

**RICHLAND HILLS CITY COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING
MARCH 22, 2021
MINUTES**

Roll Call:

Council present

Edward Lopez, Mayor
Douglas Knowlton, Place 1
Stacey L. Morse, Place 2
Curtis A Bergthold, Mayor Pro Tem
Javier Alvarez, Place 4
Athena Campbell, Place 5

Council present via Zoom

Staff present

Candice Edmondson, City Manager
Cathy Bourg, City Secretary

Staff present via Zoom

Betsy Elam, City Attorney

The Work Session and Regular Session is open to the public and citizens are welcome to attend. However, due to the current Coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak in our area and in an effort to abide by social distancing recommendations, we encourage citizens wishing to participate in the meeting to email your comment to City Secretary Cathy Bourg at cbourg@richlandhills.com by 5:00 p.m. on Monday, March 22nd. Your comment will be read aloud during Item 1B *Citizen Appearances/Public Comments*. If you would like to join and participate in the meeting by video conference or phone, you may do so via the following options:

- **Online via Zoom:** Go to zoom.us, Join a Meeting, and enter Meeting ID 816 1607 7077 and the host will allow you to enter the virtual meeting. The host will ask you what item you would like to speak on, and you will be called upon when that item is presented to address the City Council.
- **By Phone:** Please call (346) 248-7799 and enter Meeting ID 816 1607 7077 and provide your name and address. The host will ask you what item you would like to speak on, and you will be called upon when that item is presented to address the City Council.

CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION – 6:00 PM

1. **Executive Session: Pursuant to the Open Meetings Act, Chapter 551, Texas Government Code, Sec. 551.071, Sec. 551.072, Sec. 551.073, Sec. 551.074, Sec. 551.076, Sec. 551.087 and Sec. 418.0183 (f) and 418.106 (d) & (e) of the Texas Government Code (Texas Disaster Act). Refer to posted list attached hereto and incorporated herein.**

None

2. Discuss Tarrant County 2021 Transportation Bond Program

Scott Mitchell, Director of Neighborhood Services presented the Tarrant County 2021 Transportation Bond Program. The Tarrant County Commissioners Court is planning to call a \$400 million Transportation Bond Program in November to fund regional transportation projects. With voter approval, the program will increase mobility, reduce congestion, enhance safety and improve connectivity. Bonds will only be issued if the County has the capacity to repay the bonds without a tax rate increase. It is the goal of the Program to be open to a broad range of projects across the county and to encourage participation from a broad range of public agencies. Priority funding will be given to “shovel ready” projects that are fully funded and can begin construction within five years from the date the bond election is approved.

The Program will be divided into three categories:

1. \$200 million for regional transportation projects submitted to the Commissioners Court for evaluation. These projects will need to be “shovel ready” within 5 years and will require a 50% cost share match from sponsoring agencies. Proposals are due to the County by April 16, 2021 for evaluation by a committee appointed by the Commissioners.
2. \$15 million for each Commissioner for discretionary spending in their precincts. The entire Court must approve the projects prior to release of funds. Local match is preferred but not required.
3. \$125 million for Countywide initiatives in conjunction with regional agencies (TXDOT, NCTCOG, etc.) as approved by the Tarrant County Office of Transportation Services. Some may be allocated to safe-routes-to-school and trail projects.

Staff, along with our city engineer, have evaluated the program criteria and recommend proposing three projects for the bond program.

1. Reconstruction of Glenview Drive from the east city limit with Hurst to Blvd. 26. This would involve pavement reconstruction, new curb and gutter, drainage improvement and new signalization.
2. Reconstruction of Booth Calloway from Glenview Drive to threshold of the new intersection as developed by TXDOT at Baker Blvd. / Loop 820. Would include pavement reconstruction, new curb and gutter, drainage improvements.
3. Reconstruction of Midway Road from Big Fossil Creek to Handley Ederville Road. This would include expansion to include a center turn lane, pavement reconstruction from asphalt to concrete, curb and gutter and drainage improvements.

Project proposals must include a City Council resolution supporting the projects and the funding match, along with a funding plan and conceptual drawings. The drawings and conceptual plans are currently being developed by Halff Engineering and future funding

can be allocated from the Street Improvements Fund. Staff will be bringing a resolution to City Council for consideration at the April 12th Council meeting.

