

**CITY OF CASTROVILLE CITY COUNCIL
REGULAR CALLED COUNCIL MEETING**

**1209 Fiorella
City Council Chambers
April 22, 2025
Tuesday
5:30 P.M.
MINUTES**

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Darrin Schroeder called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

II. ROLL CALL

Present:

Mayor Darrin Schroeder	Scott Dixon, City Administrator
Councilmember Houston Marchman	Debra Howe, City Secretary
Councilmember Phil King	
Councilmember David Merz	
Councilmember Robert Lee	

Absent:

Mayor Pro Tem Sheena Martinez

Others in Attendance:

Daniel Santee, Attorney, DNRBS&Z

III. PLEDGE OF ALLEIGENCE

IV. INVOCATION

Mayor Schroeder gave the invocation.

V. CITIZENS COMMENTS

The City Council will hear comments from any citizen or visitor. Speakers must address their comments to the presiding officer rather than individual council members or staff; stand at the podium, speak clearly into the microphone, and state your name and residential address before speaking. Speakers will be allowed a maximum of 3 minutes for testimony. Speakers making personal, impertinent, profane, or slanderous remarks will be given one warning before losing the privilege to speak or may be removed from the room. In accordance with the State Open Meetings Act, the City Council is restricted from discussing or taking action on items not listed on the agenda. Action can only be taken at a future meeting.

Elanor Elder, 374 PR 4731, Castroville, spoke on a ticket she received from a city police officer for making an illegal turn off at Hwy 90 onto Hwy 471N using an improved shoulder. Ms. Elder admitted guilt, but wanted improvements to the traffic flow, signage/markings saying not be used as a turning lane and noted other locals did the same thing as she. Mayor Schroeder said Hwy 90 was regulated by TxDOT and she should reach out to that entity with her concerns. Mayor Schroeder also said to look online at the northern route the county and the city was working on to help with the influx of traffic down Hwy 90 with the growth.

Corrie Mitchell, 230 CR 4703, Castroville, Executive Director of Petunia's Rescue, spoke to the possibility of a private – city partnering with her organization to provide an animal shelter for the city. Ms. Mitchell said her rescue had worked with the city and helped with over 280 animals to date. Ms. Mitchell said there was a property located on 471N that would work well with buildings in place and wanted to see if the city would consider purchasing or making a one-time expenditure to partner with the 501C organization. Ms. Mitchell said they would continue to work with the city animal control to assist in adoptions and would like to work with the city for a new facility. Mayor Schroeder thanked her for the organization's work and asked that she work with the city administrator on details to be placed on possibly the next agenda.

VI. CONSENT AGENDA

- a. Minutes for March 25, 2025 Regular Called Meeting
- b. Minutes for April 8, 2025 Regular Called Meeting

A motion was made by Councilmember King and duly seconded by Councilmember Merz to approve the consent agenda. A vote was made (4:0 all ayes) the motion carried by all present.

VII. CITY ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

- a. City Administrator Report Topics:

Gas Operations Update, CPS Wholesale Electric Negotiations, Regional Park Community Center Project, WWTP Dams & Ponds, Regional Park Irrigation, Solid Waste RFP, UDO Progress, New Developments - Water Demand, Budget Workshops, Bluebonnet Child Advocacy Center, 345 KV Transmission Line, City Hall Remodel RFQ, CDBG Waterline Project, Council Chamber Audio/Video, Athens Area Drainage Project

City Administrator Scott Dixon briefed the city council on the CA's report highlighting the Athens area drainage project with notification of street closures that day. Councilmember Lee asked about the information provided in his report on water demand. Mr. Lee clarified the city could not support new developments until the elevated storage tank was constructed. Mr. Dixon said that was correct and staff was looking at possible options. Councilmember Merz clarified it was pumping capacity, not amount of water rights. Mr. Dixon said that was correct. Mr. Dixon said he was looking at dates of May 6th, 12th or 19th for the budget presentations by department heads. Mayor Schroeder clarified only streets closed at this time were Gentilz and Geneva.

