

**City of Natalia, Texas**  
**Regular City Council Meeting**  
**January 16, 2017 at 7:00 pm**  
**Minutes**

Roll Call: Mayor – Position Vacant Alderman (Mayor Pro-Tem) Sam Smith – Present  
Alderman Mike Fernandez – Present Alderman Tommy Ortiz - Absent  
Alderman Sam Bluemel – Present Alderman Ruben Juarez – Present

Call to Order:

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

Citizens to be Heard:

- 2) Ruby Vera, MDD Chairwoman, updated the City Council on the MDD's decisions made on 12/27/2017, moving forward with purchasing the Palm Courts Property, and to consider increasing the amount of the note for a longer term, possible 20-25 year note, to also build a community center. Plans for the community center include a metal framed 50'x80's building on a concrete slab with the front appearance to replicate the old Palm Courts Hotel. Financial proposals are still being discussed with the MDD Attorney, Financial Advisor, and the Bond Counsel. Vera will bring forth more information upon MDD consideration.

City Council Comments:

- 3) Alderman Fernandez mentioned the efforts of Code Compliance seem to be selective, and would like for code compliance to be fairly enforced; and mentioned the cows roaming within city limits at Mustang Stables. Mayor Pro-Tem Smith thanked Public Works Director for repairing several pot-holes around the city, especially those on 8<sup>th</sup> Street.

Consent Agenda:

- 4) a. Approval of Minutes: December 19, 2016 Regular Meeting  
b. Approval of Financial Activity Report: December 2016  
c. Approval of Police Department Activity Report: December 2016  
d. Approval of Municipal Court Activity Report: December 2016  
e. Approval of Code Compliance Activity Report: December 2016  
f. Approval of Utility Department Activity Report: December 2016  
Action: Alderman Bluemel made the motion approving the consent agenda, and Alderman Fernandez seconded the motion. Vote: 4-0; Motion carried unanimously.

Discussion/Consideration of Action Items:

- 5) **Discussion/Consider options for vacancy created on the governing body for Office of Mayor of the City of Natalia, Texas.**

Discussion: City Administrator Hernandez reiterated about Manuel Saldana no longer holding the seat of Mayor for the City of Natalia, as he was absent for three regular consecutive meetings (October 17, November 21, and December 19, 2016), and explained that after discussing the situation with City Attorney Williams, it was advised that the city council had options to satisfy the vacant seat: 1) City Council can remain "as-is" without a Mayor, and permitting the continuous of Mayor Pro-Tem to perform the duties of Mayor during the vacancy; 2) City Council may appoint any person eligible to serve in the Office of Mayor; and 3) City Council may call for an election to fill the position. Mayor Pro-Tem Smith stated that he is comfortable with performing the duties "as-is", but does not want to be appointed as Mayor, and received a clarification response from the City Attorney that staying as Mayor Pro-Tem would not limit his voting rights or term. City Administrator Hernandez explained that should Council determine to stay "as-is", the Mayor Pro-Tem will not lose his entitlement of Alderman, and will retain his voting rights and original term expiring November 2018. Alderman Fernandez questioned City Administrator Hernandez on the recommendation of staying "as-is" with the Mayor Pro-Tem performing the duties? Hernandez stated that Mayor Pro-Tem Smith is very responsive, and has been doing a great job addressing issues of the city already.

Action: Alderman Fernandez made a motion to elect the Governing Body to continue "as-is" without a Mayor until the regular election in November, with Mayor Pro-Tem Smith performing the duties until then; Alderman Jaurez seconded the motion. Vote: 3-0-1; Motion carried unanimously, Smith abstained.

6) **Discussion/Consider Resolution; Accepting the resignation of Director, Appointing a Director to fill the vacant term, and Renewing the terms expiring February 2017 with the Natalia Municipal Development District Board of Directors.**

Discussion: MDD Chairwoman Vera explained that Susanna Lara resigned on September 21, 2016 from the MDD Board of Directors, and would like to fill the vacant position with candidate Patrick A. Bourcier. Mr. Bourcier has many years of experience in serving on Economic Development Committees, as well as other governing boards of a municipality. City Administrator Hernandez explained that the terms of four Directors will also be expiring, and without objection from the Directors, recommends that they renew the terms of the four Directors for another two-year term to end February 2019.

Action: Alderman Fernandez made a motion approving the Resolution; and Alderman Bluemel second the motion. Vote: 4-0; Motion carried unanimously.

7) **Discussion/Consider Resolution; Authorizing the Chief of Police to file a grant application to the Governor's Office for the National Incident Based Reporting System Upgrades.**

Discussion: Chief Rodriguez explained that certain reports must be reported using NIBRS, and in order to do so, the city must upgrade Copsync's equipment to perform this task; currently the Governor's Office is accepting grant application for the upgrades for a budget amount of \$7,500, with \$0 city matching funds.

Action: Alderman Fernandez made the motion approving the Resolution; and Alderman Bluemel second the motion. Vote: 4-0; Motion carried unanimously.

8) **Discussion/Consider rescheduling the date of the February 20, 2017 regular city council meeting as offices will be closed in observance of President's Day.**

Action: Alderman Bluemel made a motion rescheduling the regular meeting to Monday, February 27, 2017 at 7pm; and Alderman Fernandez second the motion. Vote: 4-0; Motion carried unanimously.

Staff Reports:

9) **City Administrator's Report:**

- i. Status on the TxCBDG Contract No.7215349 Wastewater Treatment Improvements Project. TDA did find this project to be of incompliant with bidding requirements that put a hold on the progress; however, after an administrator review and providing TDA with a corrective action plan, a release to proceed was provided. The construction contractor has ordered the equipment and anticipates delivery and mobilization to take place in March. Additionally, Project Manager Eddie Bogard and Project Engineer Javier Ramirez are no longer working with TRC Engineering; and have been assigned Jeff Dahm as Project Manager, and Jose Castillo as Project Engineer. A phone conference held with Jose Castillo confirmed the status in on schedule.
- ii. Status on the 2017-2018 TDA TxCBDG Application for Water/Sewer Improvements. A meeting with the Grant Admin, Engineer, PWD and City Admin was held to determine projects to consider in this application, which included a mechanical fine screen, automatic transfer switch, sludge blanket monitor at the wastewater treatment plant, and water tank rehabilitation. These projects were considered in the past but were not feasible or priority when determining the city's affordability within the grant-awarded budget.
- iii. Update on the Financial Audit for Fiscal Year Ending September 30, 2016. The preliminary audit was done in December, and the Final audit took place the first week in January; several letters will be going out, and should city council receive one to please complete and remit back.
- iv. Update on the Street Signs/Installation. The city ordered over 55 street name signs in the past, and after all had been installed, utility workers discovered several more street name and stop signs missing or damaged; therefore, another round of signs were ordered through the prison, and are expecting delivery anywhere from 60-90 days.

10) **Adjournment.** Alderman Bluemel motioned to adjourn the meeting at 7:15pm, and Alderman Fernandez seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

**Passed and Approved this 27<sup>th</sup> day of February, 2017.**

Approval:

Attest:

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Sam Smith, Mayor Pro-Tem

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Lisa S. Hernandez, City Administrator/Secretary