

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

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

DATE: May 16, 2023
TIME: 6:00 p.m.
PLACE: Town of Laguna Vista City Hall

MEMBERS PRESENT: Michael Carter, Mayor
Christopher Romero, Council Member Place 1
Johvonne Howard, Council Member Place 2
Bettina Tolin, Council Member Place 3
Rolando Gonzalez, Mayor Pro Tem
Silke De Gobeo, Council Member Place 6

Alan T. Ozuna, Esq.
Rendie R. Gonzales, City Manager
Crystal Chapa, City Secretary
Anthony David, Police Chief
Niel Waters, Fire Chief
Emmanuel Zuniga, Public Works Director

MEMBERS ABSENT: Victor Worrell, Council Member Place 5

ORDER OF BUSINESS

• **Call to Order**

Mayor Carter called the meeting to order at 6:05pm.

• **Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance**

Invocation lead by Council Member Romero

• **Roll Call/Excused Absences**

Motion was made by Mayor Carter to excuse Council Member Worrell.

Second was made by Council Member De Gobeo.

VOTE

Council Member Romero	Aye	Council Member Gonzalez	Aye
Council Member Howard	Aye	Council Member De Gobeo	Aye

Council Member Tolin 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.

Citizen Randy Villarreal addressed the council on the need for Emergency Town Siren.

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

- **OATH OF OFFICE** – Administration of Oath of Elected Officials.

Judge James Hunter administered the oath of office for Council Member Romero, Howard, and Tolin.

Judge Benito Ochoa IV administered the oath of office for Mayor Carter.

- **PROCLAMATION DECLARING A LOCAL STATE OF DISASTER**

Mayor Carter read the proclamation declaring a local state of disaster.

Motion was made by Council Member Gonzalez to ratify the proclamation declaring a local state of disaster.

Second was made by Council Member Tolin.

VOTE

Council Member Romero	Aye	Council Member Gonzalez	Aye
Council Member Howard	Aye	Council Member De Gobeo	Aye
Council Member Tolin	Aye	Mayor Carter	Aye

Motion Carried

LAGUNA HEIGHTS TORNADO- Discussion, consideration and possible action regarding the Laguna Heights Tornado on May 13,2023 (Mayor Carter)

Mayor Carter advised how this has touched his heart and thanked everyone on the amount of effort and the chair everyone took. He further advised the community should be like this all the time and not only during a disaster.

Council Member Howard spoke about seeing those directly impacted at the High School and seeing everyone coming together.

Council Member Romero spoke about how heart wrenching the disaster is and in these moments is when we see the best in everybody. He further stated that we need to crystallize and keep the momentum of positive change. Council Member Romero continued stating this is a wakeup call and learning opportunity and encourages First Responders, community, and all entities involved in the response at the appropriate time to conduct an accurate action discussion on what was learned and how we can improve the towns emergency response plan.

Council Member Gonzalez also spoke about the community coming together and the learning experience. He also commented that those involved will never hear the lightning storms the same and thanked the First Responders and everybody that was involved.

Council Member De Gobeo spoke about how a disaster like that touches you and states just by luck it wasn't you. She further states that it was very grounding and makes you appreciate that we still have a roof over our heads and a house to go home to.

Council Member Tolin stated that she volunteered at the site today and was made aware of a meeting taking place between the Salvation Army and County leadership and was interested in the result of that meeting if anyone knew and could report. Also now that it is declared a state of emergency if we would be able to release some discretionary funds.

Mayor Carter advised he has been in communication with state, county, and local officials, and further advised that Governor Abbott had called and asked what he could do to help. Mayor further stated the State of Texas definitely has their eyes on us. Mayor continued to advise the county and the Texas department of emergency services management is having a workshop tomorrow to help facilitate the longer short-term care since the Salvation Army is a short term, the emergency food is on the ground when it happens solution and they are very thankful for all those who have donated and helped. Mayor further advised the command center will be coming down at the end of the day or the next day and the area will no longer be secured by the County. FEMA is an uphill battle, and we have some contacts with the senator and other congressional contacts in DC however it is a big bar to cross to get FEMA assistance. Mayor added that he did like the idea of discretionary funds.

PROCLAMATION THANKING AND RECOGNIZING FIRST RESPONDERS FOR SERVICE FOR THEIR RESPONSE TO THE MAY 13, 2023 TORNADO IN LAGUNA HEIGHTS

Mayor Carter read the proclamation and then invited Police, Fire, and everyone who helped respond to the disaster up for thanks and recognition.

Council Member De Gobeo thanked the City for the communication and keeping the community updated the whole time and also advising on what the community can do and what's going on.

Mayor Carter added that he was on the phone early with Chief David and he was out there escorting the Salvation Army through the bad roads and Rendie was on the phone. Mayor thanked them for being so responsive.

MINUTES—Consideration and possible action to approve the following minutes: April 12, 2023 Regular Town Council Meeting.

Motion was made by Council Member Gonzalez to approve the April 12, 2023 Minutes.
Second was made by Mayor Carter.