Mayor Schroeder moved Item 10a. Board openings up in the agenda due to the possible length of meeting.

IX. DISCUSSION AND ACTION ITEMS

- a. Consider and take appropriate action on applications submitted for open positions on City Boards and Commissions

City Secretary Debra Howe briefed the city council on the applications received for open positions and requests from current members to be moved to different positions. Ms. Howe said the city council had

reviewed at the previous meeting an application from Mary King for an open position on the HLC, reviewed request from Library full board member Kelly Hoog to be moved to an alternate position, reviewed a request former ZBOA member Brian Griffin to be appointed to an open position on P & Z, and heard from one new applicant, Julieanna Renner-Ramierz, to be considered for an open position on the Library Advisory Board. Ms. Renner-Ramierz was present for any additional questions. Ms. Howe explained three of the positions shown had terms ending in 2025 and if the city council wished, they could appoint the applicants to a term ending in 2027. Ms. Howe said Ms. King was unable to attend due to a family conflict and Ms. Estrada Alternate #1(2026 term) had said she would like to be considered for the full board position held by Ms. Hoog.

A motion was made by Councilmember Lee and duly seconded by Councilmember Merz to appoint Mary King to Historic Landmark Commission full board position #5 with a term ending October 2027. A vote was taken (3ayes:0:1abstain (King)) the motion carried by a majority vote.

A motion was made by Councilmember King and duly seconded by Councilmember Marchman to appoint Brian Griffin to the Planning and Zoning Commission open alternate position #1.

Councilmember Lee asked for discussion and said he felt Mr. Griffin should stay on the ZBOA as he was one of three members and there were still not enough members on the board to hold a meeting. Mr. Lee said he was not ready to appoint him to the P & Z.

A vote was taken (2ayes:2nays (Lee, Merz)) Mayor Schroeder broke the tie with an aye. Mr. Griffin was appointed to the Planning and Zoning Commission. It was determined the term of office was not stated in the motion.

A motion was made by Councilmember King and duly seconded by Councilmember Marchman to reopen the item. A vote was taken (4:0 all aye) to reopen discussion.

A motion was made by Councilmember King and duly seconded by Councilmember Marchman to appoint Brian Griffin to Planning and Zoning Commission open Alternate #1 with a term ending June 2027. A vote was taken (2 ayes: 2 nays (Lee, Merz) Mayor Schroeder broke the tie with an aye - motion carried.

A motion was made by Councilmember Marchman and duly seconded by Councilmember King to move Library Advisory full board member Kelly Hoog (position#1) to alternate position#1 with a term ending June 2026, moving Michelle Estrada(alternate#1) to full board position#1 with a term ending June 2026, and appointing Julieanna Renner-Rameriz to alternate position#2 with a term ending June 2027. A vote was taken (4:0 all ayes) the motion carried by all present.

VIII. PUBLIC HEARINGS

a. Public Hearing for Alsatian Oaks Planned Unit Development Amendment

Opened: 6:51 p.m.

Community Development Director Breana Soto provided a presentation on the request for an amendment from Alsatian Oaks Development to the development agreement. Ms. Soto said there was a change to the agreement regarding the property set aside for a school. Ms. Soto said the school district had chosen not to accept due to location so the property would revert back and greenbelt/open space would be removed, only depicted. City Administrator Dixon said 20% would be recalculated into open space showing 62.24 as proposed compared to previous 60.01. The chart showed more at 69.91 acres.

Ms. Soto said street sections had been added, sidewalks would stay at 4 ft., same as existing. Ms. Soto said the one thing the P & Z did not support was changing the lots from 100 to 125 to provide at least two points of vehicular access. This was primarily for emergency vehicles. Ms. Soto said P & Z felt the 100 lots should stay the same and did not approve. City Administrator Dixon said the actual count was 101 lots with additional streets taken off. The P & Z did approve the amendment with the exception of the request for the additional lots.

