

**MINUTES**  
**CITY OF HONDO**  
**REGULAR CITY COUNCIL MEETING**  
**May 24, 2021 at 6:00 p.m.**

**1. Call to order.**

Mayor Danner called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

**2. Quorum check.**

Mayor James W. Danner, Sr., Mayor Pro Tem Bobby Vela, Councilman John E. Villa, Councilman Brett Williams, Councilman Jose "Porky" Ytuarte, Councilman Wes Huesser, City Manager Scott Albert, City Attorney Jessie Lopez, Interim City Secretary Megan Rodriguez.

Staff Present: IT Network Administrator Josh Rodriguez, IT Network Assistant Adolfo Tellez, STRTC Administrative Assistant Lillian Bales, Chief of Police Brian Valenzuela, Assistant Public Works Director William "Buddy" Stewart, Lieutenant Rick Garza, Director of Finance Judy Narezo, Director of Aviation Ryan Elder, Community Programs & Projects Coordinator Jamie Kindred

**3. Invocation by Pastor Mike Vasquez of First Baptist Church.**

**4. Pledge of Allegiance** led by Mayor Danner.

**5. Citizens'/Public Comments:**

Chavel Lopez stated he is not in agreement with the Council rescinding the COVID-19 Declaration due to the state only being 30% vaccinated and he believes Governor Abbott is playing politics and allowing City workers to be put at risk. Mr. Lopez stated the masks should be kept and they should be worn at council meetings and in the City facilities. Mr. Lopez also spoke on the hazardous pay for employees and the need for a policy to have been put in place a long time ago when the pandemic began. Mr. Lopez stated the employee compensation schedule is not a good system as it only allows for average raises and across the board pay raises. Mr. Lopez also stated that there is a water issue in the vicinity of Avenue E and 15<sup>th</sup> Street that needs to be addressed due to excessive clogging/backup in the drain water. Mr. Lopez mentioned that a work order has been done and staff has looked at the issue but nothing more has been done, also stating that other residents in the area are complaining of the standing water not draining.

Beverly Kelling stated she was speaking as a citizen of Hondo and wanted to personally and publicly thank Councilman Brett Williams for his voting against the CBD and tobacco shop coming into Hondo. Ms. Kelling stated that while there was no negative commentary regarding the shop, there was no commentary in favor of it either. Ms. Kelling stated she is disappointed that Council's main concern was the lighting and graphics because she believes the bigger concern is what the shop will be selling to the community and the kids of the community. Ms. Kelling offered statistics and research regarding CBD, cigarettes, and vaping. Ms. Kelling mentioned that the Council previously stated that 99% of the time they are in agreement with the Planning and Zoning Commission and she finds it disappointing that this would be the 1% that there was a change from the Planning and Zoning recommendations.

**6. Discuss and consider approving the minutes from the City Council of May 10, 2021.**

Mayor Pro Tem Vela moved to approve the minutes for the May 10, 2021 regular meeting. Motion seconded by Councilman Huesser. Motion carried 5-0.

**7. City Manager Report(s)**

Mr. Albert reported that on May 18<sup>th</sup> Governor Abbott signed an Executive Order that bans

government entities from requiring face masks in City buildings or facilities. The order went into effect on May 21st. Mr. Albert reported that the County Health Unit continues to take walk-ins for the COVID vaccine every Tuesday and Wednesday from 7:30 am-11:00 am and from 1:00–5:30 pm. Mr. Albert also reported that as of May 24<sup>th</sup>, there are 37 active cases in Medina County, and since March 04, 2020, the County has confirmed 3,869 cases. Mr. Albert reported that the City currently has 15 utility accounts on a COVID payment plan and 5 due to the winter storm and staff will continue to charge the late penalty after the 15th but will not charge any disconnect, reconnect, or administrative fees after the 26th.

Mr. Albert reported that the City's USDA grant request for \$93,600 to fund the purchase of diesel equipment for the South Texas Regional Training Center for diesel mechanics classes has been approved. Mr. Albert reported the classes will benefit residents interested in getting a Diesel Mechanic Certification. Mr. Albert noted that the City's match for the grant is \$174, 025 and the total project cost is \$267,625.00.

Mr. Albert reported on the Airstrip Attack to be held on June 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup>. Mr. Albert stated the Airport will host a ½ mile side by side racing event with over 90 cars registered to compete in the races. Mr. Albert noted this is a family-friendly event that will also feature a car and truck show, helicopter rides, go-karts, as well as food and retail vendors. and tickets for the event can be purchased online at [www.Airstripattack.com](http://www.Airstripattack.com) for \$20.00 per day or \$30.00 for both days. Prices will be \$10.00 per day for adults or \$15.00 for both days.

