

REGULAR CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
Wednesday, April 20, 2022, at 6:30 p.m.
City Hall, Council Chambers
2610 South Main St, Stafford, TX 77477

The Stafford City Council met in regular session on Wednesday, March 20, 2022, with the following in Attendance:

City Council

Cecil Willis, Mayor
Ken Mathew, Mayor Pro Tem
Alice Chen, Councilmember
(arrived at 7:05 p.m.)
Wen Guerra, Councilmember
Xavier Herrera, Councilmember
Don Jones, Councilmember
Virginia Rosas, Councilmember
(arrived at 6:40 p.m.)

City Staff

Richard Ramirez, Police Chief
Tatyanna Luttschlager, City Planner
Art Pertile, City Attorney, Olson & Olson
Katie Rutherford, Attorney, Olson & Olson
Bonnie Baiamonte, Acting City Secretary
Glynell Horn, Assistant Police Chief
Alka Shah, Finance Director
Shanell Garcia, HR Director
Larry DiCamillo, Fire Chief
Bryan Blaum, FMsquared

1. Call to Order.

Mayor Willis called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

2. Executive session as authorized by Chapter 551, Texas Government Code, Section 551.071(1)(A), pending or contemplated litigation; Section 551.071(2), authorized under the Texas Disciplinary Rules of Professional Conduct of the State Bar of Texas. Professional Conduct of the State Bar of Texas, Section 551.074 (1), to deliberate the appointment, employment, evaluation, reassignment, duties, discipline, or dismissal of a public officer or employee including Director of Public Works/Development Services and City Secretary.

Council went into executive session at 6:31 p.m. and reconvened in open session at 7:00 p.m.

3. Pledge of Allegiances.

Mayor Pro Tem Mathew led the pledge to the American flag and Councilmember Rosas led the pledge to the Texas flag.

4. Consideration of appropriate action on items discussed in Executive Session.

Mayor Willis nominated Roxanne Benitez for the City Secretary position to begin employment on May 2, 2022. Councilmember Rosas made a motion to approve the nomination of Roxanne Benitez for the City Secretary position. Councilmember Mathew seconded the motion, and it carried 6 -0. Councilmember Chen had not arrived at the meeting.

Mayor Willis nominated Jose Pastrana for the Director of Public Works/Development Services position to begin employment on May 2, 2022. Councilmember Guerra made a motion to approve the nomination of Jose Pastrana for the Director of Public Works/Development Services position. Councilmember seconded the motion, and it carried 6 – 0. Councilwoman Chen had not arrived at the meeting.

5. Council Reports: The Mayor and Council may make announcements of community interest on the following items:

- (1) expressions of thanks, congratulations, or condolence.
- (2) information regarding holiday schedules.
- (3) an honorary or salutary recognition of a public official, public employee, or other citizen, except that a discussion regarding a change in the status of a person's public office or public employment is not an honorary or salutary recognition for purposes of this subdivision.
- (4) a reminder about an upcoming event organized or sponsored by the governing body.
- (5) information regarding a social, ceremonial, or community event organized or sponsored by an entity other than the governing body that was attended or is scheduled to be attended by a member of the governing body or an official or employee of the political subdivision; and
- (6) announcements involving an imminent threat to the public health and safety of people in the political subdivision that has arisen after the posting of the agenda.

Mayor Willis announced that the City's Spring Clean Up will be held on Saturday, April 23, at the Codes Department facility located next door to City Hall from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. It will be drive-thru for disposing electronics, paper and prescription. There will also be a heavy trash pickup in the City. Please visit the City's website for further information. Mayor Willis welcomed suggestions on how next year's event can be improved and expanded.

Mayor Willis announced that Early Voting begins next week and that a resident of Fort Bend County can vote at any early polling locations. The hours for Early Voting at Stafford City Hall are: Monday-Friday, April 25-29, 8:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.; Saturday, April 30, 8:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.; and Monday-Tuesday, May 2-3, 7:00 a.m.-7:00 p.m. The polls will be open on Election Day, Saturday, May 7, from 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.

