



AGENDA MEMO

Business of the City Council City of Sweeny, Texas

Meeting Date	08.07.2024	Agenda Items	
Approved by City Manager	Yes	Presenter(s)	Lindsay Koskiniemi, City Manager
Reviewed by City Attorney	No	Department	Permitting
Subject	Discussion and possible action on granting a variance Section 92.01 of the Sweeny Code of Ordinances to allow burning of debris along Stevenson Slough, the natural drainage ditch, at the Prayer Garden.		
Council Strategic Goals	2) Infrastructure Investment – Drainage infrastructure improvement.		
Attachments / Supporting documents	Email correspondence between Pastor W. Rayburn and City Manager.		
Financial Information	Expenditure Required:	N/A	
	Amount Budgeted:	N/A	
	Account Number:		
	Additional Appropriation Required:		
	Additional Account Number:		

Executive Summary

Pursuant to Chapter 92 §92.01 of the City of Sweeny Code of Ordinances, Outdoor Burning of Waste; Combustible Material, “It shall be unlawful for any person, firm, or corporation to knowingly and intentionally burn outdoors within the corporate city limits, any waste or any combustible material in violation of any of the rules and regulations of the State Natural Resource Conservation Commission, as the rules and regulations are adopted by the Commission pursuant to the provisions of the Clear Air Act of the state.”

While Hurricane Beryl debris clean up is substantially complete, there remains large piles of organic debris at the Prayer Garden owned by the First Baptist Church, along Stevenson Slough, the City’s natural drainage system. The concern is that with heavy rainfall, the debris could block the drainage and cause storm water to back up.

This variance request is made to give the option of burning the debris in place, because the locations of the piles are likely inaccessible with heavy equipment.

In discussing the strategy for clearing the debris from the slough at the Prayer Garden with Pastor Rayburn, the church parishioners are amenable to requesting a burn variance from City Council but are not able to maintain fire watch and have requested assistance from the City and / or Sweeny Fire and Rescue.

Recommended Action

Staff recommends approving a variance to Section 92.01 of the City’s Code of Ordinances to allow burning of debris if piles are inaccessible with heavy equipment. If burning is the only way to remove the debris, staff will work with other entities to help with fire watch.