

STATE OF TEXAS §  
COUNTY OF CAMERON §  
TOWN OF LAGUNA VISTA §

**MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING  
OF THE LAGUNA VISTA TOWN COUNCIL**

DATE: December 16, 2024  
TIME: 5:30 p.m.  
PLACE: Town of Laguna Vista City Hall

MEMBERS PRESENT: Michael Carter, Mayor  
Johvonne Howard, Council Member Place 2  
Teresa Bryant, Council Member Place 5  
Miguel Hernandez, Council Member Place 6  
  
Alan T. Ozuna, Esq.  
Greg Cruz, Commander  
Norma Barbosa, City Secretary  
Crystal Chapa, Finance Director  
Karla De La Pena, City Clerk  
Liz Baldwin, Library Clerk

**ORDER OF BUSINESS**

• **Call to Order**

Mayor Carter called the meeting to order at 5:31 pm.

• **Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance**

Invocation led by Mayor Carter.

• **Roll Call/Excused Absences**

Kenneth Cornelius, Council Member Place 4  
Dr. Christopher Romero, Mayor Pro-Tem

**Motion made by Council Member Howard and seconded by Council  
Member Bryant**

Council Member Howard	Aye	Council Member Bryant	Aye
Council Member Hernandez	Aye	Mayor Carter	Aye

**Motion Carried**

**OPEN FORUM** - At this time, audience is allowed 3 minutes per person to address the Council on any topic. There will be no discussion or formal action taken during this agenda item. The speaker must identify themselves before speaking. A Speaker Request Form must be presented to the City Secretary prior to the meeting.

Natalie Ruiz presents asking how town decide the appointment of a new member of the council via an election or will the current council members appoint a new member of their own decision or entertain the possibility of residents submitting applications and resumes to join the council.

Elma Arredondo addressed the Council and describes the lights are too bright and are possibly causing light pollution, wants to know if town can in place a bright light ordinance.

Bill Beaty described the ammendment that the appointment of a city manager is dependant on education and experience and recommended a possible new city manager (Darla Jones).

**NEW BUSINESS** – Discussion, consideration, and possible action on each of the following items:

**RESOLUTION NO. 2024-16 – ARPA Memorandum Of Understanding**-Consideration and possible action to approve the Memorandum Of Understanding (MOU) regarding American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds for the Fire Department.

Town Council Ozuna explains what the resolution is about and explains that this resolution was picked up from a previous agenda and was amended to the way it was presented to the council previously in order to divert from one project involving the Police Department to a project involving the Fire Department and that it needed to be taken action by this month. Council Member Howard asks to specify the resolution, Mayor Carter explains that originally the ARPA funds were going to be used for the building of a Police Department due to recent events occurred in the town he had found out that the budget number for that building is much different that what they were told. Mayor called Greg Cruz to clarify the amount was going to be \$600, 000 dollars.

**Motion** was made by Council Member Bryant to approve Resolution 2024-16.

**Second** was made by Mayor Carter.

**VOTE**

Council Member Howard	Aye	Council Member Bryant	Aye
Council Member Hernandez	Aye	Mayor Carter	Aye

**Motion Carried**

**ARPA MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING**–Consideration and possible action to approve the Memorandum Of Understanding (MOU) regarding American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds for the Fire Department.

Town Attorney explains again this ARPA Memorandum of Understanding and its similarity and that is required for the town to enter into this Memorandum Of Understanding but now instead of Police Department it will be with Fire Department. Dee Dee Arizmendiz project manager introduced herself and explains furthermore about the importance of this process and the deadline (December 31<sup>st</sup> 2024) to go into contract with Grantworks. She also introduces the engineer for this project (Guzman & Munoz) and they explained how the process will be. Howard states she is a little confused and would like to table this item until after executive session.

**Motion** was made by Council Member Howard to approve ARPA Memorandum Of Understanding (MOU).

**Second** was made by Council Member Hernandez.

**VOTE**

Council Member Howard	Aye	Council Member Bryant	Aye
Council Member Hernandez	Aye	Mayor Carter	Aye

**Motion Carried**

**RESOLUTION NO. 2024-18**-Discussion, Consideration and possible action to approve Resolution 2024-18 rescinding prior approval and prior memorandum of understanding regarding American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Police Department project ID#2418.

