



Regular Council Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, March 18, 2025 at 6:30 PM
8301 Westview Drive, Houston, Texas 77055

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

1.A. Mayor Buesinger gave the **Invocation**.

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: Attorney Scott Bounds, Olson & Olson, HDR Engineers Him and Moylan, Spring Valley Village Police Spriggs and Menchaca, Secretary Stephens, and Assistant Secretary Ray

2. CITIZEN'S COMMENTS None

3. REPORTS TO COUNCIL

3.A. Spring Valley Police Report

In February, there were 1,025 service calls, 827 business checks, and 82 house checks. There were 21 violations resulting in 49 citations.

On February 28th on Glourie Drive lawn equipment was reported stolen. Thanks to home security footage, the suspect vehicle was identified. Officers contacted the registered owner of the vehicle, who had rented it out. There was no Flock footage of the vehicle so it is believed they entered on foot. Although officers were unable to file charges due to insufficient evidence to prove who committed the theft, the stolen equipment was successfully recovered and returned to its owner.

Council Member Cooper asked for comparative data for crime statistics of the recent months and prior year.

3.B. Fire Commissioner's Report

Two personnel remain out due to injuries—one firefighter and one officer. The department is in the process of hiring three new firefighters who are completing their

required testing. Once onboarded, staffing will be at full capacity, which is expected to reduce overtime demands.

A new ladder truck has been ordered and is scheduled for delivery in August 2026. The purchase order was approved by all villages. The total cost is approximately \$2.3 million, but \$2 million was recovered through insurance after the previous apparatus was totaled. The insurance funds have been received and placed in a new interest-bearing account. A down payment has already been made, and the department was able to secure an earlier delivery date by moving up in the queue.

Engine 1 had a pump leak, which was repaired during its annual maintenance. Biannual maintenance is also being performed on the department's rescue equipment.

There were no major incidents in February. Hilshire Village experienced one small fire and two EMS calls, with an average response time of 5 minutes and 22 seconds.

The 2026 budget process is underway, in collaboration with the Budget Committee and the Fire Commission. Fire hydrant inspections are beginning for the year, and the deputy chief's new vehicle has been ordered for delivery later this year.

The next Fire Commission meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, March 26.

3.C. City Engineer's Report

For the drainage easement at **1307 Friarcreek Lane**, HDR completed drainage area calculations for the Friarcreek Subdivision to estimate flows and evaluate potential pipe or open channel improvements. Three preliminary options were presented: (1) installation of RCP pipe with a drop manhole at the outfall, (2) RCP pipe with rip-rap at the outfall, and (3) concrete channel lining. Exhibits, calculations, and existing condition photographs were included. The Council asked that another meeting be conducted with the neighboring property owners for their input.

At **1209 Pine Chase Drive**, HDR finalized drawings and a quote form for improvements including installation of a concrete headwall for 24-inch and 30-inch outfall pipes, regrading of the existing ditch, removal and replacement of deteriorated concrete slope paving, and mortar coating of recently stabilized concrete slope paving areas. Quotes have been requested from four contractors, and a recommendation will be brought before Council at the April 15, 2025, meeting.

Hilshire Green Paving, Drainage, and Utility Improvements remains ahead of schedule. 26 of 29 submittals and 2 of 3 RFIs have been reviewed. Throughout February and March 2025, the Contractor installed and tested new water lines, completed storm sewer system installation, performed the wet connection, and began pavement demolition on the eastbound lane. Pavement reconstruction and sanitary sewer manhole rehabilitation will begin shortly.

For the **Wirt Road Safety Project**, HDR received City of Houston final plan approval on March 11, 2025. Coordination is ongoing with The School of the Woods for easement dedication and with adjacent property owners regarding tree impacts. Harris County Precinct 3's Project Manager, Jason Hains, is now the primary contact. HDR is awaiting final steps from the County to proceed with construction.

HDR completed a 30% design set for the **Hickory Shadows Paving, Drainage, and Water Line Improvements Project** on March 13, 2025, including plans for paving, drainage, water lines, traffic control, and SWPPP. HDR is also coordinating tree protection plan design with C.N. Koehl Urban Forestry. Technical specifications are approximately 85% complete.

