

# Regular Council Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, December 20, 2022, at 6:30 PM  
8301 Westview Drive, Houston, Texas 77055

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**This meeting was held in person with remote attendees present.**

**1. CALL TO ORDER** Mayor Buesinger called to order the Regular Council Meeting at 6:31 P.M.

1.A. Mayor Pro Tem Maddock gave the **Invocation**.

1.B. **Pledge of Allegiance**

1.C. **PRESENT**

Mayor Bob Buesinger  
Council Member Mike Gordy  
Council Member Justin Crawford  
Council Member Andy Carey  
Mayor Pro Tem Paul Maddock

**ABSENT**

Council Member David Schwarz

Also Present Were: City Attorney Bounds, Olson & Olson, City Engineer Him, City Engineer Vasquez, HDR Engineering, Spring Valley Police Chief Schulze, Captain Lane, City Administrator Blevins, City Secretary Stephens, and City Clerk Ray.

**2. CITIZEN'S COMMENTS**

**Ron Presswood, Burkhart Road**, said that Fire Chief Foster requested redaction of the statements made against him and asked for justification for Mayor Buesinger's actions as Fire Commission Chair.

**Liz Swain, Bunker Hill**, stated, that she has questions about the actions against the Fire Chief.

**Zandra Anderson, Mallie Court**, said that she has heard support for the Fire Chief from those that work with him and did not understand why his termination was sought.

**Nancy Friedman Taub, Pine Chase Grove**, stated that she sent emails to the Council asking for an explanation of the actions against Chief Foster but had not received a response. She said the service of the Village Fire Department has been exemplary. She read a petition aloud which included the names of 31 residents and verbally added five (5) more names.

**Kay Morgan, Pine Creek Lane**, said that she also didn't understand the actions against Chief Foster and stated that she would like her name to be added to the list on the petition. An audience member stated that she was already included.

**Regina Giovannini, Glourie Drive**, thanked the Council for their service on the behalf of the citizens. She said that she does not know of any reasons for the Fire Chief to be terminated and said that it appears that lack of communication has led to misunderstandings, personal animosity, and suspicion. She asked for an explanation of decisions before further action is taken.

**Cheryl Wolfe, Pine Chase Drive**, said that a previous serving commissioner was removed due to a lack of transparency and that since then she has not seen improved communication or transparency.

### **3. REPORTS TO COUNCIL**

3.A. **Police Report:** Captain Lane said that there were 286 calls for service in November, 163 being business checks, 88 public relations, and 11 traffic violations.

Captain Lane stated that the three (3) additional Flock license plate reader camera installation was a success; all are functional. He also said that the City of Houston has installed a camera at Wirt Road and I-10 which Spring Valley is also connected to. Council Member Crawford asked if all of the Memorial Villages had Flock cameras installed, and Captain Lane confirmed, "yes".

Captain Lane said that in preparation for the cold weather, homeowners should secure their sheds and outdoor buildings.

3.B. **Building Official Report:** There were no outstanding items to report.

3.C. **Engineer Report:** Engineer Vasquez said that they continue to review new construction plans. He stated that the **1209 Pine Chase Drive** inspection resulted in identifying some saplings and dead trees for removal.

Engineer Him stated that the **Wirt Road Safety Project** is still under review by the City of Houston and Harris County. He said that he has been communicating with Mr. Laguna on the design of the sidewalk and the need for updated utility surveys. Engineer Him said that Harris County Commission did not put the item on the November agenda, but had responded that they hoped to include it in the December meeting agenda.

Councilmember Carey asked about the asphalt patch on **Pine Creek Lane**. Engineer Him said that the patch will be redone after the construction at 12 Pine Creek Lane is complete, limiting the amount of heavy equipment driving over it.

**Robert Byrne, Bridle Spur Lane**, asked about the status of the erosion control project at 1310 Ridgeley Drive as he believes it to be complete and is concerned about the drainage infrastructure. Engineer Vasquez said that he will follow up with the contractor.



## **4. DISCUSSION**

### **4.A. Discussion of Tree Ordinance Limitations**

City Administrator Blevins said that she would like for the Council to review the Tree Ordinance. She stated that there are a lot of calls from citizens and council members asking if their neighbor has a permit to remove a tree and why it is being cut down. Administrator Blevins said that she appreciates the awareness of neighbors and wants to make sure that the ordinance protects the trees in the City.

Administrator Blevins said that the \$25 fee for a tree removal permit does not cover the cost of the arborist to inspect after removal. She stated that the City relies on the property owner to report the number of trees remaining after removal. Administrator Blevins said that for new homes there are inspections required before and after construction.

### **4.B. Discussion of Artificial Turf Applications in Front Yard**

Administrator Blevins said that the City discourages property owners from installing artificial turf in the front yard, but there is no ordinance prohibiting it. She stated that the turf would not be allowed in the right-of-way.

Engineer Him said that the permeability of the artificial turf is dependent on the base material and if a waterproofing layer was installed.

Council Member Gordy said that standards should be developed for backyard applications as well.

