



**MINUTES
OF THE CITY OF SAN BENITO REGULAR CITY COMMISSION MEETING**

On October 6, 2020 the City Commission met for a Regular Meeting at the San Benito Municipal Building, Cesar Gonzalez Meeting Hall, 401 North Sam Houston Boulevard, San Benito, Texas.

City Commission Members Present: Benjamin Gomez, Mayor; Carol Lynn Sanchez, Mayor Pro Tem; Rene Villafranco, Commissioner, Place 2; Mark Sossi, City Attorney.

City Commission Member Absent: Antonio Gonzales, Commissioner, Place 1; Vacant, Commissioner, Place 3

City Administration Personnel Present: Manuel De La Rosa, City Manager; Fred Bell, Assistant City Manager; Ruth McGinnis, City Secretary.

ITEM 1. WELCOME.

Mayor Benjamin Gomez called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. confirming a quorum.

ITEM 2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE U.S. FLAG AND TO THE TEXAS FLAG.

Police Captain Michael Cortez led the City Commission and audience in reciting the pledge of allegiance to the U.S. Flag and to the Texas Flag.

ITEM 3: INVOCATION.

David Favila, Public Relations Director led the City Commission and audience in prayer.

ITEM 4. ANNOUNCEMENTS: ITEMS OF COMMUNITY INTEREST.

Mayor Benjamin Gomez congratulated Michael Cortez in being promoted to Police Captain. No other announcements due to ongoing pandemic.

ITEM 5. PRESENTATION OF A PROCLAMATION TO THE CATHOLIC DAUGHTERS OF AMERICA COURT NUMBER 2390 PROCLAIMING OCTOBER 18, 2020 AS NATIONAL CATHOLIC DAUGHTER'S DAY.

Mayor Benjamin Gomez read the proclamation and presented it to Ms. Tae Nam Meza, Ms. Maria S. San Pedro, Ms. Linda Rivera, and Ms. Elia Castillo, Ms. Celeste Sanchez, and other members from the Catholic Daughters. The City Commission took group pictures with recipients.

ITEM 6. PRESENTATION OF A PROCLAMATION TO WORKFORCE SOLUTIONS CAMERON IN OBSERVANCE OF NATIONAL DISABILITY EMPLOYMENT AWARENESS MONTH.

Mayor Pro Tem Carol Lynn Sanchez read the proclamation and **Mayor Benjamin Gomez** read the closing. **Mayor Benjamin Gomez** presented the proclamation to Ms. Maria Roussett from Workforce Solutions Cameron. The City Commission took group pictures with recipient.

ITEM 7. PRESENTATION OF A PROCLAMATION RECOGNIZING THE MONTH OF OCTOBER AS NATIONAL BREAST CANCER AWARENESS MONTH.

Mayor Benjamin Gomez read the proclamation and presented it to Ms. Leslie G. Bingham, Chief Executive Director, Valley Baptist Medical Center-Brownsville and Ms. Jennifer Bartnesky-Smith, Chief Strategy Officer, Valley Baptist Health System. The City Commission took group pictures with recipients.

ITEM 8. PUBLIC COMMENTS. (Speakers/Remarks limited to three minutes. Public Comments limited to forty-five minutes).

Ruth McGinnis, City Secretary, announced no registrants for public comments.

ITEM 9. CONSIDERATION AND POSSIBLE ACTION TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE SEPTEMBER 1, 2020 REGULAR CITY COMMISSION MEETING AND BUDGET WORKSHOP, THE SEPTEMBER 8, 2020 SPECIAL CITY COMMISSION MEETING AND BUDGET WORKSHOP, AND THE SEPTEMBER 17, 2020 SPECIAL CITY COMMISSION MEETING.

Mayor Benjamin Gomez requested a motion. **Commissioner Rene Villafranco** moved to approve. **Mayor Pro Tem Carol Lynn Sanchez** seconded the motion. Voting Aye: **Mayor Benjamin Gomez, Mayor Pro Tem Carol Lynn Sanchez, and Commissioner Rene Villafranco**. Motion carried to **APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE SEPTEMBER 1, 2020 REGULAR CITY COMMISSION MEETING AND BUDGET WORKSHOP, THE SEPTEMBER 8, 2020 SPECIAL CITY COMMISSION MEETING AND BUDGET WORKSHOP, AND THE SEPTEMBER 17, 2020 SPECIAL CITY COMMISSION MEETING.**

ITEM 10. CONSIDERATION AND POSSIBLE ACTION TO APPROVE A REQUEST FROM THE SPECIAL EVENTS BOARD CONCERNING THE CANCELLATION OF ALL CITY HOSTED EVENTS DUE TO COVID-19 THROUGH DECEMBER 2020.