For the **Pine Chase Grove Water Meters**, HDR awaits confirmation from City of Houston regarding scheduling trench and electrical work, vault painting, hatch locks, and safety bumpers. Once the schedule is confirmed, HDR will issue the Notice to Proceed to Infrastructure Construction Services (ICS), which was awarded the contract in January.

In regard to **City-Wide Ditch Cleaning**, HDR submitted exhibits and photographs for City review prior to soliciting contractor proposals. City Staff has returned additional addresses for review and inclusion.

As for the **City-Wide No Parking Study**, HDR met with City Staff on March 7, 2025, to discuss four key No Parking areas: Ridgeley Drive at Wirt Road, Ridgeley Drive at Westview Drive, Glourie Drive at Westview Drive, and the Ridgeley Curve between Mallie Court and Guinea Drive. Recommendations included installing dual signs per side, evaluating the Ridgeley Curve sight triangle, and conversion of the Ridgeley Drive/Burkart Road intersection to a four-way stop. HDR clarified that painted No Parking stripes are unenforceable by police.

3.D. Building Official's Report

Secretary Stephens said that there were 10 permits issued and 29 inspections performed in March.

3.E. Mayor Buesinger's Report

Mayor Buesinger announced the Hilshire Village Civic Club Spring Event on April 13th in the Pine Chase Grove cul-de-sac.

3.F. City Secretary's Report:

The City has received five submittals for IT services which have been sent to the Council for review. An evaluation sheet was distributed for City Council to rate the submissions and request additional details if needed, with a final decision aimed for the April Council Meeting.

Regarding the 89th Legislature, Senate Bill 673 seeks to prevent municipalities from prohibiting accessory dwelling units (ADUs) on residential lots and would reduce side and rear setbacks to five feet. The City has drafted and sent letters of

opposition to our House and Senate representatives, the bill's author, and the Senate Local Government Committee. Some Memorial-area colleagues also testified against the bill in Austin. This bill, which has passed the committee, would make certain ordinances unenforceable, such as the current restriction limiting lots to one dwelling unit and the current side and rear setbacks in Hilshire Village. The Texas Municipal League (TML) has also opposed this bill and others, and they provide weekly Legislative Updates on key bills affecting cities.

3.G. City Treasurer's Report (Secretary Stephens)

City Secretary Stephens presented the monthly Treasurer's Report in a new format, providing additional details. She confirmed that the Quarterly Report will continue to be presented in its traditional format, with added historical context for more comprehensive quarterly reporting.

4. CONSENT AGENDA

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

- 4.A. Approve Disbursements
- 4.B. Approve Minutes from the Regular Council Meeting February 18, 2025
- 4.C. Approve February 2025 Check Registers
- 4.D. Approve Proclamation for the Hilshire Village Civic Club Spring Event April 13, 2025

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. Discussion and possible approval to Experts Underground Solutions Invoice for Construction Services provided to the City for the Hilshire Green Paving, Drainage & Utility Improvements Project, Invoice #1 in the amount of \$234,347.90.**

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

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 approve City of Hilshire Village Ordinance # 845-2025 cancelling the General Election May 3, 2025.**

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

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

The motion carried 5-0.

5.C. Discussion and possible action to approve City of Hilshire Village Resolution # 2025-272 Suspending the April 19, 2025, Effective Date of CenterPoint Energy's Proposed Interim GRIP Rate Adjustments.

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

City Secretary Stephens said that this only delays a cost increase, we do not have authority to deny it altogether.

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 action to make changes to the utility billing schedule.

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

Cathy Faulke of Inframark addressed the City Council to explain an error that occurred in the utility billing cycle for the first quarter of 2024. She stated that the City of Hilshire Village is the only client Inframark serves on a bi-monthly billing schedule, whereas all other clients are billed monthly. When Inframark transitioned to a new dashboard system for meter readings, the city's account was mistakenly set to align with a monthly billing cycle. This caused a misalignment in the city's billing schedule and resulted in a shortened billing period. Ms. Faulke acknowledged the mistake and discussed potential solutions with City Secretary Stephens, including gradually adding days to future billing cycles to correct the schedule. She also raised the option of switching to monthly billing, explaining that while it is slightly more expensive, it allows for earlier detection of leaks and usage issues, and accelerates the city's receipt of water revenue.

