

**RICHLAND HILLS CITY COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING
DECEMBER 18, 2023
MINUTES**

Roll Call:

Council present

Edward Lopez, Mayor
G.W. Estep, Mayor Pro Tem
Douglas Knowlton, Place 1
Travis Malone, Place 2
Theresa Bledsoe, Place 3
Javier Alvarez, Place 4
Roland Goveas, Place 6

Council absent

Staff present

Candice Edmondson, City Manager
Lindsay Rawlinson, City Secretary

CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION – 6:30 PM

1. **Executive Session:** Pursuant to the Open Meetings Act, Chapter 551, Texas Government Code, Sections 551.071, 551.072, 551.073, 551.074, 551.076, 551.087, 418.183(f) and 418.106(d) & (e). Executive Session may be held, under these exceptions, at any time during the meeting that a need arises for the City Council to seek advice from the City Attorney as to the posted subject matter of this City Council meeting.

None.

2. **Discuss items listed on tonight's City Council agenda. No action will be taken and each item will be considered during the Regular Session.**

7A. *Special Events Recap*

Director of Parks and Recreation Jason Brown presented a recap of recent City events including Tricky Treat Trails & Haunted Stacks, Veteran's Day, and the Christmas Tree Lighting event. He expressed his appreciation to the City's generous event sponsors and advised that each recent event had been very well attended.

7B. *October and November Department Reports*

Fire Chief Russell Shelley provided the Fire Department update and advised of response times, Medstar statistics, and overall staff training and development.

Director of Public Works and Capital Projects Kip Dernovich presented the Public Works Department update and discussed project timelines, potholes repaired, and staff training.

Police Chief Kimberly Sylvester presented the Police Department update and advised of issues related to the Code Compliance Department.

Mayor Lopez adjourned the work session at 7:06 p.m.

REGULAR SESSION – Mayor Lopez Called to Order – Time 7:06 p.m.

INVOCATION AND PLEDGES OF ALLEGIANCE – Mayor Lopez

PRESENTATIONS

1A. Honor former Mayor Bill Agan

Mayor Lopez announced that former Mayor Bill Agan passed away on Monday, November 27, 2023. Mayor Lopez issued and read a proclamation in honor of Mayor Agan's life and service to the community and invited the City Council and those in attendance an opportunity to speak about Mayor Agan.

Several members of the City Council spoke fondly about serving with Mayor Agan and their memories of him.

Diane Barrette, 7123 Dover Lane, Richland Hills, spoke of her memories of Mayor Agan.

1B. Citizen Appearances/Public Comments

City Secretary Lindsay Rawlinson read emails submitted by the following three residents requesting that the City Council discuss and consider adding a stop sign to the intersection of Hovenkamp Avenue and Popplewell Street.

Mike and Mary Witt, 7200 Hovenkamp Avenue, Richland Hills

Louis Stiles, 3437 Popplewell Street, Richland Hills

Melinda Hocker, Richland Hills

CONSENT AGENDA

2A. Approved minutes from the November 13, 2023 City Council Regular Meeting, November 14, 2023 State of the City Meeting, November 20, 2023 City Council Special Called Meeting, and November 30, 2023 City Council Special Called Meeting

2B. Approved purchase of sewer camera from Green Equipment Company in the amount of \$88,996

Agenda Item 2C was removed from the Consent Agenda and given separate discussion.

Motion: Motion was made by Councilmember Malone and seconded by Councilmember Goveas to approve consent agenda items 2A and 2B.

Motion carried by a vote of 7-0.

2C. Tabled designation of one-way streets around Cheney Hills Elementary School and Richland Middle School

Police Captain Scott Russell introduced the item and advised that the Police Department is seeking to change traffic patterns around Cheney Hills Elementary and Richland Middle School. Cheney Hills Elementary opened in August 2021. Since the opening of the school, the Richland Hills Police Department has observed the impacts of current traffic patterns during school hours and met with concerned residents impacted by daily traffic congestion.