Closed: 6:31 p.m.

b. Public Hearing on the adoption of the Comprehensive Plan

Opened: 6:32 p.m.

Community Development Director Breana Soto briefed the city council on the changes to the Comprehensive Plan. Ms. Soto said the language on update/review every five years had been retained; changed the areas of stability; all residential areas were now P2.5; added an engagement table; and an updated map.

Closed: 6:36 p.m.

c. Public hearing on the adoption of the Unified Development Ordinance

Opened: 6:36 p.m.

Community Development Director Breana Soto briefed the city council on the past and up to the present steps taken to get to this point in the UDO process. Ms. Soto reviewed the recommendations from the last meeting on who would serve on the Design Review Committee including City Administrator, Community Development, Building Permitting, Public Works and include others as needed. Ms. Soto said they added a preapplication meeting with staff, design charette was optional, and neighborhood plans were now three acres instead of two. Ms. Soto said they included language from the current subdivision ordinance on water rights requirements, would allow model homes to be constructed before plat was finalized. Allow work trailers to get construction permits; included definition of Castro Street; types of mobility, removed warrants due to being too messy legally as per the city attorney; incorporated TIA threshold worksheet to show the triggers for applicant to improve perimeter streets surrounding subdivisions that did not meet city standards; included adequate lighting; sidewalk widths; ADU's chart allowing in P2 and P2.5 with a Special Use Permits; RV Parks were allowed with Special Use Permit in P2 but not in P1, P2.5, P3, P3M, P4 or P5; Recreational Vehicle Parking was allowed in layers two and three; P2 zones changed to P2.5, P3 changed to P2.5, and P5 changed to P4; setbacks were 80ft. in P2.5 with 12,000 ft. lots, 40% lot coverage, build-to-line range 10ft-80ft, 40% façade buildout minimum; Block lengths P2 720ft., P2.5 330ft., P3 & P3M 660ft, P4 & P5 330 ft. with block breaks in P3 & P3M. Bicycle parking was identified at civic buildings and Place Types P4, P5 and EC with one space per 5 parking lots; a parking plan to be included with Site Development Plan; and the definition of a Home Occupation would be included. Ms. Soto said P & Z had not taken any action at the last meeting.

Joe Holzhaus 602 Berlin, had questions about pocket parks in P2.5 and what was the meaning of commercial, Pg. 159 transitional zones the red outline and civic space.

Closed: 6:52 p.m.

IX. DISCUSSION AND ACTION ITEMS

b. Consider and take appropriate action on adopting a Resolution for a 90-day free trial for Automatic License Plate Reader (ALPR)/ Flock Cameras

Police Chief James Kohler and Officer John Sapper briefed the city council on submitting a grant application for the use of automatic license plate reader Flock cameras. Officer Sapper said the devices would be a big help with keeping the community safe and strategically placed the cameras would help with identifying stolen vehicles, vehicles break-ins, along with other criminal activities. City Administrator Dixon asked how the program worked. Officer Sapper said all the agencies in the state using the program could get alerts. Officer Sapper said it was very manageable and the city would receive alerts for crimes within the area. Councilmember Lee asked if all the different programs worked together. Officer Sapper said they were not intergraded, but the information would be in the data system just would not receive alerts unless in the Flock system. Councilmember King asked the cost after the trial period. Officer Sapper said this was a 90-day free trial and they were looking at 4 cameras at a cost of \$3,000 per camera annually. Councilmember Marchman asked if citizens could call in license plates if they thought there was suspicious activity. Officer Sapper said they were in the process of drafting a policy on the uses and that would be a policy call. City Administrator Dixon felt they would get a good return on the investment. Police Chief Kohler said it was a game changer on being able to be alerted to potential crimes. Councilmember Merz asked if there was software setup and training involved. Officer Sapper said it was a standalone program with no integration and a small amount of training for a select few. Councilmember Lee asked how the information was captured and sent. Officer Sapper said the cameras were mounted on TxDOT poles through an agreement with power or solar. The cameras took pictures and upload within 24hrs to the DPS site. The alert system used a cellular service to push the alerts. Councilmember Marchman asked what would happen if the cellular tower went down. Officer Sapper said he would check on what the backup plan was if this happened. Council asked if the department had looked at any other systems and was told the other popular program was Motorola with a setup cost of \$50,000 including a mobile trailer and higher annual costs for that system.