Councilmember Rosas announced that earlier this evening she accepted an award and plaque from SMSD on behalf of one of Stafford's residents, Mary Ann Smith, for her community service and being a good representative of SMS. She made additional comments on Ms. Smith's service to the City, SMSD and the community.

Mayor Pro Tem Mathew announced that this is the month of Ramadan, and he wished his Muslim friends a good Ramadan month.

Councilmember Herrera said that a GoFundMe account has been created for Kathy Ratcliff, a long-time Stafford resident, former SMSD employee and a passionate and strong community leader. Unfortunately, she has fallen ill and is in need of help. He asked everyone to strongly consider donating to her fund. Sheri Hobbs at SMSD is the point of contact. Councilmember Herrera said there is also a barbeque benefit fundraiser for a long-time Stafford resident Michael Rosas, Sr.'s funeral expenses on Sunday April 24, at 908 Texas Parkway, Stafford.

Councilmember Jones commented that Kathy Ratcliff spent all of her career teaching mostly at SMSD. For five years he was principal where she taught and she was one of those teachers

referred to as exemplary. She influenced not only hundreds of children but was a leader amount the teachers who she mentored and nurtured. She was not only a teacher but an educator.

Councilmember Herrera said that Ms. Ratcliff has retired from SMSD but it was not only her but her family who were very active and served SMSD and the community including her husband and son.

Councilmember Chen said she is very honored to have received an outstanding service award from SMSD. This award is not to her but to the people in the community and business owners and leaders who support SMSD when it has a need. The school needed a playground and she has gone out and talked to businesses. So far they have raised \$27,000 with a goal of \$65,000. As a City Councilmember, her goal is to support SMSD for it to be the best school district in the County. It has been said when SMSD goes, so does the City, and vice versa. "We are one." She appreciates SMSD recognizing her tonight. Councilmember Chen also made comments about Ramadan and wished her Muslin friends happy Ramadan.

Councilmember Guerra talked about a recent event he attended for the Ramadan Interfaith Iftar 2022 at the mosque on Brand Lane. He made comments about Kathy Ratcliff and her husband who were strong community and SMSD supporters and were like family to him.

Mayor Pro Tem Mathew made additional comments about Ms. Ratcliff and her husband and their strong ties to the school and community.

6. Public Comments on items on the agenda.
7. (a) Discussion of request by Sugars Restaurant LLC to receive a HOT Funds Grant in an amount not to exceed \$100,000.00 from the City of Stafford to hold Fort Bend Funkfest at the Stafford Centre on September 17, 2022.

Mayor Willis made comments on this item. For several months the Stafford Centre Committee has been working on a HOT Funds Grant application that anyone can apply for and receive as long as they qualify. This is the first applicant the City has received. The process is to submit the application to the City Secretary, the City Secretary forwards the application to the Stafford Centre staff for review and their comments, and then it goes to the Stafford Centre Committee to be analyzed and for their recommendation. Ultimately it comes before City Council for a final decision.

Mr. Blaum addressed Council. The Stafford Centre Committee has spent a great deal of time working on the HOT Funds Grant application form. He said we want to protect the City's interest but utilize the HOT Funds which are restricted funds that have restricted usage. The grant application form went through several amendments and are comfortable with it. The form has been approved by City Council and the Stafford Economic Development Corporation. Mr. Blaum said they have worked with legal counsel and Mr. Pertile for the most equitable situation for the promoter and the City for usage of the HOT Funds. The maximum grant is \$100,000, Mr. Pertile has suggested that a system of attrition be used regarding the amount of HOT Funds money contributed to the event which would be tied into hotel room nights. The applicant, Mr. Darryl Austin, recognized this. The applicant would receive \$200.00 for each confirmed hotel room that is booked in Stafford for the event, assuming double occupancy which would mean \$100.00 per person. There is \$35,450.00 just in rent at Stafford Centre that it would be realizing as well as \$2.00 per ticket, as well as sales tax for expenditures at gas stations, restaurants, etc. This was voted on by the Stafford Centre Committee with the requirement of a non-refundable deposit in the amount of \$5,000.00 to be paid by April 25, 2022. Stafford's hotels do real well during the week Mr. Blaum commented that Stafford's hotels do well during the midweek time period because there are a lot of business travelers that utilize Stafford hotels. The hotel business in Stafford is slow during the weekend and an event like this could generate a Friday and Saturday night booking. Mr. Austin plans to have multiple ticket levels including a VIP ticket that requires the rental of a room in a

Stafford hotel. Mr. Blaum feels this is well thought plan that is beneficial to the City. He is familiar with Mr. Austin's good reputation in the business.