During the 2021 and 2022 school years, Police Department staff worked with Cheney Hills administration to make improvements to the traffic congestion. The intersection of Allena Lane and Dreeben Drive continued to be dangerous for vehicular, pedestrian, and cyclist traffic due to congestion limiting views, restricting vehicular movement, and preventing access for first responders. An additional designated walkway was installed by the city utilizing linear dividers and a crosswalk was installed by the school district to assist in eliminating pedestrian traffic at this intersection.

Prior to the start of the 2023 school year, Police Department staff met with school district officials to reevaluate the traffic patterns. After several meetings, school staff redesigned the student drop-off and pick-up procedures to allow more traffic to queue inside the school parking lot and relieve some of the congestion on Dreeben Drive.

To assist in the new pattern, Police Department staff determined that creating a one-way traffic flow on southbound Dreeben Drive from Baker Boulevard would best accommodate the entrance and exit points of the school parking lot. To prevent additional congestion and maximize traffic and pedestrian safety, Crites Street from Baker Boulevard to Allena Lane was designated as a southbound one-way only, and Allena Lane from Dreeben Drive to Gerome Street was designated as an eastbound one-way only. This pattern encourages traffic to disperse further away from the school and use Rufe Snow Drive where there is a traffic control signal.

Additionally, due to the redesign and construction of Richland Middle School, the traffic flow pattern also changed during drop-off and pick-up times. Currently, the ordinance has the following one-way designations for Richland Middle School during school zone hours:

- Norton Drive from its intersection with Evergreen Road to Glenview Drive, and its intersection with the 7400 block of Bridges Avenue to Hovenkamp Avenue, traffic to move in a northerly direction.

- Hardisty Street from its intersection with Labadie Street to its intersection of Norton Drive, traffic to move in a westerly direction.
- Labadie Drive from its intersection with Evergreen Road to Hardisty Street, traffic to move in a northerly direction.
- Hovenkamp Avenue from its intersection with Norton Drive to Labadie Drive, traffic to move in an easterly direction.

The following one-way designations need to be added due to the relocation of the school:

- Bridges Avenue from its intersection with Labadie Drive to Norton Drive traffic to move in a westerly direction.
- Labadie Drive from its intersection with Hovenkamp Avenue to Bridges Avenue, traffic to move in a southerly direction.

Edward Mitchell, 3116 Dreeben Drive, Richland Hills, expressed concern regarding the Police Department's proposed changes to traffic patterns. He advised that he would prefer the streets remain two-way streets for traffic.

Sherry Winkler, 3004 Dreeben Drive, Richland Hills, advised that she was unhappy with traffic going one way as it creates an undue burden on residents and many times she is unable to leave her house during school pick up times.

Chris Keating, 3216 Dreeben Drive, Richland Hills, expressed concern regarding traffic patterns as well as the amount of traffic on residential streets near Cheney Hills Elementary. He advised that the lack of available parking for the quad area is a problem as well.

Discussion ensued regarding the need for additional discussion and resident involvement.

Motion: Motion was made by Councilmember Bledsoe and seconded by Councilmember Knowlton to table item 2C, designation of one-way streets around Cheney Hills Elementary School and Richland Middle School.

Motion carried by a vote of 7-0.

City Manager Candice Edmondson recommended bringing the item back for Council consideration at the January 22, 2024 meeting to allow adequate time for review and to receive citizen input.

PUBLIC HEARINGS, MEETINGS, AND OTHER RELATED ITEMS

3A. Approved Resolution 591-23 to participate in the 50th Year Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program PUBLIC HEARING

Director of Public Works and Capital Projects Kip Dernovich presented the item to the City Council and advised that the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)

appropriates funds to entitlement communities through the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program. These funds are targeted to benefit low to moderate income persons. Funds are to be used for the development of viable urban communities by providing decent housing and a suitable living environment.

Since 2013, Tarrant County has divided the consortium cities into two groups to provide for greater funding on a project for all cities in alternating years. For 2024, Group B cities will be eligible for funding, which includes the City of Richland Hills.