VOTE

Council Member Romero	Aye	Council Member Gonzalez	Aye
Council Member Howard	Aye	Council Member De Gobeo	Aye
Council Member Tolin	Aye	Mayor Carter	Aye

Motion Carried

FINANCIAL REPORTS – Review of Monthly Financial Reports. (City Manager)

The Check Register, Bank Reconciliation, Income Statement, and Balance Sheets were provided to Council for review. Rendie advised the large check this month was to Cascos for the Audit.

Council Member De Gobeo asked regarding the check register on the 2 charges for EFTPS and Rendie answered this is the payroll taxes. Next asked about the Porta Sani charge and Rendie advised this was for the Event we had for Big Heros that as the events grow, we are seeing Roloff bathrooms alone are not enough and this is the city’s contribution to the events. Also asked was the 8x8 charge that Rendie advised this was a software update for our phone system.

Council Member Romero inquired about the Other Equipment Maintenance in the Revenue and Expenditure Report. Rendie advised this is a line item for Police and Fire and Chief David added this is used for things like Generator service, radio antennas, batteries, and siren wiring and fuses etc.

Mayor Carter advised the Council that we are right on budget and thanked the City staff.

Council Member De Gobeo also asked about a zero-dollar charge for motor fuel. Rendie answered that the incorrect card was used for fuel instead of the voyager in error and a correction was done. Also asked was investing funds to make additional interest. Mayor Carter advised that Government Agencies have much stricter rules on what they can and cannot invest in but we can look into moving money into Government insured TML funds.

FIRE HYDRANT MAINTENANCE—Discussion, consideration, and possible action regarding fire hydrant maintenance. (Mayor Carter)

Chief David gave a brief overview of the fire hydrant maintenance needed. He advised that there are 7 hydrants in the original town site that need maintenance totaling \$1,993.00 for materials. He further advised that the last maintenance that was done was done back in August of 2020 by an outside contractor.

Mayor Carter asked if the fire hydrants on the Golf Course Community get tested. Chief David answered No they have not. Mayor followed up by asking if they will be and Chief David answered that they can be. Mayor advised that would think that the tax payors of the Golf Course community would like them tested. Mayor advised the council that no action is needed on this item, and it is just for informational purposes and continued to advise that insurance rates are going up and insurance rates will change based on ISO rating for the city, we need to do everything we can to keep ISO as low as it can be so insurance rates will be more manageable.

Council Member Romero advised the Council that by the volunteer fire department doing this maintenance and bringing them up to functionality is a huge savings passed on to the town by this volunteer force.

ACCEPTANCE OF RESIGNATION– Consideration and possible action to accept the resignation of Town Council Member Victor Worrell.

Mayor Carter stated that Mr. Worrell was a great man to serve with all these years, it's been a pleasure, and it saddens him that he is gone. He continued to state that the Town Council and the Town itself is less because of it.

Motion was made by Council Member Tolin to accept the resignation of Council Member Victor Worrell.

Second was made by Council Member Romero.

VOTE

Council Member Romero	Aye	Council Member Gonzalez	Aye
Council Member Howard	Aye	Council Member De Gobeo	Aye
Council Member Tolin	Aye	Mayor Carter	Aye

Motion Carried

Mayor Carter added that next meeting he would like to have a proclamation for Mr. Worrell's time served. Council Member Tolin wanted the record to show that her motion was only meant to move things along.

APPOINTMENT OF TOWN COUNCIL MEMBER– Consideration and possible action to appoint Town Council Member.

Motion was made by Mayor Carter to move this item to the next meeting.

Second was made by Council Member Tolin.

VOTE

Council Member Romero	Aye	Council Member Gonzalez	Aye
Council Member Howard	Aye	Council Member De Gobeo	Aye

Council Member Tolin Aye Mayor Carter Aye

Motion Carried

RESOLUTION 2023-14– Consideration and possible action to approve Resolution 2023-14 approving increase in approved funds for Fire and Police vehicles.

Rendie advised the council that they had approved the purchase of a Fire Command One vehicle for \$55,000 and Police Chief Unit Vehicle for \$65,000.00 and we knew prices were going up and when the new bids came in, it is for \$74,288. Rendie added these are 2024 vehicles.

Chief David advised the council that even though the price has gone up it needs to be taken into consideration that they will include the lights, sirens, radios and will be delivered ready to go. In addition, they will also be equipped with L Tanks holding 200 Gallons of gasoline that will help in the event of a Freeze or natural disaster and gas runs out the units will be prepared.

Council member De Gobeo asked if we received price guarantee. Rendie answered yes, once the Bid is accepted the Bid will be locked in.

Mayor Carter shared what Rendie told him the other day that Chief David thanked the council for all the years they continue to supply them with the necessary tools to do their jobs the best they can do it.

Council Member De Gobeo asked about the Library Computers and reading that due to the grants received they may not be necessary. Rendie answered computer prices are going up and once the bid is received the Council will decide if they want to spend the money on them.