A motion was made by Councilmember King and duly seconded by Councilmember Marchman to adopt a Resolution for a 90-day free trial for Automatic License Plate Reader (ALPR)/Flock Cameras. A vote was taken (4:0 all ayes) the motion carried by all present.

Mayor Schroeder recessed the meeting for a short break at 7:19 p.m.
Mayor Schroeder reconvened in open session at 7:24 p.m.

c. Discussion and appropriate action on Alsatian Oaks Planned Unit Development Amendment request

Councilmember Marchman verified the P & Z approved with the exception of keeping the number of lots to 100. Councilmember Merz said the school space had already been agreed to just moving

boundaries some. Mr. Merz felt the property should be left in the agreement, agreed on keeping 100 lots and streets were subject to subdivision ordinance. Councilmember Marchman said the school property could be used for open space. Councilmember Lee clarified the street cross sections were identified in the subdivision, an open space table was required, and felt the city was trading off good useable space for flood plane identified on the map with the amendment presented. Councilmember Merz said comparing current and proposed there were smaller areas not large continuous amounts. Mr. Merz said if allowed to take off the map the portions of land could be small and unusable. Councilmember King thought the developer had to bring plats to the city and the city council could decide then if the open space shown would be acceptable. Ms. Soto said they did not come before the city council if there was a development plan in place but could come back for preapproval. City Administrator Dixon said if the open space was taken out the city could lose but also said the developer could only use 50% of flood plane for open space. Mr. Dixon said the city would receive useable land. Brittany Christy with Merit and Engineer Jim Welch with Pape Dawson spoke on the amendment. Ms. Christy said they had changed engineering firms and Merit was trying to be thoughtful of how the land was developed for each Unit. Mr. Welch said his firm was trying to bring something more accountable by adding the cross-street sections not shown on the previous PUD Plan, call out collector streets, parks (no acreage shown) and would show a percentage and design when they brought to the city. Mayor Schroeder was in agreement with Councilmember Lee on map changes and loss of open space. Ms. Christy said there was not a loss of space, they were trying to clarify better and actually more was shown. Councilmember Merz verified the street sections added would be the same as currently in the built-out units. Mr. Welch said they were being mimicked. Councilmember King asked about northern corner of development being designed as a flood plane. Mr. Welch said it was a natural drainage area and better for them. Mr. King wanted the city to have final review before construction. Ms. Soto said it was in the requirements that staff had the right to review before the construction began. City Administrator Dixon asked how the open space was calculated. Mr. Welch said they had looked at units 1 and 2 that have pocket parks and they would be looking to do the same design. Mayor Schroeder reiterated the designated space to be usable space, and taking out the depiction could be a problem. Mr. Welch said the changes came with his firm taking over the project and finding incorrect calculations on acreages for right-of-way and discrepancy in open space. Councilmember Lee asked if the document had to come back with changes if the city council did not approve the change to the lots from 100 to 125 as they had submitted. Ms. Soto said the city council could approve the P & Z recommendations to approve with keeping the 100 lots. Councilmember King asked why the amenity center shown was downsized. Ms. Soto said they had found it was in part of a flood plane so they to downsize to meet that criteria. It was noted the amenity center on Lot 18 was considered open space.