For the 50th Year CDBG program, staff is recommending replacement of the water main along the 2600 block of Mimosa Park Drive, between Magnolia Park Drive and Airport Freeway. The project will consist of removing and replacing approximately 850 linear feet of two inch water main pipe with eight inch pipe, approximately 625 square yards of asphalt, and approximately 17 service connections.

The Tarrant County funding allotment for the 50th Year CDBG program is estimated to be between \$160,000 to \$180,000. Any additional funds would come from the FY 2025 Utility Fund Budget for water system improvements. The City's contribution will provide for a balanced project and is estimated to be \$85,000. The City would also be accountable for any construction overrun costs above the allocated grant amount.

Mayor Lopez opened the public hearing at 8:18 p.m. and asked to hear from any proponents followed by opponents.

Hearing none, Mayor Lopez closed the public hearing at 8:18 p.m.

Motion: Motion was made by Councilmember Goveas and seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Estep to approve Resolution 591-23 to participate in the 50th Year Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program.

Motion carried by a vote of 7-0.

ORDINANCES & RESOLUTIONS AND OTHER RELATED ITEMS

4. None

CONTRACTS, AGREEMENTS, BID AWARDS AND OTHER RELATED ITEMS

5A. Approved agreement with RPGA Architects for the development of design, engineering, and construction documents for the former Fire Administration and Public Works buildings and authorize City Manager to sign

Fire Chief Russell Shelley advised that during FY 2023, staff worked with RPGA Design Group on site analysis and concept plans to redesign the former Fire Administration and Public Works buildings. A final concept plan was presented to City Council during the FY 2024 Budget process and funds were allocated to develop design, engineering and

construction documents. The document development process is estimated to take 180 days and will provide a complete set of construction documents that can be bid once the City is ready to proceed with the project.

RPGA provided a proposal in the amount of \$169,000 for the proposed architectural services. Funding in the amount of \$175,000 was approved in the FY 2024 Strategic Initiative Fund Budget.

Motion: Motion was made by Councilmember Knowlton and seconded by Councilmember Malone to approve proposal with RPGA Design Group, Inc. for the development of design, engineering, and construction documents for the former Fire Administration and Public Works buildings and authorize City Manager to sign proposal.

Motion carried by a vote of 7-0.

OTHER ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION

6. None

REPORTS & DISCUSSIONS

7A. Special Events Recap

This item was discussed during the worksession.

7B. October and November Department Reports

This item was discussed during the worksession.

Director of Parks and Recreation Jason Brown presented the Parks Department update and advised of the status of the indoor playground construction, the HVAC system at the Police Department, and The Link flooring issues.

COMMUNITY INTEREST ITEMS

8. Mayor Pro Tem Estep advised of several upcoming events:

- City Offices closed Monday, December 25, 2023, Tuesday, December 26, 2023, and Monday, January 1, 2024;
- Through January 15, 2024, Membership Sale, The Link;
- Tuesday, January 9, 2024, Richland Hills Literary Club, Public Library, 6:30 p.m.;
- Thursday, January 11, 2024,
 - Senior Lunch Bunch and Bingo, The Link, 12:00 to 2:00 p.m.;
 - Tarrant County Food Pantry, The Link parking lot, 5:30 to 7:00 p.m.; and
- Every Thursday, Coffee Talk, Public Library, 10:00 to 11:30 a.m.;

Councilmember Knowlton wished everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Councilmember Goveas advised that he will be absent from the January 8, 2024 and the January 22, 2024 City Council meetings.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

9. **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).

None.

ADJOURNMENT

10. A motion was made by Councilmember Knowlton and seconded by Councilmember Bledsoe to adjourn.

Motion carried by a vote of 7-0.

There being no further business to come before the City Council, Mayor Lopez declared the meeting adjourned at 8:40 p.m.

ATTEST:

APPROVED:

Lindsay Rawlinson, City Secretary

Edward Lopez, Mayor