All three proposed projects have both local and regional impact on transportation and economic development. Staff is discussing partnership opportunities with our adjacent cities to improve more of these roadways and share costs. Even if only a single project is approved by the County, it will lead to improved transportation infrastructure with substantial savings to the city versus the full cost of the projects.

Mayor Lopez read questions submitted by email from John Skier, 7016 Park Place Dr. - There is a lot of discussion around the need for street repairs, so I was looking for the master plan and the state of progress. Is the plan posted? What progress have we made and what progress will we likely see in 2021?

Scott Mitchell, Director of Neighborhood Services responded that a formal transportation master plan does not exist. The street projects are based on our pavement management plan and water/wastewater evaluation plan. This is what staff builds its recommendation from each year in conjunction with the funding.

3. Discuss Aquatics Feasibility Study Program Options

George Deines with Counsilman-Hunsaker presented the aquatics feasibility study program options and the associated cost estimates for each concept. Based on feedback received from the community survey, Counsilman-Hunsaker developed four conceptual program options – two indoor-only options, one indoor/outdoor option and one outdoor-only option. The options for an addition and the project cost have been studied that include the following:

- Indoor Lap + Program \$6.84M
- Indoor Lap + Leisure \$7.50M
- Indoor Lap + Outdoor Leisure \$7.48M
- Outdoor Lap + Leisure \$4.68M

Mr. Deines presented a direct facility expense budget for each option as well as a revenue summary and a revenue/expense summary.

Council asked questions and discussed the parking issues and the current splash pad.

Jim Schibel, 3101 Crites spoke regarding parking and partnering with North Richland Hills.

Mayor Lopez read questions/comments submitted by email from Cecil Lanter, 7133 Hovenkamp Ave. - Of the two hundred and fifty-four study responses that were received regarding the proposed Aquatics Feasibility center just how were residents from citizens of Richland Hills? Honestly, I never saw anything about this study. Membership to the Link is open to both residents and nonresidents so even those members that were for the project may not be residents. We residents are already carrying the load of paying for the Link and funding its current operational shortfall through our property taxes.

If Counsilman-Hunsaker can pay for this project out of his own pocket even then I would be completely against this as the additional staffing would be a forever cost to us taxpayers. (and please do not say no additional staffing would be required as that is lie) If there is a huge pile of money laying around how about doing some of the long neglected deferred millions of dollars of street maintenance? Or pay off some bonds that were issued for projects such as the Drainage Bonds that only the water meter holders are paying, who I guess will pay for the water in this if built aquatic center as there are not any water meters on city buildings.

G.W. Estep, 6868 Hardisty street asked if the outdoor pool would be heated; what number of months would they be useful and the usage rate of lap pools?

4. Discuss items and presentations listed on tonight's City Council Agenda.

Candice Edmondson, City Manager presented the following agenda item:

4A. Consider Resolution 535-21 amending City Council Rules of Procedure

Resolution 535-21 proposes an amendment to the City Council Rules of Procedure designating City Council meetings as campaign free zones. Comments made during City Council meetings may not contain campaign messages for or against the election of any candidate. Section 255.003 of the Texas Election Code expressly prohibits the expenditure of city funds for political advertising. Resolution 535-21 sites rulings from the Texas Ethics Commission that determines the spending of public funds includes use of a political subdivision's resources including employees' work time, facilities, and equipment.

Council discussed including ballot measures to the amendment and asked the City Attorney to speak regarding adding the language to the Resolution.

Due to an audio issue, Mayor Lopez called for a break at 7:00 p.m.

REGULAR SESSION – Mayor Lopez Called to Order – Time 7:05 p.m.

Invocation – Councilmember Knowlton

1. PRESENTATIONS

A. Employee Service Award

Mayor Lopez presented a 5-year Service Award to Jeff Stow, Fire Captain with the Richland Hills Fire Department.

Motion: Motion was made by Councilmember Bergthold and seconded by Councilmember Knowlton to move item 4A to follow item 1A under presentations.

Motion carried by a vote of 5-0.