Councilmember Guerra said he feels this event will be very successful and he encouraged Mr. Austin to possibly consider a Fat Tuesday Mardi Gras Festival next year which will promote the City and bring in revenue. Councilmember Jones said he is very excited about the Funkfest and commended everyone who was involved in making this happen. Councilman Herrera said he appreciates Mr. Austin's involvement in the community.

Mr. Darryl Austin, 4 Canaveral Creek Land, Sugar Land, addressed Council. He said he is the owner of Sugar's Cajun Cuisine and has just opened his second restaurant called the Ten Dollar Grill. He thanked Council for the opportunity and feels we can do some great things together and bring a lot of positive notoriety and exposure to Stafford. In his 31 years promoting shows, he has built a lot of good relationships and is able to get popular artists. He promotes positive mature material to 35 and up age audiences. There have never been any incidents. He hopes to present a great event, safely and securely, and bring positive feedback to the City. He plans to work with the City in terms of the Police Department, Fire Department, Health Department, and do everything orderly and within the law. His position is to make this event one of many. He has put together a show with Anthony Hamilton and Tank, who are very prominent R&B acts. He spoke of his history in the business stating he has booked a wide variety of artists.

Mr. Austin gave a PowerPoint presentation about the Funkfest. It will take place in festival field 4. They will bring in all the fencing, production, staging, lights, generators and transform that field into a major concert venue for one day. They plan to open the doors at 3:00 p.m. with a variety of local artists

(b) Consideration of appropriate action on item (a).

Councilmember Guerra made a motion to approve the request by Sugars Restaurant LLC to receive a HOT Funds Grant in an amount not to exceed \$100,000.00 from the City of Stafford to hold Fort Bend Funkfest at the Stafford Centre on September 17, 2022, as presented, including a \$5,000.00 non-refundable deposit to be paid by April 25, 2022, and the final amount granted to Sugars Restaurant be at a value of \$200.00 times the number of hotel room nights within the City booked by unique guests and tracked back to the event held by Sugars Restaurant. Councilmember Mathew seconded the motion and it carried 7 – 0.

8. (a) Discussion of the five-year depository services contract with Allegiance Bank.

Ms. Shah presented this item.

(b) Consideration of appropriate action on item (a).

Councilmember Chen make a motion to accept the five-year depository services contract with Allegiance Bank as presented. Councilmember Guerra seconded the motion and it carried 7 – 0.

9. (a) Discussion of a Resolution of the City Council of the City of Stafford authorizing City staff and Higginbotham Insurance Agency, Inc. to issue a Request for Proposals for City and Stafford Municipal School District employee benefits.

(b) Consideration of appropriate action on item (a).

Councilmember Herrera made a motion to approve the Resolution as described in item 9.(a) as presented. Councilmember Chen seconded the motion and it carried 6 – 0. Councilmember Jones was away from the Council table when the vote was taken.

10. (a) Discussion of a Resolution of the City of Stafford, Texas, finding that CenterPoint Energy Houston Electric, LLC's application for

approval to amend its distribution cost recovery factor pursuant to 16 Tex. Admin. Code § 25.243 to increase distribution rates within the City should be denied; finding that the City's reasonable rate case expenses shall be reimbursed by the Company; finding that the meeting at which this resolution is passed is open to the public as required by law; requiring notice of this Resolution to the Company and legal counsel.

(b) Consideration of appropriate action on item (a).

Councilmember Guerra made a motion to approve the Resolution as described in item 10.(a) as presented. Councilmember Rosas seconded the motion, and it carried 7 – 0.

11. (a) Presentation and discussion of employee compensation by Human Resources.

(b) Consideration of appropriate action on item (a).