Mr. Albert reported that Republic Waste has been picking up brush left from the April 28th storm since the first week in May. Mr. Albert stated that Republic has picked up 50 tons of brush since the storm when typically they pick up 15 tons every month and they expect to complete clean sweep of the city by the end of the week.

Mr. Albert reported on the Hwy 173 waterline project stating that work will begin on the water line around June 7th and should be completed by October 1<sup>st</sup> with crews from R.L. Jones installing an 8-inch water line along CR 443 and Hwy 173 to replace the existing 4-inch asbestos water main. Mr. Albert stated the new water main will connect to the new TX DOT facility and reported that the project will cost \$318,296.50 with TX DOT contributing \$124,000.00 toward the project.

Mr. Albert reported that he will report on the employee hazard pay at the first meeting in June and provide to Council a proposal for the hazard pay as related to the April 28 weather event.

Councilman Villa questioned why he has not received the information regarding the excessive water bills, to which Mr. Albert and Mayor Pro Tem Vela replied that an email had gone out to Council with that information. Councilman Villa replied that the information provided was on utility bills and not water bills as he requested. Mr. Albert stated he would provide additional information. Councilman Villa questioned the number of COVID cases in Hondo, Mr. Albert stated that the 37 cases was countywide. Mayor Danner added that the county is not breaking the cases down by city any longer.

## **8. Public Works Report**

### **a. Water Division**

- i. Mr. Stewart reported that backup on work orders was provided to Council and asked if there are any questions. Mayor Danner questioned two outstanding work orders on the primary list and five outstanding on the secondary list. Mr. Stewart replied that these are work orders that Water crews have entered that are not major water repairs such as concrete around valves, also extra work crews see around town.
- ii. Mr. Stewart reported that the city is out of Stage 1 water restrictions with water levels holding at 667 ft. and the Water division will keep monitoring the levels and keep the public notified. Mr. Stewart noted he would look into the outstanding work orders and would email Mayor and Council with his findings.

- b. Street Maintenance
  - i. Mr. Stewart reported that the Street division has patched 122 potholes and has completed 38 work orders.
- c. Street and Alley Projects
  - i. Mr. Stewart reported that the 14<sup>th</sup> Street project is at the bid opening phase and that will be happening May 25<sup>th</sup> and once that information has been reviewed by M & S Engineering it will be presented to Council. Mayor Pro Tem Vela questioned when the water service lines in that area, to which Mr. Stewart replied that the lines were replaced in 2018 with grant money. Councilman Ytuarte stated that he sent an email following the heavy rains in regard to flooding and alleyways asking for them to be looked at and repaired if any were damaged with the rains. Mr. Stewart replied that they have driven out to look but any repairs will have to wait until the rains stop and the ground is drier. Mr. Stewart noted crews will continue to monitor the alleys. Council had a discussion on the street sweeper as it has been down and repairs have not been done on it, to which Mr. Albert stated that the cost of repairs at this point are excessive and we need to purchase a new sweeper. Councilman Villa stated his issue with the mosquito sprayer. Mr. Albert asked that Council gather their questions and concerns as such and present them at the Council retreat.
- d. City Hall
  - i. Mr. Stewart reported that the payment kiosk as shown in the backup provided to Council would be put in place on the northwest corner of City Hall and a change in flow of traffic in that area would occur with added curbing to keep the direction in traffic for the kiosk flowing. Council had questions as to what services are provided at the kiosk, to which IT Administrator Josh Rodriguez gave a description of services mainly pertaining to payments. Mayor Pro Tem Vela questioned the cost of the kiosk and Finance Director Judy Narezo stated the cost of the kiosk was around \$36,000 and to pay for it those funds were obtained through the CARES Act.

9. **Public Hearing/TxDOT Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside Program: Public Hearing regarding the submission of an application for the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside (TASA) Program. The purpose of this meeting is to allow citizens an opportunity to address the City of Hondo regarding the TASA Program.**

Ms. Kindred gave a brief explanation of the Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside (TASA) Program and Mayor Danner opened the public hearing at 6:41 p.m. Chavel Lopez spoke on his discussions with Kim Davis regarding the sidewalks and the possibility of having them on Avenue U on the north side of Hwy 90. Ms. Kindred stated that the sidewalks would only be on the south side of Hwy 90 in the vicinity of the three schools, Meyer Elementary, McDowell Middle School, Woolls Intermediate, and up to Hwy 90. Mayor Danner questioned what comments were made at the Town Hall held on May 6<sup>th</sup>. Ms. Kindred stated that no negative comments were made with most of the communication being in regard to the drainage issues in the area of the improvements to come, and positive comments were made on the sidewalks and bike paths. Mayor Danner closed the public hearing at 6:45 p.m.

