

City of Natalia, Texas
Regular City Council Meeting
September 21, 2015 at 7:00 pm
Minutes

Roll Call: Mayor Ruby Vera - Present Alderman Sam Smith - Present
Alderman Mike Fernandez – Present Alderman Tommy Ortiz - Present
Alderman Sam Bluemel – Present Alderman Ruben Juarez – Absent

Call to Order:

- 1) Mayor Vera called the regular city council meeting to order at 7:00 pm followed by the pledge of allegiance led by Alderman Fernandez, and the invocation by Alderman Bluemel.

Citizens to be Heard:

- 2) i. George Saenz and Laura Gallagher discussed the city council's decision to reopen DelMonte Street (end of Miller Street) is not safe, and creates hazard for traffic and pedestrians, and having a city valve in the middle of the street creates another issue; and, stating the street is too narrow, grass is too high to see ahead of the road, and the dust is horrible. However, citizens stated they're in favor of opening the streets on Thursdays and Fridays specifically for football games, but not for everyday traffic. Mr. Saenz, and Mrs. Gallagher ask that this matter get replaced on the agenda for further discussion to reconsider the use of the street; additionally, mentioned that if the City is going to leave it open, then it needs to be widened, maintained, monitored and streets signs need to be placed.
ii. George Martinez asks that city council look into co-ed/adults playing on the softball field because its creating a problem; these adults are hitting the ball so hard its flying into his and his neighbor's property, and just had a ball break through his window; and expressed his concern that these fly-balls are going to hit his son, or someone else.

City Council Comments:

- 3) Alderman Fernandez asks if ACI was informed of the placement of trashcans during garbage pickup. City Administrator Hernandez responded that Blake Caesar was informed and would be notifying the garbage men. Alderman Fernandez announced the NPD's National Night Out is set for October 6, 2015 starting at 6pm and welcomes all to attend. Alderman Ortiz stated that co-ed/adults should not be allowed to play on the softball field, and to be restricted only to the baseball field, as the fields were specifically built for youth play. Mayor Vera mentioned to City Council of the 2015 Delinquent Taxpayers lists, and asks that a committee of City Council volunteer to sanitize the list to determine if properties have been abandoned, owners are deceased, etc., and scheduled this review on September 29, 2015 at 9am with Aldermen Smith, Bluemel and Ortiz.
- 4) Public Notice: 2015 Texas Community Development Block Grant Program
Mayor Vera announced that the City of Natalia will submit a Texas Capital Fund – Downtown Revitalization Program grant application to the Texas Department of Agriculture – CDBG Program for \$150,000 to construct public sidewalk, lighting, parking, and handicap accessibility improvements in the historic downtown commercial district in the City of Natalia. The application will be available for review on and after Sept. 25, 2015, at City Hall (2078 St. Hwy. 132N, Natalia, TX 78059) during regular business hours. *Este aviso se puede encontrar en inglés y en español en la sala municipal.*

Consent Agenda:

- 5) a. Approval of Minutes: August 17, 2015 Regular Meeting, August 24, 2015 Special Meeting, September 2, 2015 Special Meeting, and September 9, 2015 Special Meeting
b. Approval of the Financial Activity Report: August 2015
c. Approval of the Police Department Activity Report: August 2015
d. Approval of the Municipal Court Activity Report: August 2015

e. Approval of the Code Compliance Activity Report: August 2015

f. Approval of the Utility Department Activity Report: August 2015

Motion: Alderman Bluemel made the motion approving the consent agenda, and Alderman Fernandez seconded the motion.

Vote: 4-0; Passed by a unanimous vote.

Discussion/Consideration of Action Items:

- 6) **Discussion/Consider action on approving the Natalia Municipal Development District Annual Budget for fiscal year beginning October 1, 2015 and ending September 30, 2016.**

Motion: Alderman Fernandez made the motion approving the NMDD fiscal year annual budget; and Alderman Smith seconded the motion.

Vote: 4-0; Passed by a unanimous vote.

- 7) **Discussion/Consider action on Ordinance No. 15-0921-1; Levying Ad Valorem Taxes for the Fiscal Year beginning October 1, 2015 and ending September 30, 2016 for a Tax Rate of \$0.8869 on each \$100 valuation of property .**

Discussion: The 2015 Tax Rate proposed of \$0.8869 on each \$100 valuation consists of the Maintenance & Operations Tax Rate of \$0.7319 and the Interest & Sinking (Debt) Tax Rate of \$0.1550. The Tax Rate of would increase property owner taxes by last year's taxes by 0.77%.

Motion: Alderman Fernandez made the motion adopting Ordinance No.15-0921-1; for the property tax rate increase by the adoption of a tax rate of \$0.8869, which is effectively a 0.77% increase in tax rate; and Alderman Smith seconded the motion.