City Manager Manuel De La Rosa addressed the City Commission referencing them to a letter received from Mr. Julian Rios, Special Events Board Chairman, expressing concern and requesting cancellation of all City hosted events through December 2020 as COVID-19 continues to be a concern in our community. **Mayor Benjamin Gomez** requested motion. **Mayor Pro Tem Carol Lynn Sanchez** moved to approve. **Commissioner Rene Villafranco** seconded the motion. Voting Aye: **Mayor Benjamin Gomez, Mayor Pro Tem Carol Lynn Sanchez, and Commissioner Rene Villafranco**. Motion carried to **APPROVE THE REQUEST FROM THE SPECIAL EVENTS BOARD CONCERNING THE CANCELLATION OF ALL CITY HOSTED EVENTS DUE TO COVID-19 THROUGH DECEMBER 2020.**

ITEM 11. PUBLIC HEARING: TO SOLICIT INPUT FROM CITIZEN PARTICIPATION ON PROPOSED SUBSTANTIAL AMENDMENT TO AMEND THE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT (CDBG) 2019-2020 YEAR 45 ANNUAL ACTION PLAN TO INCLUDE THE SPECIAL ALLOCATION OF \$403,977.00 IN CDBG-CV FUNDS AND REALLOCATE FUNDING FROM AN APPROVED ACTIVITY.

- A) OPEN PUBLIC HEARING
- B) CLOSE PUBLIC HEARING

Elvira Cavazos, CDBG Coordinator, addressed the City Commission stating this is a public hearing for the 2019-2020 Year 45 Annual Action Plan. **Mayor Benjamin Gomez** announced the time is 5:58 p.m. and the floor is opened for citizen participation. No input received from citizen participation. **Mayor Benjamin Gomez** announced the time is 5:58 p.m. and the floor is closed.

ITEM 12. CONSIDERATION AND POSSIBLE ACTION TO APPROVE THE PROPOSED SUBSTANTIAL AMENDMENT TO AMEND THE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT (CDBG) 2019-2020 YEAR 45 ANNUAL ACTION PLAN TO INCLUDE THE SPECIAL ALLOCATION OF \$403,977.00 IN CDBG-CV FUNDS AND REALLOCATE FUNDING FROM AN APPROVED ACTIVITY.

Elvira Cavazos, CDBG Coordinator, addressed the City Commission advising staff recommends the approval of the Amendment to the CDBG 2019-2020 Year 45 Annual Action Plan to include the special allocation of \$403,977.00 in CDBG-CV Funds as part of the CARES ACT in an effort to prevent, prepare for, and respond to the Coronavirus (COVID-19). Staff also recommends reallocation of \$8,000.00 which was awarded to the San Benito Boys & Girls Club on the 2019-2020 Year 45 Annual Action Plan. The activity will be removed and phones will be reprogrammed to City Parks General Park Improvements.

Mayor Benjamin Gomez requested a motion. **Mayor Pro Tem Carol Lynn Sanchez** moved to approve. **Commissioner Rene Villafranco** seconded the motion. Voting Aye: **Mayor Benjamin Gomez, Mayor Pro Tem Carol Lynn Sanchez, and Commissioner Rene Villafranco**. Motion carried to **APPROVE THE**

PROPOSED SUBSTANTIAL AMENDMENT TO AMEND THE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT (CDBG) 2019-2020 YEAR 45 ANNUAL ACTION PLAN TO INCLUDE THE SPECIAL ALLOCATION OF \$403,977.00 IN CDBG-CV FUNDS AND REALLOCATE FUNDING FROM AN APPROVED ACTIVITY.

ITEM 13. PUBLIC HEARING: TO SOLICIT INPUT FROM CITIZEN PARTICIPATION ON PROPOSED SUBSTANTIAL AMENDMENT TO ADD THE GOALS TO THE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT (CDBG) 2015-2019 CONSOLIDATED PLAN FOR THE SPECIAL ALLOCATION OF \$403,977.00 IN CDBG-CV FUNDS AS PART OF THE CARES ACT IN AN EFFORT TO PREVENT, PREPARE FOR, AND RESPOND TO THE CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19).

