

The Austwell City Council met for a regular meeting on Monday, May 10, 2021, at 6:00 pm at the Austwell Community Center. The meeting was called to order by Mayor Mollie Garcia. Council members Andrew Biery and Bonnie Mutschler and approximately thirty citizens also attended the meeting. Mayor Garcia led the pledge of allegiance to the flag and welcomed the audience. Public comments were offered by Bonnie Mutschler, Melissa Hopper, W.M. Cunningham, Alexandra Ramirez, and Monica Torres.

A list of minutes that are missing or that need to be submitted, read, and/or considered was reviewed. Minutes from the April 26, 2021, special meeting were read and approved. The secretary's report was presented as a sizable printed document compiled by City Secretary Melissa Hopper for both council members and citizens. Ms. Hopper provided explanation for some of the items in the financial report. She also reported on a visit that she and Commissioner Biery had made to Wells Fargo Bank to clarify monetary issues with a bank representative and to add Biery's name to the signatory card. They also obtained a cashier's check to pay Rene Rodriguez for services in April. Some information usually provided in the secretary's report was not available due to the lack of computer access in the office and the inability to collect mail from the post office. Following the presentation of her report, Ms. Hopper submitted her resignation from the secretary's position. accepted?

Refugio County Commissioner Blaine Wolfshohl reported on efforts to reduce the ongoing mosquito infestation. He also reported that a grant of \$192,000 has been received by the county to replace the fishing pier on Hynes Bay. He introduced Jose DeLeon, a representative of the engineering firm in charge of the rebuilding project.

Rene Rodriguez was not available to present a report from Rene's Water Operations, but Commissioner Biery provided information about the condition of Water Well No. 1 and the Waste Water Plant.

The commissioners canvassed the May 1, 2021, city council election results and declared Monica Torres the winner of the election for Place 2 Commissioner. Justice of the Peace Mary Canales conducted the swearing in of the new Commissioner.

An addendum to the Certificate of Authority from Wells Fargo Bank (three forms, one per account) were signed by Mayor Garcia.

An official communication from the State of Texas regarding a third noncompliance notice of an eminent domain report was discussed, and options for handling the issue were deliberated.

Purchasing a new computer to replace the equipment seized in the execution of the search warrant by law enforcement officials under the direction of a Texas Ranger on April 14 was discussed.

Communication from AEP Texas regarding the Application of a Distribution Cost Recovery Factor (DCRF) Rate Case Filing and a subsequent request from Mayor Garcia and Secretary Spence for legal assistance from Alan T. Ozuna were examined, resulting in

Deliberations in regard to the distribution of keys to locks at the Community Center, the office at the Community Center, the old City Hall, the Post Office, and the money drawer at the Community Center office to various city officials led to a proposal that Mayor Garcia would have keys to _____, Commissioner Torres would have keys to _____, and Commissioner Biery would have keys to _____. There being no secretary at this time, no decision was made in that regard.

Motion was made, seconded, and passed to add newly elected Place 2 Commissioner Monica Torres to the signature card for the bank accounts at Wells Fargo Bank and for her to be approved as a signer for checks.

Questions were posed regarding the purpose of the credit card held with Wells Fargo Bank, the nature of past transactions, and the system to pay for the purchases charged to the card. General agreement was reached to pay off the outstanding charges as soon as possible and close that account.

The status of the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) administered by Grantworks was discussed, focusing primarily on the failure to have an audit done or at least provide a document to Ana Gomez-Sanchez describing audit services that the city was seeking. Apparently no progress has been made in this regard.

The consideration of another similar item, the Subgrant Application - FEMA Form 90-91 for the Old City Hall building (total cost \$ 36,153.53) also led to a similar conclusion.

In regard to the status of emergency funds available for relief from damages caused by the sub-freezing temperatures experienced from February 15 through February 18, 2021, it was suggested that community fundraisers be held in order to be able to apply for matching funds grants from the state.

Water Well #2

Estimated costs from Rene's Water Operations for repairs to the wastewater treatment plant range from \$9,040 to \$14,220 to \$30,260 depending on the extent of the damages.

Citizens who have received past due invoices are advised to contact the city office for further information on how to proceed.

Mowing and Maintenance contracts have been approved and notices should be published in a local newspaper to announce a time period for acceptance of bids.

RV Park Rules and Regulations have been revised. Repairs are required to some of the RV spaces before the park will be fully operational.

The process of applying for and obtaining building permits is to fill out a standard application to be presented to the city secretary. Those applications will then be presented to the city council to be accepted, adjusted, or rejected by the full council, NOT by the mayor or an individual council member. When approved application forms are returned to the applicant, work may begin. Motion made by , seconded by and approved by vote of council.

Financial procedures of the City of Austwell require two authorized signatures on every check that is issued.

Adjournment

Minutes submitted by former council member Bonnie Mutschler due to resignation of city secretary after Item 6: Secretary's Report.