### **4.C. Discussion of the delayed lighting renovation project for the city hall building budgeted in FYE 22 and its effect on the FYE 23 Budget**

City Administrator Blevins said that the order for the light fixtures as part of the City Hall interior renovation has been delayed but that the carpeting and painting have been completed. Administrator Blevins said that she spoke with the City Auditor and was told that the expense could not be placed in Accounts Payable and therefore would not be in FYE 2022. She stated that the recommendation was to allow the leftover funds to flow into the fund balance and then transfer from there in FYE 2023. The lighting upgrade leftover funds were \$23,911.

## **5. DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION**

### **5.A. Discussion and Possible Approval of the City of Hilshire Village, Texas Ordinance Number 827-2022 providing for the holding of a General Election on May 6, 2023**

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

Administrator Blevins said the election is for council member positions three (3), four (4), and five (5).

**Nancy Friedman Taub, Pine Chase Drive**, asked for the candidate names to be posted on the City's website.

**Voting Yea: Council Member Gordy, Council Member Crawford, Council Member Carey, Mayor Pro Tem Maddock**

**The motion carried 4-0.**

**5.B. Discussion and Possible Approval of a payment plan to the Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts for sales taxes received erroneously**

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

Administrator Blevins said that a Hilshire Village citizen paid \$21,596.64 of sales tax to Hilshire Village which should have been paid to the City of Houston. She said Hilshire Village has to pay that money back but there is an option for installments of \$459 per month. She stated that the City is already engaged in a payment plan for undue sales tax from another entity with a remaining balance due of \$2,931.53.

**Voting Yea: Council Member Gordy, Council Member Crawford, Council Member Carey, Mayor Pro Tem Maddock**

**Motion carried 4-0.**

**5.C. Discussion and possible approval of a Village Fire Department Budget Transfer or Amendment to cover overtime for personnel for an emergency that might arise between now and December 31, 2022.**

Mayor Buesinger said that there is no action necessary on this agenda item. He stated that the Fire Commission was able to schedule an emergency meeting and had representation from each member city. Mayor Buesinger said that the commissioners approved a transfer of \$20,000 from the Salaries and Healthcare Fund to cover overtime expenses.

**6. CLOSED EXECUTIVE SESSION:** The Council did not convene into an executive session.

**7. REPORTS TO COUNCIL**

**7.A. Fire Commissioner's Report:** Mayor Buesinger said that the department is fully staffed and Fire Captain B. Croft is actively training with Fire Marshal Kattner. He stated that two (2) replacement ambulance chassis have been ordered and delivery is expected mid to late spring.

Mayor Buesinger said that the contractor has taken responsibility for the incorrect installation of the fire station roof. He stated that the roof will be replaced in sections to limit operational disruptions, and the project will not start until all materials have been received.



Mayor Buesinger stated that the commission approved a coating to be applied to the leaking annex roof including caulking around the windows to cost \$20,000.

Mayor Buesinger said that ambulance wait times are trending down, and the department has data on the area hospitals' patient admit time.

Mayor Buesinger said the next fire commission meeting is on January 25, 2023.

There were comments and questions from the audience regarding the Village Fire Department which were not discussed publicly per advice by Attorney Bounds.

- 7.B. **Mayor Buesinger's Report:** Mayor Buesinger thanked the City Council for their volunteered time and dedication.
- 7.C. **City Administrator's Report:** Administrator Blevins said that there is an additional invoice to be added to the Consent Agenda, it is from HDR Engineering and she reminded them of the deadline for council agendas.

Administrator Blevins stated that the **Lift Station Generator** will have the meter installed tomorrow by CenterPoint and should be functional before the freeze. Council Member Gordy said that he thinks there is room for a sliding gate to protect the equipment while allowing easy maintenance access. Engineer Him said that he would confer with colleagues but believes there needs to be sufficient clearance between the equipment and fencing for airflow.

- 7.D. **City Treasurer's Report:** Administrator Blevins provided the Council with check registers. There were no comments or questions.

## **8. CONSENT AGENDA**

**Motion made by Mayor Pro Tem Maddock, Seconded by Council Member Crawford.**

- 8.A. Disbursements
- 8.B. Minutes from the Regular Council Meeting, November 15, 2022
- 8.C. Check Registers

**Voting Yea: Council Member Gordy, Council Member Crawford, Council Member Carey, Mayor Pro Tem Maddock**

**Motion carried 4-0.**

## **9. ADDITIONAL COUNCIL COMMENTS:** None

**10. FUTURE AGENDA TOPICS:** Tree Ordinance, Solar Panels, Artificial Turf, Playground Equipment, CenterPoint Street Light LED Upgrade.

## **11. ANNOUNCEMENTS**

11.A. **2023 Hilshire Village Holiday Schedule:** Secretary Stephens said that if a holiday falls on the weekend, then the City will observe the nearest adjacent weekday.

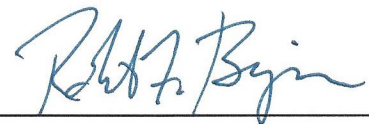
**12. ADJOURNMENT**

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

**Voting Yea: Council Member Gordy, Council Member Crawford, Council Member Carey, Mayor Pro Tem Maddock**

**Motion carried 4-0.**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:03 P.M.



Robert F. Buesinger, Mayor

ATTEST:



Cassie Stephens, City Secretary