- A) OPEN PUBLIC HEARING
- B) CLOSE PUBLIC HEARING

Elvira Cavazos, CDBG Coordinator addressed the City Commission stating this is the public hearing for the consolidated plan. Mayor Benjamin Gomez announced the time is 6:00 p.m. and the floor is opened for citizen participation. No input received from citizen participation. Mayor Benjamin Gomez announced the time is 6:01 p.m. and the floor is closed.

ITEM 14. CONSIDERATION AND POSSIBLE ACTION TO APPROVE THE PROPOSED SUBSTANTIAL AMENDMENT TO ADD THE GOALS TO THE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT (CDBG) 2015-2019 CONSOLIDATED PLAN FOR THE SPECIAL ALLOCATION OF \$403,977.00 IN CDBG-CV FUNDS AS PART OF THE CARES ACT IN AN EFFORT TO PREVENT, PREPARE FOR, AND RESPOND TO THE CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19).

Elvira Cavazos, CDBG Coordinator addressed the City Commission advising staff recommends the approval of the Amendment to the 2015-2019 Consolidated Plan to add the goals for the special allocation of \$403,977.00 in the CDBG-CV Funds as part of the CARES ACT in an effort to prevent, prepare for, and respond to the Coronavirus (COVID 19). This program is similar to the Cares Hardship Program the City recently implemented, these are HUD funds, there are additional federal requirements that applicants must meet in order to be approved. Staff intends to implement this program on Monday, November 2nd. Information on this program will be added to the city website on October 23rd. Mayor Benjamin Gomez requested a motion. Commissioner Rene Villafranco moved to approve. Mayor Pro Tem Carol Lynn Sanchez seconded the motion. Voting Aye: Mayor Benjamin Gomez, Mayor Pro Tem Carol Lynn Sanchez, and Commissioner Rene Villafranco. Motion carried to **APPROVE THE PROPOSED SUBSTANTIAL AMENDMENT TO ADD THE GOALS TO THE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT (CDBG) 2015-2019 CONSOLIDATED PLAN FOR THE SPECIAL ALLOCATION OF \$403,977.00 IN CDBG-CV FUNDS AS PART OF THE CARES ACT IN AN EFFORT TO PREVENT, PREPARE FOR, AND RESPOND TO THE CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19).**

ITEM 15. CONSIDERATION AND POSSIBLE ACTION TO AWARD BIDS ON VARIOUS CHEMICALS FOR THE CITY OF SAN BENITO WATER TREATMENT PLANT NUMBER 1 AND WATER TREATMENT PLANT NUMBER 2 FOR FISCAL YEAR 2020-2021.

Adan Gonzalez, Public Works Director addressed the City Commission requesting approval to award bids for Water Plant 1 and Water Plant 2 for Fiscal Year 2020-2021 referring to bid sheet provided in City Commission packets. Mayor Benjamin Gomez requested a motion. Commissioner Rene Villafranco moved to approve. Mayor Pro Tem Carol Lynn Sanchez seconded the motion. Voting Aye: Mayor Benjamin Gomez, Mayor Pro Tem Carol Lynn Sanchez, and Commissioner Rene Villafranco. Motion carried to **AWARD BIDS ON VARIOUS CHEMICALS FOR THE CITY OF SAN BENITO WATER TREATMENT PLANT NUMBER 1 AND WATER TREATMENT PLANT NUMBER 2 FOR FISCAL YEAR 2020-2021.**

ITEM 16. CONSIDERATION AND POSSIBLE ACTION TO APPROVE THE AMENDMENT TO CONTRACT AGREEMENT WITH MERCURY PUBLIC AFFAIRS, L.L.C.

City Manager Manuel De La Rosa addressed the City Commission referring to amendment to the original contract signed two years ago with Mercury Public Affairs. Mr. Parker McCoullough serves as our consultant lobbyist who was very instrumental in helping the City get two pieces of legislation through the 86th legislative session. He also helped the City tremendously with the issue with HUD. I maintain constant contact with Parker, at least once a week and sometimes even more, especially with the upcoming 87th Legislative Session starting in January 2021. Between City Attorney Sossi, Parker McCoullough, and myself, we are working on a legislative plan for next year. Some of you had discussions seeking funding for parks and grants. City Attorney Sossi has provided Parker information on incentives for future developments. The monthly retainer fee continues to be same as previous year. Mayor Benjamin Gomez requested a motion. Commissioner Rene Villafranco moved to approve. Mayor Pro Tem Carol Lynn Sanchez seconded the motion. Voting Aye: Mayor Benjamin Gomez, Mayor Pro Tem Carol Lynn Sanchez, and Commissioner Rene Villafranco. Motion carried to APPROVE THE AMENDMENT TO CONTRACT AGREEMENT WITH MERCURY PUBLIC AFFAIRS, L.L.C.