10. **Discuss and consider Resolution 366-21, a resolution to the City Council of the City of Hondo, Texas, declaring its support for the proposed TxDOT Transportation Alternatives Project and associated application form which would add new connecting sidewalks and bike routes between Meyer Elementary, Woolls Intermediate, and McDowell Middle Schools.** Mayor Pro Tem Vela moved to approve Resolution 366-21, a resolution by the City Council of the City of Hondo, Texas, declaring its support for the proposed TxDOT Transportation Alternatives Project and associated application form which would add new connecting sidewalks and bike

routes between Meyer Elementary, Woolls Intermediate, and McDowell Middle Schools . Motion seconded by Councilman Ytuarte. Motion carried 5-0.

- 11. Discuss and consider action to rescind the City of Hondo's COVID-19 Declaration.** Mayor Danner stated that with Governor Abbott banning City and County officials from mandating masks, he thinks the Council has no choice but the rescind the COVID-19 Declaration. Mayor Danner stated that he has spoken to City Attorney Frank Garza in regard to this and he confirmed that the powers to enforce masks has been withdrawn and the declaration no longer stands. Mayor Danner stated he has been in communication with the school regarding baccalaureate and graduation and recommended to continue social distancing but any mandates for mask are null and void.

Councilman Villa moved to approve the rescinding of the City of Hondo's COVID-19 Declaration. Motion seconded by Councilman Williams. Motion carried 5-0.

- 12. Discuss and consider authorizing the City Manager to negotiate and execute a Lease Agreement Amendment No. 1 with Hondo Aerospace, LLC for the lease of Hangar ER-3 (Hangar 1).**

Mr. Elder stated Hondo Aerospace entered into a lease agreement for Hangar 2 on December 1st, 2019 and the company now wishes to amend their lease to include Hangar 1 for their operations following the remaining term in the original lease. Mr. Elder stated that airport and City staff recently completed some upgrades and renovations to the Hangar which increased the appraisal value of the hangar which will be reflected in the monthly rent increase. Mayor Danner noted the increase in the number of airplanes out at the airport and questioned if leasing of one of the runways would still be an option, to which Mr. Elder responded it is an option due to Aerospace bringing in more aircraft during the remainder of the year. Mayor Danner also questioned the extent of damage to the hangar, Mr. Elder replied that there was substantial hail damage to the hangar roof due to the storms and which will be repaired but the damage does not affect the leasing of the hangar.

Mayor Pro Tem Vela motioned to authorize the City Manager to negotiate and execute a Lease Agreement Amendment No. 1 with Hondo Aerospace, LLC for the lease of Hangar ER-3 (Hangar 1). Motion seconded by Councilman Ytuarte. Motion carried 5-0.

- 13. Discuss the new Text to Pay option for Utility Billing customers and the process the new feature entails. (Judy Narezo)**

Ms. Narezo gave an update on the new feature through the Municipal Online Pay program, the software and company that the City utilizes for online payments. Ms. Narezo stated the company is now offering a text to pay option allowing for customers to call via the City telephone number and authorize a text to pay that will then prompt the system to send out automatic text messages when the resident has a new balance. Ms. Narezo stated the card information is saved on file making the feature user friendly and more convenient for our customers to pay their utility bills. Ms. Narezo also stated there is no additional cost to the City with this feature, however, there is the 2.25% fee just like online for the customer.

- 14. Executive Session:** The City Council of the City of Hondo convened in Executive Session at 6:55 p.m. and reconvened in Open Session at 7:57 p.m. in accordance with the Texas Open Meetings Act, Texas Government Code, *Section 551.071* (Consultations with Attorney) on matters in which the duty of the attorney to the governmental body under the Texas Disciplinary Rules of Professional Conduct of the State Bar of

Texas clearly requires discussion in closed session); Pending or contemplated litigation; *Section 551.072* (Deliberations about Real Property); and

*Section 551.087* (Deliberations Regarding Economic Development Negotiations):

- a. Discussion regarding potential lease, purchase or value of real property.
- b. Discussion regarding potential lease/sale of property located at the South Texas Regional Airport.
- c. Discussion regarding potential development incentives and negotiations with a prospect for

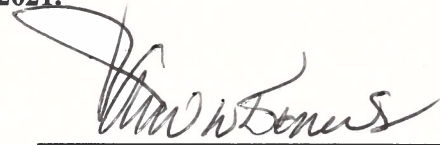


development at the South Texas Regional Airport.  
d. Discussion regarding negotiations – Indio Estates and El Cortijo

**15. Discuss and consider appropriate action resulting from Executive Session.**  
No action taken.

**16. Adjourn.**  
Councilman Villa moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:57 p.m. Motion seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Vela. Motion carried 5-0.

**PASSED AND APPROVED THIS 24TH DAY OF MAY 2021.**



JAMES W. DANNER SR., MAYOR

ATTEST:



Megan Rodriguez  
Interim City Secretary