A motion was made by Councilmember Merz and duly seconded by Councilmember Marchman to approve the amendment request with the exception of keeping the 100 lots as shown in the original and keeping the designated open spaces on the map. A vote was taken (4:0 all ayes) the motion carried by all present.

d. Discussion on the adoption of the Comprehensive Plan

Mayor Schroeder asked if there were any more comments from the citizens to the P & Z Board on the Comprehensive Plan. Community Development Director Soto said there had not been any additional

comments received and the P & Z Board felt the plan was tied to the UDO ordinance and did not take any action. Ms. Soto said the only updates were an engagement table and the numbers updated.

e. Discussion on the adoption of the Unified Development Ordinance

Community Development Director Soto asked for more comments on the revisions to the UDO document. Councilmember Lee said he did support having two separate ordinances. Councilmember King agreed. Councilmember Marchman said the goal was for any changes not affect the Old Castroville area. Ms. Soto went through in depth all of the changes made to the document. Changes shown – 1.11, 1.14.3.2, 1.14.3.3 City Administrator or their designee identified throughout document as city representative for matters related to the UDO (example written interpretations, stop work orders); 2.2.7 and 2.2.8 change 2.5 acres to 3 acres which was greater than a city block. Ms. Soto was to verify 3 acres equaled a city block. 2.2.11 Special Use Permit language would stay the same with a public process staying the same; 2.2.11 Final Plat include “shall not”; 2.2.23 Amending Plats would go to P & Z board for review - keep the same.

Mayor Schroeder called a brief recessed at 9:30 p.m.

Mayor Schroeder reconvened in open session at 9:35 p.m.

Mayor Schroeder continued with the amending plats approval process. City Staff would review, refer to the P & Z Board then sent to the city council for final approval. Councilmember Lee said he was good with the technical details of the Subdivision Improvement Plans with city council approval. 2.3.1 Appeals of Administration would go to the Zoning Board of Adjustment; 3.6.4.1 New Neighborhoods or Employment Center Plan would stay the same with P & Z Board and city council approval; 3.7 Infill Plans language to be kept as written; 3.8.6.5 Cost of Utilities Extensions language was kept as written; 4.3 Place Type Zoning leave as is; 3.8.7.5 and 4.3.1.9 Civic Space/Building language needed to be cleaned up and clarification on meeting the criteria to operate as a civic space. Religious dwelling was to be added to civic spaces. 5.9.6 Variances to be removed; 5.10.3 Signs in the Historic District information was provided by the city’s HPO Selina Angel on historic signage saying only the movie theater was legible under this section. City Council asked for language to include allowing with historic approval. 5.10.3.1 Illuminating Signs – did the city council want these types of signage. Staff was to bring back different language. On 6.1.5. Designation Process for local Historic District Councilmember King asked about properties outside of the designation and the process. Ms. Soto said there had to be a super majority vote to designate. Under definitions: Home Occupation keep definition and enforcement; Recreational vehicles would be allowed but was restricted to one boat and 1 RV not over 48ft. and not to be lived in. The changes would be made and sent back to the P & Z Board for consideration at an upcoming meeting.

f. Discussion and appropriate action on survey for historic bridges created by TxDOT

HPO Selina Angel briefed the city council on a survey being conducted by TxDOT on historic bridges. Ms. Angel found two bridges, the Hwy 90 bridge over the Medina River and the BMA Irrigation Canal, that met the criteria and asked that the citizens partake in the survey, information provided. The survey would close May 31st.

Councilmember Lee stepped out of the meeting at 11:17 p.m.

g. Discussion and appropriate action on recording historic district with Medina County

HPO Selina Angel briefed the city council on meeting with the city attorney to get guidance on ways to provide information on designated historic properties in the city. Ms. Angel said she had created a website link to provide information on each historic property and the process associated with owning a historic property in Castroville for realtors. Ms. Angel said deed restrictions were not a good idea and all property owners would have to be contacted in the whole historic district if initiated. A suggestion was to change street signage to one color as a designation of the historic district.

