



Regular Council Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, May 21, 2024 at 6:30 PM
8301 Westview Drive, Houston, Texas 77055

1. CALL TO ORDER: Mayor Buesinger called to order the meeting at 6:30 P.M.

1.A. Invocation was given by Council Member Huber.

1.B. Pledge of Allegiance

1.C. PRESENT

Mayor Bob Buesinger
Council Member Mike Gordy
Council Member Justin Crawford
Mayor Pro Tem Andy Carey
Council Member Mark Huber
Council Member Kristi Cooper

Also Present were:

Attorney Bailey, Olson & Olson
Lieutenant Menchaca and Captain Lane, Spring Valley Police
Secretary Stephens

2. CITIZEN'S COMMENTS

Wallace Partridge, Glourie Drive, expressed a desire for improved coordination in future storm responses.

Cheryl Wolfe, Pine Chase Drive, emphasized the need for collection teams to handle tree debris more effectively, expressing frustration over the current lack of organized house-by-house collection.

3. REPORTS TO COUNCIL

3.A. Spring Valley Police Report

Lieutenant Menchaca reported 138 calls for service in April, 685 business checks, 53 public relations interactions, and 32 traffic stops. There's a pending death investigation awaiting ME results.

Captain Lane noted significant activity in the Villages, including road blockages for cleanup, appreciating citizen participation but also addressing complaints about blocked roadways, urging citizens to navigate around temporarily. He praised the quick cleanup response from Spring Valley and Hilshire compared to neighboring cities.

Councilmember Gordy commended the swift debris pickup by Harris County post-storm. Captain Lane highlighted a positive relationship with County Commissioner Ramsey that facilitated a quick response, including the use of a crane. Councilmember Gordy also mentioned encountering several helpful citizens clearing the roadways during this time.

3.B. Fire Commissioner's Report

Deputy Chief Witte mentioned that the department has been busy due to the recent storm, with two members still on light duty. They are hiring for a fire medic position and accepting applications for part-time dispatchers. Engine 2 is undergoing preventative maintenance, and ladder one needs extensive repairs after an impact from a stray vehicle tire.

Deputy Chief Witte's report discussed storm impacts, highlighting Hilshire Village's significant challenges with 135 storm-related calls. Alarm systems may trigger false alarms when power returns, but responses will be canceled upon confirmation of false alarms.

Mayor Buesinger noted the recent presentation of audited financials, showing a surplus for future capital items. The recommendation is to place the surplus and ambulance fund into an investment fund for future capital expenses, potentially reducing immediate capital expenses for the upcoming year and planning for long-term capital needs, including a pumper truck in 2027 and a ladder truck in 2032.

3.C. City Engineer's Report

Engineer Him said that Engineer Vasquez is displaced due to the storm but is attending the meeting virtually. He said that it has been business as usual with new and as-built plans.

Capital Infrastructure Projects:

Pine Chase Grove Water Meters: The focus is on designing underground utilities and erosion control measures for this project.

Hilshire Green Drive Red Line Design: The design work is currently underway and expected to be completed within the next 30 days.

Hickory Shadows Rehabilitation: This project is included in the budget for completion this year and may be combined with Hilshire Green Drive rehabilitation. Debt service numbers are being sought for funding, with plans to present them at the June meeting.

The Wirt Rd Safety Project involves preparing a plan package for submission to the City of Houston. It requires a 584 easement for the School of the Woods, and a metes and bounds proposal has been requested, with a budget not exceeding 5K for approval by Mayor Buesinger under his purchase power. This package will then be sent to the City of Houston for review and approval. The project's plan design is currently at 90% completion in response to comments, and the full design package is expected to be ready and submitted to the City of Houston by the end of this

week. Council Member Huber expressed concerns about potential staff cuts in the City of Houston impacting this project. Engineer Him reassured that this should not be a significant concern as the project is funded by Harris County, which presents a more substantial consideration.

Pavement Point Repairs: A purchase order has been issued, and Engineer Vasquez is collaborating with the contractors to schedule the repair work. Council Member Huber recommended postponing these repairs due to the road's condition and current traffic situation.

Lead Service Line Inventory: Contractor RJN conducted fieldwork last Monday, but encountered difficulties locating meters at 10 addresses. Additionally, 10 addresses had issues and were not inventoried. They are scheduled to return to locate these meters, but the process has been delayed by debris from the recent storm.

3.D. Building Official's Report

Secretary Stephens reported that the building reports from last month are included in the packet, noting that there are no outstanding items for discussion. She highlighted the significant impact of the recent storm, mentioning that its effects will be reflected in future reports as repairs for roofs, fences, tree removal, and related repairs are addressed. Secretary Stephens also mentioned that permit fees will be waived, but emphasized the importance of inspections for any work involving licensed trade professionals.

3.E. Mayor Buesinger's Report

Mayor Buesinger informed the Council about the Mayor's Emergency Guide provided by the Village Fire Department for the Villages. He mentioned completing 6 hours of FEMA training and suggested the Council update their training too. Additionally, he noted that the City issued a disaster declaration following the recommendation of the Village Fire Department Emergency Operations Center, aligning with other Memorial Villages. Mayor Buesinger also mentioned being in contact with Peyton Archie from Congressman Wesley Hunt's office to confirm the disaster declaration's delivery to the US President's desk and subsequent approval. Mayor Buesinger mentioned that during a declared disaster, one of the authorities granted is the ability to enforce a curfew. He noted receiving reports of suspicious individuals shortly after the power outage. He assured that the curfew would be lifted within the next few days as power is gradually restored. Commissioner Ramsey and his offices took part in coordinating debris collection across all Memorial Villages.

