presented Proclamations to Jose Carlos Hernandez, Gregorio Alcorta and Kyle Mueller, Lytle Senior Cross Country team members for their multiple recognitions at State level. He also presented Proclamations to Gilbert Ruiz and Hadley Foster for their involvement and mentorship of these three team members during their years on Lytle’s Jr. High and High School
PRESENTATION OF PROCLAMATIONS TO PIRATE CROSS-COUNTRY SENIOR RUNNERS AND COACHES (CONT.)
Cross Country teams.

Mayor Gonzalez thanked the parents and School Superintendent Michelle Smith for their help and support of these boys.

CONSIDER APPROVAL OF MINUTES
Mayor Gonzalez asked that the first line taken out of the minutes from the December 14th minutes be shown on the January 11th meeting minutes. Alderman Stone made the motion that Council approve the January 11th minutes, as amended and payment of the bills except for the bill from the Law Office of Thomas P. Cate. Seconded by Alderman Cate. Passed unanimously.

Alderman Cortez made the motion that the bill from the Law Office of Thomas P. Cate be approved, for payment. Seconded by Alderman Stone. VOTE: FOR motion Aldermen Cortez, Stone, Castro and Reyna. Alderman Cate abstained. Motion carried.

CONSIDER APPROVAL OF PAYMENT OF BILLS
A. Mayor Gonzalez told Council he has talked to Dr. Neel and he says the Covid-19 cases are leveling off.

The Mayor also reported that the Atascosa County Health Center has been taking care of vaccinations for the first tiers. He said a lot of Lytle residents are going to San Antonio to get their vaccinations, and that Uvalde is another source for Lytle residents to get their vaccinations.

The Mayor told everyone that there has been 760 confirmed Covid cases in the Lytle zip code.

CONSIDER AND ACT UPON REQUEST FROM LYTE I.S.D. TO SHARE THE COST OF A DEMOGRAPHICS REPORT
Lytle I.S.D. Superintendent Michelle Smith told Council that about ten (10) years ago the city had shared the cost of a demographics study with the school and asked if Council would consider sharing the cost for this study once again. Mrs. Smith said the cost for this demographic study is $8,500.00; and explained some of the information that would be in the study. After discussion, Alderman Castro made the motion that Council allow the city to share the expenses for this study with the school. Seconded by Alderwoman Reyna. Discussion. Passed unanimously.

CONSIDER AND ACT UPON MOBILE HOME COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION ON MARK URRUTIA'S REQUEST FOR PLACEMENT OF A DOUBLE-WIDE MOBILE HOME AT 18628 N. BENTON STREET
City Secretary Josie Campa told Council that the Mobile Home Commission is recommending Mr. Urrutia’s request be approved. Alderman Stone made the motion that Council approve the Mobile Home Commission’s recommendation. Seconded by Alderman Castro. Passed unanimously.
DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION FOR SIDEWALK/BRIDGE REPAIR AT/AROUND 15010 MAIN STREET AND ANY MATTERS INCIDENT THERETO—ALDERWOMAN REYNA
Alderman Reyna showed Council pictures of the bridge and sidewalk near 15010 Main Street. She told Council that people have to go around this area and it is dangerous. Chief Priest told everyone that this area had been damaged several years ago and that TXDot had repaired it to its present condition. He said he has talked to TXDot about Main Street being very busy and dangerous for people and this crossing needing to be fixed. Kristin Longoria, TXDot Area Engineer told Council she would look into this matter. No action was taken on this item, as TXDot will be looking into it.

TXDot PRESENTATION ON SIDEWALK GRANTS BY KRIS KNOLL—SAN ANTONIO DISTRICT
Kristi Knoll, from TXDot’s San Antonio District gave a power point presentation on TXDot sidewalk grants. She reviewed the steps for submitting grants and said the match for these grants is 20%. Ms. Knoll said grant cycle was opened January 15th and deadline for applications is March 1st. A lengthy discussion was held on this item and ways to get the city’s matching funds.