Ms. Faulke further noted that monthly reading and billing could provide the city with more current water usage data. She emphasized that Inframark is willing to proceed according to the city's preference and apologized for the error. The Council discussed the number of meter readings processed annually, the potential benefits of switching to monthly billing, and the city's long-standing interest in upgrading to smart meters. Although implementing smart meter infrastructure would involve a significant upfront investment, Ms. Faulke mentioned that financing options are available and that installation could be completed by the manufacturer or a third-party provider. Smart meters offer advantages such as more accurate readings and early leak detection, although she noted that customer participation in alert programs tends to be low. She added that Inframark does monitor alerts for other clients and proactively contacts customers when anomalies are detected.

Janet Wourms, a resident of Burkhart Road, expressed concern about the shortened billing cycle, stating that the most recent billing period was only 45 days instead of the typical 59 to 63 days, which she substantiated with billing records dating back to 2014. She also noted that the rate increase went into effect on October 1, which fell in the middle of the billing cycle, further compounding the issue.

Inframark proposed a revised reading schedule for the remainder of the year, with a staggered adjustment intended to gradually return the city to the correct bi-monthly billing cadence. Ms. Faulke also discussed the possibility of aligning billing due dates with even months to simplify the process. She concluded by stating that the proposed corrections and alternatives were presented for the Council and Mayor to determine what best serves the city and its residents.

The Council discussed that, unless the city transitions to monthly billing, similar issues could recur in future years, particularly with mid-cycle rate changes that take effect annually on October 1.

The Council chose not to take formal action at this time and directed City Staff to research financing options and costs associated with replacing existing meters with smart meters. City Secretary Stephens noted that when the ordinance is written for the next utility rate change, if monthly billing is not already in effect, the ordinance can specify that the new rate will apply “at the start of the first billing cycle after October 1.”

5.E. Discussion and possible action to consider proposals for traffic engineering study.

The Council discussed concerns regarding no parking zones and visibility issues at the intersections of Mallie Court and Ridgeley, as well as Burkhart Road and Ridgeley. City Secretary Stephens shared that she reached out to a traffic engineer who works with Bunker Hill to get a general sense of the scope and cost of a traffic study. The engineer advised that a full traffic study might be too comprehensive for a city of this size and suggested that the City select specific locations and determine what kind of data would be most helpful.

Engineer Him recommended removing the parking pad on the Ridgeley Curve at Mallie as a first step. Council and staff discussed that printed pavement markings are not enforceable. Enforcement requires proper no parking signage that meets legal standards: signs must be installed on separate posts and cannot be mounted on stop signs or speed limit signs. Some signs may need to be relocated to comply with spacing requirements, such as those currently too close to driveways or not placed at appropriate intervals.

Visibility concerns at Burkhart and Ridgeley were discussed, including that southbound drivers on Ridgeley may not see the proposed stop sign due to overgrown vegetation. The Council discussed the possibility of installing a three-way stop at Mallie Court as well.

Council acknowledged that more thoughtful planning was needed for traffic and parking solutions, noting that previous signage installations may not have been fully effective. Some residents and construction crews continue to park in restricted areas, complicating enforcement. The curve at Ridgeley remains a key area of concern due to parked vehicles and limited visibility. The Council discussed that trimming vegetation as well as signage relocation and additional traffic control devices should be considered.

HDR will develop a site plan recommendation and consider a sight triangle evaluation to improve visibility at intersections. The goal is to prevent vehicles from obstructing sightlines at intersections and curves, thereby reducing near-collisions.

6. FUTURE AGENDA TOPICS

Council plans to revisit traffic and street parking safety concerns and will continue to closely monitor proposed state legislation that may negatively impact the City.

7. ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Buesinger adjourned the meeting at 8:11 PM.

Robert F. Buesinger, Mayor

ATTEST:

Cassie Stephens, City Secretary