

City of Austwell
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February 2022 City Council Meeting

The Austwell City Council met for its regular monthly meeting on Wednesday, February 9, 2022, at the Austwell Community Center. Three city commissioners, water systems director Rene Rodriguez, ten citizens, and County Commissioner Blaine Wolfshohl attended the meeting. The meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm by Mayor Bonnie Mutschler, who led the pledge of allegiance and welcomed those attending. She announced that Friday, February 18, is the filing deadline to run for the May city council election.

Public Comments

In Public Comments, Joyce Biery asked for an update on the research into the number of streetlights and yard lights in Austwell. Some preliminary information has been gathered, but more details need to be gathered before the project can move forward.

Water Systems Report

Water systems director Rene Rodriguez reported that Water Well #1 has been inspected and appears to be in better condition than anticipated, but that repairs will be needed. A new pump should be available in about two weeks. Water Well #2 also has a leak that requires repair. Improving the movement of water out of the city ditches after heavy rains will help to alleviate problems at the waste water plant.

County Commissioner's Report

Precinct 4 County Commissioner Blaine Wolfshohl acknowledged the city's assistance in receiving permission for the controlled burn of brush at the city/county landfill. He also reported that the anticipated grant for the bayfront pier will not be granted. The county and city have renewed an interlocal agreement regarding an animal control officer for the Austwell-Tivoli area.

Secretary's Report

Secretary Josie Flores noted residents' comments about overgrown grass and stray animals. City Office will be closed February 16 through February 22 for medical leave by the city secretary and for use by the county Election Administrations Office on March 1.

Minutes

After reading the December 2021 minutes, Council member Torres asked that the spelling of Mr. Earl Bluhm's name be corrected and then moved that the minutes be approved. Motion seconded and passed.

Financial Report

The Financial report consisted of December 2021/January 2022/February 2022 Aging Summaries and January bank statements from three accounts at Wells Fargo Bank. Councilman Biery mentioned the advantage of having financial documents printed in-house and moved that the reports be accepted. Council member Torres seconded the motion; it passed unanimously.

Park Committee Report

Dave Ancira presented the report from the Park Committee by showing video from the website that will soon be posted featuring photography of Austwell park scenes and area attractions.

City RV Park

Updating rules and regulations for City RV Park usage is ongoing, so Councilman Biery moved to table action on that project. Council member Torres seconded the motion; it passed unanimously.

Grant Project Status Report

A report on the status of grant-supported projects (water systems, street repairs, park improvements) was presented by Councilman Biery indicating progress in all projects even though much work remains to be done. He asked for volunteer assistance from citizens to speed the progress of projects to clear ditches, mow rights-of-way, and repair streets.

TCEQ Enforcement Report

Updates on two enforcement actions with TCEQ indicated progress in using grant funds to pay for water system and drainage projects. TCEQ has approved the city-proposed purchase of generators, and progress continues on these improvements.

City-Wide Work Day

Councilman Biery announced city-wide workdays on February 19 and 20 for construction and repair projects. The city will provide materials for a list of projects and requests the assistance of citizens to reduce the cost of labor. Those who cannot provide physical assistance may help by preparing meals and/or refreshments for workers.

Executive Session

The council moved into executive session to discuss an undisclosed personnel matter. Upon returning to open session, Mayor Mutschler announced that no decision would be made public at this time. Councilman Biery moved that the meeting be adjourned; council member Torres seconded the motion. Motion carried.