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION TO DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT A SIDEWALK CONDITION ASSESSMENT AND REPLACEMENT PLAN, DESIGNATE PROCESS/POLICY FOR RESIDENT REQUESTS AND OUTSTANDING WORK-ORDERS—ALDERWOMAN REYNA
Alderman Reyna told Council she felt this item ties in with the presentation made by TXDot. She then asked what the process is for sidewalks. The City Secretary told Council that the repair of sidewalks is only tracked if someone turns in a work order, otherwise, they are not tracked by the office and asked the Public Works Director if his department keeps track of sidewalk repairs. The Public Works Director told Council his department has not repaired sidewalks. Mayor Gonzalez said sidewalk repairs need to be tracked. TXDot reps told Council TXDot repairs sidewalks that are theirs and in their right-of-ways. Alderman Reyna told Council that in the municipal maintenance agreement, the city is responsible for sidewalks and needs to look at repairing them, and to address where sidewalks can be placed in the city. Alderman Reyna told Council that sidewalks need to be addressed the way streets are addressed. This item was tabled until Council members make sidewalk assessment for their districts.

DISCUSS AND TAKE POSSIBLE ACTION TO SUBMIT PRELIMINARY APPLICATIONS (S) (PA) FOR TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION (TXDot) 2021 TRANSPORTATION ALTERNATIVES (TA) CALL FOR PROJECTS, PROVIDE ANY OTHER NECESSARY DOCUMENTS, AND ASSIGN PROJECT POINT OF CONTACT (SIDEWALKS)—ALDERWOMAN REYNA AND ALDERMAN CATE
Alderman Cate reminded Council that TXDot project grant applications are due by March 1st. He told them he had looked around city for areas needing sidewalks. Alderman Cate said he had started filling out application due to the time line. He told Council he had prepared three applications, and the first application is for Main Street from the post office to FM 2790 North;
DISCUSS AND TAKE POSSIBLE ACTION TO SUBMIT PRELIMINARY APPLICATIONS (S) (PA) FOR TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION (TXDot) 2021 TRANSPORTATION ALTERNATIVES (TA) CALL FOR PROJECTS, PROVIDE ANY OTHER NECESSARY DOCUMENTS, AND ASSIGN PROJECT POINT OF CONTACT (SIDEWALKS)-ALDERWOMAN REYNA AND ALDERMAN CATE (CONT.)

the second application is for the area from Lytle State Bank to Main Street and the 3rd application is for school routes. He presented these applications to Council and said he chose these areas because people had talked to him about this during the campaign. Kristi Knoll from TXDot told Council these are all great applications and she will assist the city as much as she can and answered questions from Council. She told Council that working with the railroad on its right-of-ways will hold up an application. After a lengthy discussion, Alderwoman Reyna made the motion that the city submit all three (3) applications and meet with the community in a month to get their input. Seconded by Alderman Cate. Passed unanimously.

DISCUSS AND CONSIDER EXPLORING FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE FROM TXDot THROUGH THE TEXAS STATE INFRASTRUCTURE BANK (SIB) TO CONSTRUCT, MAINTAIN OR FINANCE ELIGIBLE PUBLIC HIGHWAY PROJECTS-ALDERMAN CATE

Alderman Cate handed out copies of information for funding projects from TXDot. After reviewing it with Council, he told them he just wanted to bring this information to them when exploring funding options in the future. Alderman Cate made the motion that Council table this item for now. Seconded by Alderman Cortez. Passed unanimously.

Council took a break at 8:39 p.m. and reconvened at 8:51 p.m.

REPORT FROM CODE COMPLIANCE OFFICER ON DUTIES AND ONGOING PROJECTS

Skip Trager talked to Council about his duties as Code Compliance Officer. He reviewed chapters of the city's code to explain some of the things he oversees. He also told Council about some of the people and agencies he works with to help him with getting people to comply with city ordinances. Mr. Traeger told Council about some of the current projects going on. Mayor Gonzalez told Council he will add the Code Compliance Officer to agenda each month for reports and updates. He asked Mr. Traeger to reach out to Council members if something is happening in their districts.

CONSIDER AND ACT UPON REQUEST FROM METHODIST CHURCH TO PLACE PORTABLE BUILDING PARTIALLY IN CITY'S ALLEYWAY

No action was taken on this item since city did not receive a sketch for this request.
CONSIDER AND ACT UPON OPTIONS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF WELL #4
Jeff Dahn talked to Council on the phone about the options to be considered for Well #4. He reviewed the options he addressed in his letter and another option added after talking to Edwards Aquifer Authority that could cost the city anywhere from $27,000.00 to $50,000.00. He recommended Council go with Option #2 to water jet blockage for $14,500.00. City Attorney Tom Cate asked several questions to the engineer.