Record Vote: 4-0; Passed by a unanimous vote.

FOR: Aldermen Sam Smith, Tommy Ortiz, Sam Bluemel, Mike Fernandez

AGAINIST: None. ABSENT: Alderman Ruben Juarez ABSTAIN: None.

PRESENT and NOT Voting: Mayor Vera

- 8) **Discussion/Consider action on Ordinance No. 15-0921-2; ratifying the adoption of Fiscal Year 2015-2016 Municipal Budget(s).**

Motion: Alderman Smith made the motion adopting Ordinance No.15-0921-2, ratifying the adoption of FY2015-2016 Municipal Budget(s); and Alderman Fernandez seconded the motion.

Vote: 4-0; Passed by a unanimous vote.

- 9) **Discussion/Consider action on designating an official newspaper for the city's publications and notices for fiscal year beginning October 1, 2015 and ending September 30, 2016.**

Motion: Alderman Bluemel made the designating Devine News newspaper as the city's official newspaper for FY2015-2016; and Alderman Ortiz seconded the motion.

Vote: 4-0; Passed by a unanimous vote.

- 10) **Discussion/Consider action on Resolution No.15-22; authorizing the write-off of uncollectible utility account receivables.**

Discussion: City Administrator Hernandez explained that several inactive, delinquent accounts are uncollectible; having no forwarding address, contact information, or supportive documentation of services connected and/or disconnected makes it difficult to determine if monies are actually owed by the customer for the period(s) of delinquency. Alderman Fernandez asked if the property owners of rental properties are being liable for these delinquent accounts. City Administrator Hernandez answered "no", and explained that at the time no documents were provided to property owners in notifying them in their responsibility, or having record of which accounts were rental property; however, since last year, all customers must pay a deposit when any services are connected to any address, deposits are not transferrable from one address to another, and all customers will be disconnected for non-payment, and a policy is now in place for property owners of rental property. Staff has aggressively attempted to collect on these accounts, but the end result from accounts owing prior to September 30, 2012 is \$11,454.80.

Motion: Alderman Fernandez made the motion approving such request, and Alderman Bluemel seconded the motion.

Vote: 4-0; Passed by a unanimous vote.

- 11) **Discussion/Consider action on Resolution No.15-23; nominating a candidate to serve a two-year term beginning January 1, 2016 on the Medina County Appraisal District Board of Directors.**

Motion: Alderman Fernandez made the motion to nominating Natalia resident, Roy Sheetz, and Alderman Smith seconded the motion.

Vote: 4-0; Passed by a unanimous vote.

Reports:

- 12) **City Administrator's Report:** 1) Community Cleanup is scheduled on Saturday, September 26, 2015 from 8am-2pm for residents having bulky items to be disposed of on their own, the City nor ACI will not do curbside pickup, it's the owners responsibility to drop off the eligible items; 2) City Administrator reported to Council that the City's plan of purchasing of Water Rights was discussed with Bond Counsel and Financial Advisor, and would like for Council to consider scheduling a special meeting to review the finance options and recommendations of legal. Mayor and Council agreed to schedule a special meeting on Tuesday, September 29, 2015 at 12:30pm.
- 13) **Chief of Police Report:** 1) National Night Out is scheduled for October 6, 2015 from 6pm-8pm, which is the City's 20th anniversary hosting this event, which has faithfully been organized by Alderman Mike Fernandez and wife Brenda Fernandez.
- 14) **Mayor's Report:** 1) Mayor Vera announced the City's award of the 2015-2016 Texas Department of Agriculture Community Development Grant is the amount of \$275,000 which will be applied towards Wastewater Treatment Plant improvements, for the replacement of the lift station pump, improvements to the clarifier, oxidation ditch and chlorine contact basin.
- 15) Executive Session: The City Council convened into executive session at 7:41pm, pursuant to Texas Government Code, Chapter 551 to discuss the following:
a) **§551.071; Consultation with Attorney: Summons of Civil Action Suit.**
- 16) Regular Session: The City Council reconvened into regular session at 7:56pm, and took the following action:
Motion: Alderman Smith made the motion to proceed with the recommendation of Attorney Albert Pena of Denton, Navarro, Rocha, Bernal, Hyde & Zech, as provided and discussed in executive session; and Alderman Bluemel seconded the motion. The motion passed by a unanimous vote.
- 17) **Adjournment.**
Motion: Alderman Fernandez made the motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:58pm, and Alderman Ortiz seconded the motion.
Vote: 4-0; Passed by a unanimous vote.

Passed and Approved this 19th day of October, 2015.

Ruberta C. Vera, Mayor

Attest:

Lisa S. Hernandez,
City Administrator/Secretary