Councilmember Herrera made a motion to adopt in three phases as presented by HR the policy and procedures discussed in Item 11.(a) and that this item be brought back at the next City Council Meeting with the plan, including the funding sources and mechanism, to implement the first phase with regard to the Police and Fire Departments and that the City Attorney prepare an Ordinance as required by state law for the approval of the classification and salary system for the Police and Fire Departments. Mayor Pro Tem Mathew seconded the motion, and it carried 6 – 1 with Councilmember Guerra opposed.

12. (a) Consent Agenda (Items i.-x.). Any item tagged will be discussed and considered at the conclusion of this item or at the next regular City Council Meeting; any item approved will include payment of expenses.
 - i. Approval of a Resolution of the City Council of the City of Stafford approving and ratifying the renewal of the License Agreement with CenterPoint Energy Houston

- Electric, LLC for public parking at First Street Park.
- ii. Approval of a Resolution of the City Council of the City of Stafford approving the Extension Agreement with CenterPoint Energy Houston Electric, LLC for the Staging Area Site Agreement.
 - iii. Approval of request by Police Chief Richard Ramirez for training for certain Police Department personnel as specified in memo to Council dated April 12, 2022, in the amount of \$2,276.40.
 - iv. Approval of Pay Application No. 13 and final acceptance for the Cash Road extension and approval of Certificate of Acceptance.
 - v. Approval of recommendation by the 4th of July Committee for Grand Marshal.
 - vi. Approval of request by Scott McElrath, Code Compliance Administrator, to purchase Comcate Software to better support the Retail Health and Code Enforcement process in the amount of \$14,386.00 to implement the program.
 - vii. Approval of the City's Investment Report for the period ending February 28, 2022.
 - viii. Approval of request by Ryan Young, Director of Information Technology, for the allocation of funds for the purchase of a replacement of the existing Municipal Court Department security camera system in the amount of \$27,801.24.
 - ix. Approval of request by Ryan Young, Director of Information Technology, for the allocation of funds for the purchase of a security camera system for the Streets Division in the amount of \$67,143.74.
 - x. Approval of a Resolution of the City Council of the City of Stafford authorizing the expenditure of up to \$60,000.00 by the City Engineer for the inspection, design and repair of the sewer line at the Stafford swimming pool to be billed to SMSD.

(b) Consideration of appropriate action on items (i-x).

Mayor Pro Tem Mathew made a motion to approve consent agenda

items i.-x. as presented. Councilmember Rosas seconded the motion and it carried 6 – 0. Councilmember Herrera was away from the Council table when the vote was taken.

13. Approval of the following City Council Meeting Minutes.
 - (a) Regular City Council Meeting of March 16, 2022,
 - (b) Regular City Council Meeting of April 6, 2022.
 - (c) Consideration of appropriate action on items (a)-(b).

Councilmember Chen made a motion to approve the minutes of the Regular City Council Meeting of March 16, 2022, and the Regular City Council Meeting of April 6, 2022, as presented. Councilman Rosas seconded the motion, and it carried 6 – 0. Councilmember Herrera was away from the Council table when the vote was taken.

14.
 - (a) Discussion of requests by Councilmembers for future agenda items.
 - (b) Consideration of appropriate action on item (a).

Councilmember Rosas made a motion to request Bob Jones of Jones Engineering Solutions to present to City Council the short term and long term solution to the access opening (curb) of Staffordshire Road and US 90A. Mayor Pro Tem Mathew seconded the motion. A vote was taken resulting in a 3 – 3 tie.

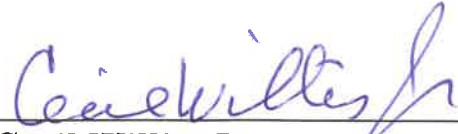
Councilmember Rosas made a motion to request Bob Jones of Jones Engineering Solutions to present what traffic control can and cannot be done at the intersection of Staffordshire Road and Willow Drive including a speed bump, traffic light or four-way stop sign. The motion died for lack of a second.

15. Adjournment.

Councilmember Rosas made a motion to adjourn. Councilmember Chen seconded the motion and it carried 6 – 0. Councilmember Herrera was away from the Council table when the vote was taken.



Bonnie Baiamonte
Acting City Secretary



Cecil Willis, Jr.
Mayor