The Engineer told Council that Edwards Aquifer Authority feels that water jetting will work. The City Attorney told Council he had talked to the Edwards’ people and they feel the sure thing for removing the blockage is drilling it. After a lengthy discussion, Alderman Castro made the motion that Council approve Option #4 (drill thru blockage) for $27,000.00 to $50,000.00. Seconded by Alderman Cortez. Passed unanimously.

DISCUSS AND CONSIDER DUTIES OF COUNCIL LIAISONS-ALDERMAN CATE
Alderman Cate told Council he had this item placed on the agenda mainly to avoid confusion in the future since there had been a duplicate item this month. After a lengthy discussion, no action was taken on this item.

DISCUSS AND CONSIDER SETTING A TIME LIMIT ON REGULAR COUNCIL MEETINGS-ALDERMAN CATE
Alderman Cate told Council he had this item placed on the agenda because people tend to wear down after long hours of meeting and then the meeting can become counter productive. He suggested Council set three hours for length of meeting. Mayor Gonzalez told Council he had talked to other Mayors and they have set times but also have a backup date to continue meeting. He said others set a cap on the number of items on the agenda. After a lengthy discussion, Mayor Gonzalez asked the City Attorney to look into this item and come back in March with suggestions for Council.

CONSIDER AND ACT UPON ADOPTING RESOLUTION APPROVING COOPERATION WITH THE CITIES SERVED BY AEP TO REVIEW AEP TEXAS INC.’S REQUESTED FINAL RECONCILIATION OF ADVANCED METERING COSTS AND HIRING LEGAL AND CONSULTING SERVICES TO NEGOTIATE WITH THE COMPANY
City Secretary Josie Campa explained the resolution proposed by the attorneys representing cities in case with AEP Texas. City Attorney Tom Cate recommended Council adopt this resolution. Alderman Cortez made the motion Council adopt this resolution. Seconded by Alderman Stone. Passed unanimously.

CONSIDER AND ACT UPON ADDITIONAL DAYS FOR EXTENDED EARLY VOTING FOR MAY 1, 2021 ELECTION
City Secretary Josie Campa explained to Council that the Election Administration has asked that the days for extended hours of early voting be April 20th and April 27th. Alderman Cortez made the motion that Council approve this request. Seconded by Alderman Cate.
CONSIDER AND ACT UPON CONTRACT FOR ELECTION SERVICES WITH ATASCOSA COUNTY ELECTIONS DEPARTMENT
The City Secretary presented the Election Contract sent to the City from Atascosa County’s Election Administrator and said the city and school would share the cost for this election. After discussion, Alderwoman Reyna made the motion that Council approve this contract contingent on the City Attorney’s approval. Seconded by Alderman Cortez. Passed unanimously.

CONSIDER AND ACT UPON ADOPTION OF ORDINANCE CONCERNING RVs IN A BUSINESS DISTRICT AND A 90-DAY TEMPORARY RV LOCATION FOR A BUSINESS DISTRICT
City Attorney Tom Cate presented his ordinance concerning RVs in a business district. He recommended Council table this item to the next meeting to give everyone a chance to review this ordinance. After discussion, Alderman Cortez made the motion that this item be tabled. Seconded by Alderman Castro. Passed unanimously.

CONSIDER AND ACT UPON RESCINDING APPROVAL OF QUOTE FROM SHOR-LINE FOR UPDATING KENNELS
After short discussion, Alderwoman Reyna made the motion that Council go into closed session. Seconded by Alderman Cate. Passed unanimously. Mayor Gonzalez told everyone that Council would go into closed session at 10:35 p.m. as allowed by Chapter 551.071 of the Government Code. Mayor Gonzalez re-opened the meeting at 11:02 p.m. and announced no action was taken during the closed session. Alderman Stone made the motion that this item he tabled. Seconded by Alderman Castro. Passed unanimously.

CONSIDER AND ACT UPON APPROVING QUOTE RECEIVED FROM MIDMARK ON THE UPDATING OF THE KENNELS
Alderwoman Reyna made the motion that this item be tabled. Seconded by Alderman Cate. Passed unanimously.

CONSIDER AND ACT UPON EMPLOYMENT STATUS OF ANTHONY LOPEZ
Police Chief Richard Priest recommended to Council that Anthony Lopez be hired as a regular police officer and be given a $1.00 per hour increase in pay and all city benefits. Alderman Stone made the motion that Council approve the Chief’s request listed above. Second by Alderman Castro. Passed unanimously.