ITEM 17. CONSIDERATION AND POSSIBLE ACTION TO APPROVE THE CANCELLATION OF THE NOVEMBER 3, 2020 REGULAR CITY COMMISSION MEETING.

City Manager Manuel De La Rosa addressed the City Commission advising November 3, 2020 is the General Election and Presidential Election year and do not believe those running for office will be concentrating on City business. Requesting approval for this meeting be cancelled and we address items on next meeting date. The election polls don't close until seven in the evening. Mayor Benjamin Gomez requested a motion. Commissioner Rene Villafranco moved to approve. Mayor Pro Tem Carol Lynn Sanchez seconded the motion. Voting Aye: Mayor Pro Tem Carol Lynn Sanchez and Commissioner Rene Villafranco. Voting Nay: Mayor Benjamin Gomez. Motion carried to APPROVE THE CANCELLATION OF THE NOVEMBER 3, 2020 REGULAR CITY COMMISSION MEETING

ITEM 18. CONSIDERATION AND POSSIBLE ACTION TO APPROVE THE CALLING OF A SPECIAL CITY COMMISSION MEETING ON NOVEMBER 5, 2020.

City Manager Manuel De La Rosa, addressed the City Commission stating if the item for November 3rd was approved the cancellation to continue City business will be on November 5th. Mayor Benjamin Gomez requested a motion. Commissioner Rene Villafranco moved to approve. Mayor Pro Tem Carol Lynn Sanchez seconded the motion. Voting Aye: Mayor Benjamin Gomez, Mayor Pro Tem Carol Lynn Sanchez, and Commissioner Rene Villafranco. Motion carried to APPROVE THE CALLING OF A SPECIAL CITY COMMISSION MEETING ON NOVEMBER 5, 2020.

ITEM 19. PRESENTATION OF THE CITY OF SAN BENITO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE PERIOD ENDED AUGUST 31, 2020.

Belen Pena, Finance Director, addressed the City Commission reviewing the Financial Statements report for the period ended August 31, 2020. No questions received. No motion carried PRESENTATION ONLY.

ITEM 20. EXECUTIVE SESSION:

- A) CONSULTATION WITH CITY ATTORNEY PURSUANT TO TEXAS GOVERNMENT CODE 551.071(1) TO RECEIVE PRIVILEGED ATTORNEY-CLIENT COMMUNICATION AND REGARDING CITY OF SAN BENITO, TEXAS V. CAMERON COUNTY IRRIGATION DISTRICT NO. 2, JAMES D. PENNY, AND LARRY GARCIA.
- B) CONSULTATION WITH CITY ATTORNEY PURSUANT TO TEXAS GOVERNMENT CODE 551.071(1) TO RECEIVE LEGAL ADVICE ON CONTRACT NEGOTIATIONS WITH REPUBLIC SERVICES.

THE CITY COMMISSION CONVENEED INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION AT 6:11 P.M. AND ADJOURNED AT 6:34 P.M.

GENERAL SESSION:

ITEM 21. CONSIDERATION AND POSSIBLE ACTION ON AGENDA ITEM 20(A).

Mayor Benjamin Gomez announced **NO ACTION**.

ITEM 21. CONSIDERATION AND POSSIBLE ACTION ON AGENDA ITEM 20(B).

Mayor Benjamin Gomez announced **NO ACTION**

ITEM 22. ADJOURNMENT.

Mayor Benjamin Gomez requested a motion to adjourn. Mayor Pro Tem Carol Lynn Sanchez moved to approve. Commissioner Rene Villafranco seconded the motion. Voting Aye; Mayor Benjamin Gomez, Mayor Pro Tem Carol Lynn Sanchez, and Commissioner Rene Villafranco. Motion carried to **ADJOURN AT 6:34 P.M.**

CITY OF SAN BENITO

BENJAMIN "BEN" GOMEZ
MAYOR

ATTEST:

RUTH MCGINNIS
CITY SECRETARY