Motion was made by Council Member Howard to approve Resolution 2023-14.
Second was made by Mayor Carter.

VOTE

Council Member Romero Aye Council Member Gonzalez Aye
Council Member Howard Aye Council Member De Gobeo Aye
Council Member Tolin Aye Mayor Carter Aye

Motion Carried

RESOLUTION 2023-15– Consideration and possible action to approve Resolution 2023-15 approving ARPA request for quote based on Texas SmartBuy Contract No. 070-A1 for purchase of: Police Chief Unit and Fire Command One Unit

Motion was made by Council member Tolin to approve Resolution 2023-15.
Second was made by Council Member Howard.

VOTE

Council Member Romero	Aye	Council Member Gonzalez	Aye
Council Member Howard	Aye	Council Member De Gobeo	Aye
Council Member Tolin	Aye	Mayor Carter	Aye

Motion Carried

RESOLUTION 2023-15– Consideration and possible action to APPROVE Resolution 2023-16 regarding Town’s participation in AEP Texas Inc’s rate case. (City Attorney)

Town Attorney spoke to the council on the towns participation in AEP’s rate case.

Motion was made by Council Member Gonzalez to approve Resolution 2023-15.
Second was made by Council member De Gobeo.

VOTE

Council Member Romero	Aye	Council Member Gonzalez	Aye
Council Member Howard	Aye	Council Member De Gobeo	Aye
Council Member Tolin	Aye	Mayor Carter	Aye

Motion Carried

ORDINANCE 2023-03– Consideration and possible action on **SECOND READING** regarding one-time approval for prescribed burn consistent with the Texas Clean Air Act. (City manager)

Rendie advised the Council that this item is coming back now that they have provided the map with area that will be burned.

Council Member Howard asked if our fire department will be involved. Rendie answered all the fire departments will be involved and they have their own tankers and fire trucks and have created the fire lane. It will also be used as a training source.

Council Member De Gobeo stated looking at the map she feels relieved seeing there are spaces, and it is not a hundred percent of the area.

Council Member Gonzalez also added that it is not burning the areas in concern with the thick brush needed for wildlife.

Council Member Romero asked if this proscribed burn was discussed with Chief Waters and Chief answered he has along with US Fish and Wildlife and a North Wind would be optimal. A fire break is cut behind the Stripes that are adequate and he is good with it.

Town Attorney did the Second reading of Ordinance Caption.

Motion was made by Council Member De Gobeo to approve Ordinance 2023-03.
Second was made by Council Member Tolin.

VOTE

Council Member Romero	Aye	Council Member Gonzalez	Aye
Council Member Howard	Aye	Council Member De Gobeo	Aye
Council Member Tolin	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 and pending litigation; 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 Howard to go into executive session.
Second was made by Council Member De Tolin.

VOTE

Council Member Romero	Aye	Council Member Gonzalez	Aye
Council Member Howard	Aye	Council Member De Gobeo	Aye
Council Member Tolin	Aye	Mayor Carter	Aye

Motion Carried

Meeting Adjourned for Executive Session at 7:25 p.m.
Meeting resumed at 8:07 p.m.

OPEN SESSION– Consideration and possible action on items discussed in executive session.

Motion was made by Council Member Gonzalez to approve the updated Personal Policy Manual.
Second was made by Mayor Carter.

VOTE

Council Member Romero	Aye	Council Member Gonzalez	Aye
-----------------------	-----	-------------------------	-----

Council Member Howard	Aye	Council Member De Gobeo	Aye
Council Member Tolin	No	Mayor Carter	Aye

Motion Carried

CITY MANAGER REPORT

Rendie advised the council that she and Mayor discussed prior to the tornado revisiting our Emergency Management processes.

Mayor Carter advised that Tom Hushins could come to a meeting and bring a power point so that we can brand it ourselves and he will work with the town and council to educate us on what we need and should be doing. Rendie added that the first county wide Emergency Management meeting is on the 23rd and herself and Chief David will be attending. Also, Tom Hushins will be there and they will get the meeting set up.

Council member Gonzalez commented that one of the key discussions should be communication. Rendie advised that we are working on rolling out by June 1st an SMS group text with Constant Contact that will be able to be subscribed to by all the citizens.

NOTE: Prior to adjournment Mayor invited the volunteer fire department up to speak. In honor of Police Appreciation week, the volunteer fire department wanted to give a big thank you to the Laguna Vista Police Department for being there to support them each and every call and let them know how appreciative they are and also presented Chief David with a basket of goodies for the Police department.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion was made by Council Member Tolin to adjourn.

Second was made by Council Member Romero.

VOTE

Council Member Romero	Aye	Council Member Gonzalez	Aye
Council Member Howard	Aye	Council Member De Gobeo	Aye
Council Member Tolin	Aye	Mayor Carter	Aye

Motion Carried

Meeting Adjourned at 8:17 pm



Michael Carter, Mayor

Attest:



Crystal Chapa, City Secretary