Betsy Elam, City Attorney addressed the Council's request to include both a candidate and a ballot measure to the amendment to the City Council Rules of Procedure regarding designating City Council meetings as campaign free zones. The analysis for a measure is very similar to that of candidates. While comments for or against the election of any candidate is an inappropriate use of city facilities, a proposition or measure discussion can be informational/factual and not for or against. The City Attorney will include language that will preclude advocating for or against a measure but allow for actual discussion.

Travis Malone, 2641 Mimosa Park Dr. spoke in favor of the proposed Resolution and for adding the measure language.

Motion: Motion was made by Councilmember Knowlton and seconded by Councilmember Campbell to approve Resolution 535-21 amending City Council Rules of Procedure.

Motion carried by a vote of 5-0.

B. Citizen Appearances/Public Comments

Citizen comments emailed to Cathy Bourg (cbourg@richlandhills.com) on an item either listed on this agenda or not listed on this agenda will be heard at this time. Citizens in attendance at the meeting who have signed a card to speak to the City Council will also be heard at this time. In compliance with the Texas Open Meetings Act, unless the subject matter of the presentation is on the agenda, the city staff and City Council members are prevented from discussion of the subject and may respond only with statements of factual information or existing city policy. Public comment will not be taken on items that the Council has previously considered in a public hearing.

Mayor Lopez read questions/comments submitted by email from John Skier, 7016 Park Place Dr. - I'd like to thank the Mayor and Council for the newly announced communication system. It's a much needed and welcomed addition. The Mayor's announcement suggests it will be routinely used to inform citizens of unexpected events. I am wondering if it will also be exercised routinely perhaps in conjunction with the monthly siren test to provide a known event citizens can use to validate they are registered correctly. Something like "Richland Hills will be testing Sirens at 1pm today" or "Richland Hills 1PM Siren test has been cancelled". I've received notice from the Link of a new partnership with "Performance Experience" a review of the website has me wondering if the city has a to be announced focus on bringing youth into the city. I ask this because Performance Experience appears to have a laser focus on Youth and getting them sports scholarships. While I fully support a youth program, I'm concerned the hard-fought gains we have made with adult, senior exercise programs are soon to be lost. I did not see Silver Sneakers in the materials, nor did I see a single Bio with a focus on Adult or Senior training. Can you provide insight into how Performance Experience will be addressing the needs of the adult population? I'd also welcome insight into the price increases that

appear to be coming with this change. Mr. Skier was present via Zoom and clarified his questions and comments.

Stacy Reddy, 7012 Hardisty Street spoke regarding the Nixle System and asked how residents that have a landline and do not have a mobile device can use the service? She would like to see more documentation regarding how residents use the system if they do not have a mobile device. Ms. Reddy complimented the city for having the Nixle System directions in Spanish and English and for continuing the bilingual outreach.

CONSENT AGENDA

2A. Approve minutes from the March 8, 2021 City Council Regular Meeting

Motion: Motion was made by Councilmember Campbell and seconded by Councilmember Knowlton to approve the consent agenda.

Motion carried by a vote of 5-0.

PUBLIC HEARINGS, MEETINGS, AND OTHER RELATED ITEMS

3A. None

ORDINANCES & RESOLUTIONS AND OTHER RELATED ITEMS

4A. Consider Resolution 535-21 amending City Council Rules of Procedure

Item was discussed during the Work Session under item 4 and was moved up in the agenda to follow item 1A under presentations.

CONTRACTS, AGREEMENTS, BID AWARDS AND OTHER RELATED ITEMS

5A. None

OTHER ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION

6A. None

REPORTS & DISCUSSIONS

7A. Fire Station Project Update

Russel Shelley, Fire Chief presented a construction update on the Fire Station Project.

Recent Progress

- The roof is complete over the truck bays
- Exterior framing nearing completion in living quarters

- Interior framing at 70%
- HVAC, Plumbing, and Electrical nearing rough in completion
- Fire sprinklers roughed in

Next Steps (April)

- Finish tower framing
- Roof over living quarters
- Install front approach and mezzanine concrete
- Start drywall
- Continue MEP work

Project Budget

- The pay application for February totaled: \$396,812
- To date, we have expended \$2,275,249
- This is 41.8% of the Guaranteed Maximum Price of \$5,445,843

Chief Shelley showed drone footage of the site provided by Steele & Freeman.

7B. Police Station Project Update

Kim Sylvester, Police Chief provided a construction update on the Police Station Project.