Town Attorney Ozuna explains that this Resolutions is the last piece of the puzzle that follows the Memorandum Of Understanding (MOU). It is approved for ARPA Funds to be used for the Fire Department instead of Police Department.

**Motion** was made by Council Member Howard to approve Resolution No. 2024-18.

**Second** was made by Council Member Hernandez.

**VOTE**

Council Member Howard	Aye	Council Member Bryant	Aye
Council Member Hernandez	Aye	Mayor Carter	Aye

**Motion Carried**

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**– Executive closed session in accordance with the Open Meetings Act, as authorized by the Texas Government Code, regarding any matter listed on the agenda pursuant to Section 551.071 – consultation with Town Attorney; 551.072 – deliberation regarding real property; 551.074 – deliberation regarding personnel matters; and 551.087 – deliberation regarding economic development negotiations.

**Motion** was made by Council Member Bryant to go into executive session.  
**Second** was made by Council Member Hernandez.

**VOTE**

Council Member Howard	Aye	Council Member Bryant	Aye
Council Member Hernandez	Aye	Mayor Carter	Aye

**Motion Carried**

**Meeting Adjourned for Executive Session at 5:54 p.m.**  
**Meeting resumed at 6:53 p.m.**

**Interim City Manager**- Consideration and possible action to appoint interim City Manager.

Council Member Bryant suggested and moved to appoint Commander Cruz as Interim City Manager. Mayor Carter clarifies this is just temporarily and RFQ's will be run in the next agenda, clarified also, that Commander Cruz is not interested in being City Manager in the future. He also states that Town is in process of hiring a new City Manager in the next 60- 90 days.

**Motion** was made by Council Member Bryant to go into executive session.  
**Second** was made by Mayor Carter.

**VOTE**

Council Member Howard	Aye	Council Member Bryant	Aye
Council Member Hernandez	Aye	Mayor Carter	Aye

**Motion Carried**

**Interim Chief of Police-** Consideration and possible action to appoint interim Police Chief.

Council Member Bryant suggested and moved to appoint Commander Cruz as Interim Police Chief.

**Motion** was made by Council Member Bryant to appoint Commander Cruz for interim Police Chief.

**Second** was made by Mayor Carter.

**VOTE**

Council Member Howard	Aye	Council Member Bryant	Aye
Council Member Hernandez	Aye	Mayor Carter	Aye

**Motion Carried**

**City Manager RFQ-** Consideration and possible action regarding RFQ for the position City Manager.

Town Attorney explains that this item is to officially advertise and go out for responses to rfqs for the position of permanent City Manager for Laguna Vista. A closing period was sated for January 22,2025.

**Motion** was made by Council Member Bryant to RFQs and to close on January 22, 2025.

**Second** was made by Mayor Carter.

**VOTE**

Council Member Howard	Aye	Council Member Bryant	Aye
Council Member Hernandez	Aye	Mayor Carter	Aye

**Motion Carried**

**Emergency Management-** Consideration and possible action regarding assignment of stipend for emergency management.

Mayor Carter states both department has been run by Chief of Police. He states what a wonderful job Neil Waters has done with running the department in the last months when Chief of police was out sick and out with the VA. He states those two departments will be separated. One will be run by Chief Of Police (Police Department) and the other one (Fire Department & EMS) will be run by Chief Neil Waters.

**Motion** was made by Mayor Carter to separate Emergency Management Departments and appoint Police Chief to Police Department and Fire Chief Neil Waters to Fire Department and EMS.

**Second** was made by Council Member Bryant.

**VOTE**

Council Member Howard	Aye	Council Member Bryant	Aye
Council Member Hernandez	Aye	Mayor Carter	Aye

**Motion Carried**

**ADJOURNMENT**

**Motion** was made by Council Member Howard to adjourn.


**Second** was made by Council Member Bryant.

**VOTE**

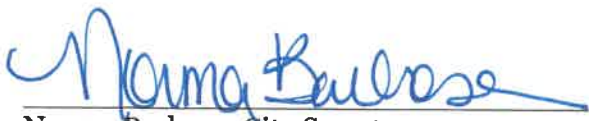
Council Member Howard	Aye	Council Member Bryant	Aye
Council Member Hernandez	Aye	Mayor Carter	Aye

**Motion Carried**

**Meeting Adjourned at 7:02 pm**

  
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Michael Carter, Mayor

Attest:

  
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Norma Barbosa, City Secretary