Council Member Cooper proposed sharing a basic emergency management plan with citizens to enhance awareness of the City's preparedness process. Captain Lane highlighted the importance of after-action reports for emergency situations, and Secretary Stephens confirmed she would prepare such a report. The Council discussed the need for coordinated citizen efforts, noting the significant response during and after the storm. They expressed concerns about potential city liability and the risks of inexperienced citizens using chainsaws in the city rights-of-way. Additionally, debris placed in drainage ditches was identified as a potential hazard

during significant rainfall. Captain Lane mentioned that chainsaw-certified officers are prepared to assist in life-threatening situations. The Council emphasized the necessity of coordinating available resources. Engineer Him explained that the streets are intentionally designed to facilitate water flow away from yards in case the ditches become overwhelmed.

3.F. City Secretary's Report:

City Secretary Stephens said that the complaint log is starting to show some of the effects of the storm. She said that there were some issues with garbage collection navigating around the debris piles, but those are being resolved.

3.G. City Treasurer's Report:

Secretary Stephens indicated that the second page of the HCAD Certified Estimates report included a comparison with last year's estimate. She mentioned that preliminary calculations for tax rates have been done, but the fiscal year 2025 Budget is not prepared for workshopping at this time.

4. CONSENT AGENDA

Motion made by Council Member Huber, Seconded by Council Member Gordy.

- 4.A. Approve Disbursements
- 4.B. Approve Minutes from the Regular Council Meeting
- 4.C. Approve Check Registers
- 4.D. Approve Proclamation for Police Week

Voting Yea: Council Member Gordy, Council Member Crawford, Mayor Pro Tem Carey, Council Member Huber, Council Member Cooper

The motion carried 5-0.

5. DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION

5.A. Approve Resolution 2024-259 appointing Mike Garofalo as the Fire Commissioner and appointing Mayor Buesinger as the alternate.

Motion made by Council Member Gordy, Seconded by Council Member Huber.

Mayor Buesinger acknowledged Mr. Garofalo's one and a quarter year of service as an alternate and praised his contributions to the commission, while Mr. Garofalo expressed his readiness to continue serving. Council Member Gordy thanked the Mayor for their leadership as the commissioner so far.

Voting Yea: Council Member Gordy, Council Member Crawford, Mayor Pro Tem Carey, Council Member Huber, Council Member Cooper

The motion carried 5-0.

5.B. Discussion and possible action to appoint a new member to the Board of Adjustments.

Motion made by Council Member Cooper, Seconded by Council Member Gordy.

Council Member Gordy mentioned speaking with candidate Schwarz, who is enthusiastic about the opportunity. Council Member Cooper praised alternate Brian Wilks' service and supported fulfilling his request to become a full member. The council asked for resumes from all candidates and sought recommendations from current Board Members.

No action taken.

5.C. Discussion and possible action to secure energy rates.

Motion made by Council Member Crawford, Seconded by Council Member Gordy.

The council discussed the minor savings of the 60 month versus lesser terms.

Mayor Gordy amended his motion to approve Hudson Energy for 60 months.

Voting Yea: Council Member Gordy, Council Member Crawford, Mayor Pro Tem Carey, Council Member Huber, Council Member Cooper

The motion carried 5-0.

5.D. Discussion and possible approval of Resolution 2024-260 prohibiting the carrying of a handgun into any public city meeting.

Motion made by Council Member Crawford, Seconded by Council Member Cooper.

The Council inquired about the necessity of a resolution, and Attorney Bailey confirmed that it is required. It was clarified that only police officers serving as security during public meetings are permitted to carry a gun.

Voting Yea: Council Member Gordy, Council Member Crawford, Mayor Pro Tem Carey, Council Member Huber, Council Member Cooper

The motion carried 5-0.

5.E. Discussion and possible action to allow an existing circular driveway to remain in the same size and location after new construction at 1201 Archley Drive in addition to a single access driveway to the garage. Hilshire Code of Ordinances Section 4.623 (Permitted Driveway and Pedestrian Access within Public Rights-of-Way).

Motion made by Council Member Huber, Seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Carey.

During the discussion, the Council considered the advantages of permitting additional parking to ease congestion on Archley and Ridgeley streets, referencing

previous approvals for corner lots in similar cases. Secretary Stephens noted that the builder, who is also the homeowner, intends to keep the circle driveway in its current shape and location but may make minor adjustments if needed.

Voting Yea: Council Member Gordy, Council Member Crawford, Mayor Pro Tem Carey, Council Member Huber, Council Member Cooper

The motion carried 5-0.

6. DISCUSSION

6.A. Discuss amendments to Hilshire Village Tree Ordinance #745.

Council Member Crawford raised residents' concerns about tree damage after the storm. Council Member Cooper showed interest in a Tree Board's opinions, which Secretary Stephens confirmed as part of the Tree City USA plan. Mayor Pro Tem Carey suggested promoting regular tree trimming and consulting on all city trees. Council Member Gordy pointed out problems with diseased trees falling. The Council agreed to defer this discussion to a future meeting for reviewing proposed language, considering recent storm damage to trees and the canopy.

7. FUTURE AGENDA TOPICS

2023 - 2024 Budget Workshop Calendar, Debt Planning

Council Member Huber proposed presenting a post-event report to citizens at a special meeting.

8. ADJOURNMENT

Motion made by Council Member Gordy, Seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Carey.

Voting Yea: Council Member Gordy, Council Member Crawford, Mayor Pro Tem Carey, Council Member Huber, Council Member Cooper

The motion carried 5-0.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:11 P.M.

Robert F. Buesinger, Mayor

ATTEST:

Cassie Stephens, City Secretary