Councilmember Lee returned to the meeting at 11:25 p.m.

h. Discuss and take appropriate action to replace the city council audio and video equipment

City Administrator Scott Dixon briefed the city council on receiving two bids for the replacement of the audio and video equipment. Mr. Dixon said the current system had been having technical and audio issues for the last several months and staff was directed to look at replacement options. Mr. Dixon said both quotes were in the packets for consideration – one from San Antonio Sound at \$32,170.00 and one from NBCP Communications System of San Antonio at \$49,981.94. Councilmember Lee recommended getting the internet issues fixed first, then look at upgrading. Councilmember Merz was in favor of replacing the current system. Councilmember King said many people watched/listened online and needed to have a good system. Councilmember Marchman felt a comparison of the two was necessary to make a good decision.

A motion was made by Councilmember King and duly seconded by Councilmember Merz to approve the proposal of \$32,170.00 submitted by San Antonio Sound for the replacement of the audio/video system. A vote was taken (2ayes: 2nays (Marchman, Lee) the vote was a tie. Mayor Schroeder voted nay. The motion failed.

Councilmember Marchman suggested some of the current equipment could be used and should have companies come before city council to give presentations. City Council members asked that since Councilmember Marchman had a background in sound systems to inspect the system, possibly met with the companies and report back.

X. STAFF REPORTS

City Council members may request a separate discussion or action on items contained within the submitted reports.

- a. Airport – Gas sales and Operations including revenues.
- b. City Secretary Monthly Report
- c. Community Development – UDO Timeline, March Permits, Board meetings, steps completed on Thoroughfare Plan, and Active Transportation Grant.
- d. Finance Report – General, Enterprise, Airport Funds and Municipal Court Report.
- e. Library – Member Statistics, Circulation Statistics, Summer Camps. - No monthly report.
- f. Parks & Rec – reservation report, maintenance work orders, Survey results, Pool Schedule, Memorial Tree & bench application, Park Rules update, and new grant opportunities Facilities.

- h. Police Department – updates on department including hiring, training, and grants. Animal Control and Code Compliance Activity Reports including open and closed cases.
- k. Public Works – work orders – electric, water, wastewater and gas, updates on AMI Meter Project, River Bluff Project and Country Village Lift Station.
- l. Tourism/Business Development – National Recognition of Walking Tour Campaign, City Communications, Event Promotion, Tourism promotions, Economic Development opportunities - No monthly report.

City Administrator Dixon briefed the city council on the staff reports speaking on the temporary closure of the city pool being for safety reasons and would be sending out a schedule.

Mayor Schroeder recessed the meeting to go into 11:51 p.m. to go into executive session.

XI. EXECUTIVE SESSION

- (1) Pursuant to the Texas Open Meetings Act, Chapter 551 of the Texas Government Code, Section 551.071 (entitled “Consultation with Attorney) and Texas Government Code Section 551.085 (entitled “Deliberation regarding Economic Development Negotiations”) the City Council may convene in executive session to receive advice from the City Attorney regarding the following:
 - a. **Approximately 6.5 acres in Medina County for future Right-of-Way**
- (2) Pursuant to the Texas Open Meetings Act, Chapter 551 of the Texas Local Government Code, Texas Government Code, Section 551.086, (entitled "Competitive Utility Matters") as the governing body of a public power utility, the city council will meet in closed session to discuss competitive matters:
 - a. **CPSE Disputed Charges and Fees**

Opened: 11:56 p.m.

Closed: 12:11 a.m.

XII. RECONVENE IN OPEN SESSION

Mayor Schroeder reconvened in open session at 12:14 a.m.

Mayor Schroeder noted Councilmember Lee left the meeting at 11:51p.m.

XIII. Consider possible action(s) resulting from items posted and legally discussed in Executive Session

No action was taken.

XIV. Discussion on Future Agenda Items

No items were discussed.

XV. ADJOURN

Mayor Schroeder adjourned the meeting at 12:15 a.m.

Mayor

ATTEST:

City Secretary