CONSIDER AND ACT UPON REQUEST FROM POLICE CHIEF FOR PURCHASE OF NEW RADIO REPEATER
Chief Richard Priest told Council about the problems with the radio repeater over the past year. He said at this point, the only solution is to replace the repeater. He said the cost for replacing this repeater is $25,000.00. After discussion, Alderman Castro made the motion that Council approve the purchase of the Motorola repeater as per Chief’s request and the budget be amended accordingly. Seconded by Alderman Cortez. Passed unanimously.
CONSIDER AND ACT UPON PRESENTATION OF RACIAL PROFILING REPORT

CONSIDER AND ACT UPON ALLOWING DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS TO ADVERTISE TO FILL VACANCY CREATED BY JOSHUA MARTINEZ’S RESIGNATION
Public Works’ Director James McGrath told Council he had an employee resign and asked for permission to advertise to fill that position. After discussion, Alderman Stone made the motion that Council allow the Public Works’ Director to advertise for this position. Seconded by Alderman Castro. Passed unanimously.

CONSIDER AND ACT UPON THE CITY HAVING AN EASTER EVENT
City Secretary Josie Campa told Council that the Mayor had talked to Dr. Neel about having an Easter event for the kids and that Dr. Neel said he thinks a drive-thru Easter event can be held as long as CDC guidelines are followed. She told Council she already has eggs, prizes and decorations for this event and needs only candy and treat bags for this project. Alderman Castro made the motion that Council approve a drive-thru Easter event for this year. Seconded by Alderman Cortez. Passed unanimously.

UPDATE ON COAL MINE EXIT
City Attorney Tom Cate told Council that the property owner that had said he would give the city an easement for an emergency exit out of Coal Mine has decided NOT to give the city a permanent easement. After discussion, Council agreed to place this item on March agenda.

CONSIDER AND ACT UPON APPOINTMENTS TO LIBRARY BOARD
City Secretary Josie Campa reminded Council about appointments needed for Library Committee. Alderwoman Reyna told Council that Robin Cantu is willing to serve on this committee. The City Secretary told Council that Ruben Gonzalez III is also willing to serve another term and Alderman Castro agree to nominate him. Alderman Cortez told Council that Margie Ellis is willing to take Mary Cortez’ place on this committee. Alderman Cate made the motion, that Council appoint Robin Cantu and Ruben Gonzalez III to the Library Committee for 2-year terms and Margie Ellis be appointed to fill the year left on Mary Cortez’ term. Seconded by Alderman Cortez. Passed unanimously.

CONSIDER AND ACT UPON SETTING UP A WORKSHOP TO DISCUSS THE DISTRIBUTION OF CRF FUNDS
City Secretary Josie Campa told Council the City has not received CRF funding yet. She said the attorney told the City Attorney told the Atascosa County application is on Stage 6 and Medina County’s application is on Stage 4. Mayor Gonzalez told Council he feels they need to have another workshop to discuss the distribution for the CRF funds. Council discussed a date for this workshop. After discussion, Alderman Cortez made the motion that Council set this workshop
CONSIDER AND ACT UPON SETTING UP A WORKSHOP TO DISCUSS THE DISTRIBUTION OF CRF FUNDS (CONT.)
for Wednesday, February 24th. Seconded by Alderman Castro. Discussion on having City Attorney present at this workshop. The City Attorney said he would check his calendar to see if he is available on February 24th. Motion was passed unanimously.

INFORMATION ITEMS
The City Secretary told Council she is waiting on the background check for the Finance Director. She also told Council that the new office employee has gotten her background check and had her physical and drug screen. She said once results are received, she will schedule her to start work.

Mayor Gonzalez told Council he had received a notice from U.S. Senator John Cornyn’s office telling about the Lytle’s Camino Real MHMR Center receiving a $4,000,000.00 (four million dollar) grant.

The Mayor told Council that the Lytle Pirates Lady Basketball team is having a great season and won district. He said this team is undefeated and ranked in the state.

The Mayor said that a Lytle band member has also placed at State level.

The Mayor thanked Alderwoman Reyna and Alderman Cate for the work done on the TXDot grants. Mayor Gonzalez also thanked the Police Department and Fire Department for their work at the deadly traffic accident. He thanked Matt Dear for the work done on the radio repeater and thanked the City Secretary for the renovations at City Hall and additional internet drops needed for the new Finance Director.

Alderman Cortez made the motion that the meeting be adjourned at 11:46 p.m. Seconded by Alderman Castro. Passed unanimously.