Current Progress

- About half of building has been textured
- Above ceiling inspection this week with ceiling tiles being installed next
- Flooring will be start in the next couple of weeks
- Millwork being delivered soon
- Preliminary date of May 4, 2021 for building turn-over

Project Funds Paid

- \$35,982.43 on 11-16-2020
- \$36,835.82 on 12-14-2020
- \$145,334.65 on 01-25-2021
- \$95,152.46 on 02-08-2021
- \$102,766.97 on 03-22-2021

7C. Animal Services Center Improvements

Kim Sylvester, Police Chief provided an update on the Animal Services Center improvements. City Council approved \$20, 000.00 in FY 2021 to be used for improvements for the Animal Services Center. The construction will be completed by AllPro acting under Locke Construction.

- Kitchen Improvements
 - Replace upper and lower cabinets
 - Install 8 foot bar counter with upper cabinet

- Demo FRP on wall, tape, bed, texture and paint
 - Install backsplash behind sink
 - Demo current tub and euthanasia table
- Sally Port/Euthanasia Room Improvements
 - Relocate washer and dryer into kitchen
 - Install customer proved bathtub and create drain

7D. Hike and Bike Trail Project Update

Jason Brown, Director of Parks and Recreation provided an update on the Hike and Bike Trail Project. Cole Construction has excavated from Glenview Dr south to Latham on the Oncor Easement. Lime has been added from Glenview to Hardisty and they will continue that process this week once rain has subsided. Concrete for the Dogwood sidewalk has been poured. On Glenview the sidewalk is being framed to get ready for pouring concrete.

7E. February Department Reports

Candice Edmondson, City Manager highlighted the following February Department Reports:

- Library – AARP Tax Prep started
- Fire Department – Chief Shelley gave a report on the February 25th fire at Advanced Foam Recycling and City Manager Edmondson thanked all local agencies that responded including the Tarrant Appraisal District for their support.
- Police Department – Recruit Anthony Pratt graduated from the Police Academy and is now in field training. Officer Velazquez was Sworn in as a Certified Officer and is now in field training.
- Public Works – A significant amount of man hours spent addressing water issues.
- Parks and Recreation – Programs continue to grow. Pickleball Tournament to be held in April. Entering into an agreement with Performance Experience. Hippity-Hop Car Stop is Saturday, March 27th. Monument sign at the corner of Baker and Matthews in the works.

COMMUNITY INTEREST ITEMS

- Hippity Hop Car Stop - Saturday, March 27, 9 AM – 11:30 AM; The Link Parking Lot
- Easter EGGscursion - Sunday, March 28 - Find the giant eggs in our city parks and submit your Clue Coloring Card to be entered to win fun prizes. There are 8 total eggs in the 5 city parks.
- Senior Lunch Bunch Curbside - Thursday, April 8; 12 noon – 1 PM; The Link Parking Lot

- Tarrant County Food Pantry - Thursday, April 8; 5:30 PM – 7PM; The Link Parking Lot. Free groceries for any Tarrant County resident provided curbside at The Link's parking lot. Sponsored by Trinity Point Church.
- Vax Shack at the Animal Shelter – March 25th - 4th Thursday of each month

8. Executive Session: Pursuant to the Open Meetings Act, Chapter 551, Texas Government Code, Sec. 551.071, Sec. 551.072, Sec. 551.073, Sec. 551.074, Sec. 551.076, Sec. 551.087 and Sec. 418.0183 (f) and 418.106 (d) & (e) of the Texas Government Code (Texas Disaster Act).

Motion: Motion was made by Councilmember Bergthold and seconded by Councilmember Morse to convene into executive session. Time: 8:03 p.m.

Motion carried by a vote of 5-0.

Mayor Lopez reconvened into open session. Time: 8:50

Motion: Motion was made by Councilmember Campbell and seconded by Councilmember Bergthold to extend the City Manager contract for one year and terms as agreed.

Motion carried by a vote of 5-0.

9. A motion was made by Councilmember Morse and seconded by Councilmember Knowlton to adjourn.

Motion carried by a vote of 5-0.

There being no further business to come before the City Council, Mayor Lopez declared the meeting adjourned at 8:51p.m.

ATTEST

APPROVED

Cathy Bourg, City Secretary

Edward Lopez, Mayor