

**RICHLAND HILLS CITY COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING
DECEMBER 9, 2024
MINUTES**

Roll Call:

Council present

Douglas Knowlton, Mayor Pro Tem
Travis Malone, Place 2
John Skier, Place 4
G.W. Estep, Place 5
Roland Goveas, Place 6

Council absent

Curtis Bergthold, Mayor
Theresa Bledsoe, Place 3

Staff present

Candice Edmondson, City Manager
Lindsay Rawlinson, City Secretary
James Donovan, City Attorney

CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION – 6:31 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.

1. Section 551.072: Deliberation regarding real property
 - a) 2721 Handley Ederville Road, Richland Hills, TX

Motion: Motion was made by Councilmember Skier and seconded by Councilmember Estep to adjourn into Executive Session at 6:32 p.m.

Motion carried by a vote of 5-0.

Mayor Pro Tem Knowlton reconvened into open session at 7:01 p.m. with no action taken.

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.**

None.

Mayor Pro Tem Knowlton adjourned the work session at 7:01 p.m.

REGULAR SESSION – Mayor Pro Tem Knowlton Called to Order – Time 7:02 p.m.**INVOCATION AND PLEDGES OF ALLEGIANCE – Mayor Pro Tem Douglas Knowlton**

Mayor Pro Tem Knowlton announced that former Mayor David Ragan passed away on Wednesday, November 27, 2024 and his funeral will be held Thursday, December 12, 2024 at Richland Hills Baptist Church. He expressed his condolences to Mayor Ragan's family. Additionally, he provided his condolences to Councilmember Theresa Bledsoe, who's mother recently passed away as well.

PRESENTATIONS**1A. Business Spotlight: Puerquitos Panaderia**

Director of Planning and Development Services JP Ducay introduced the owners of Puerquitos Panaderia located at 7017 Baker Boulevard, Suite G. The owners invited everyone to come in and hope to make everyone feel at home.

1B. Citizen Appearances/Public Comments

None.

CONSENT AGENDA

Motion: Motion was made by Councilmember Malone and seconded by Councilmember Estep to remove item 2D from the consent agenda.

Motion carried by a vote of 5-0.

2A. Approved minutes from the November 11, 2024 City Council Regular Meeting**2B. Excused the absence of Mayor Curtis Bergthold from the December 9, 2024 regular City Council meeting****2C. Approved the renewal of an Interlocal Agreement for Joint Crime Victim Assistance Program for the cities of North Richland Hills, Haltom City, Richland Hills and Watauga**

Motion: Motion was made by Councilmember Estep and seconded by Councilmember Goveas to approve the consent agenda.

Motion carried by a vote of 5-0.

2D. Approved Change Order dated 09/10/2024 in the amount of \$21,117.71 and increase the total contract value with Angiel Electric Construction for the installation of auxiliary power at city water facilities to \$1,454,088

City Manager Candice Edmondson presented the item to the City Council and advised that the City of Richland Hills received \$1,970,642 in fiscal recovery funds as provided in the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) of 2021. The funds were intended to help the City combat the COVID-19 pandemic, including ongoing public health and economic impacts. Specifically, the Act allows local government entities to use the funds to make necessary investments in water, sewer, or broadband infrastructure.

On January 24, 2022, City Council approved Resolution 549-22 allocating ARPA funds towards water system improvements required as part of Senate Bill 3. The mandates are intended to keep water systems operational in the event of a power failure, similar to what the state experienced during the February 2021 winter storms. The project includes the installation of generators, along with the required electrical and structural components, at all the well sites/pump stations. This project also includes the ability to provide power to SCADA equipment associated with our elevated storage tanks.

On January 23, 2023, City Council approved a contract with Angiel Electrical Construction for installation of auxiliary power at city water facilities in an amount not to exceed \$1,435,000. Additional work has been required to fully complete the project including fence/gate improvements for site security, upgrades to electrical transformers to meet Oncor load requirements, weep hole installation and deeper pier supports. A Change Order in the amount of \$21,117.71 was presented to the City in September for the additional work. Since the Change Order exceeds the awarded contract value (including contingency) additional funding needs to be appropriated to the original contract amount.

Motion: Motion was made by Councilmember Estep and seconded by Councilmember Goveas to approve Change Order dated 09/10/2024 in the amount of \$21,117.71 and increase the total contract value with Angiel Electric Construction for the installation of auxiliary power at city well sites to \$1,454,088.

Motion carried by a vote of 5-0.

PUBLIC HEARINGS, MEETINGS, AND OTHER RELATED ITEMS

3. None.

ORDINANCES & RESOLUTIONS AND OTHER RELATED ITEMS**4A. Approved Ordinance 1516-24 amending Chapter 18 “Businesses”, of the Code of Ordinances of the City of Richland Hills, Texas, by adding Article XIII “Short-Term Rental Registration” in order to establish regulations and registration processes for the use of residential property as a short-term rental**

Director of Planning and Development Services JP Ducay presented the item to the City Council and advised that short-term rentals refer to a residential premises, or portion thereof, used for lodging accommodations to occupants for a period of not less than one or more than 30 consecutive days, other than an ongoing month-to-month tenancy granted to the same renter for the same premises. The definition of short-term rental does not include a hotel, motel, bed and breakfast, executive suite, or other nonresidential use.

Over the past few years, city staff has received several inquiries regarding short-term rentals within the community. Many cities in the Dallas-Fort Worth Metroplex have adopted policies for short-term rentals, and city staff has prepared a draft policy to provide guidelines for operating short-term rentals in Richland Hills. The proposed policy establishes a registration program for short-term rentals that will balance the rights of all stakeholders through a fair and objective regulatory framework and ensure that short-term rentals do not become a nuisance in the community. Additionally, requiring registration of short-term rentals will allow the City to properly identify the location of short-term rentals and provide contact information for owners and operators to aid in responding to complaints and emergencies.

The policy provides for a registration process and permitting process that will be managed by the Development Services Department. Enforcement of non-compliant short-term rentals will be handled by Community Compliance through the City’s normal violation process. The Fire Department will inspect short-term rentals for the presence of properly placed smoke detectors, carbon monoxide detectors, fire extinguishers, and ingress/egress routes.

Discussion ensued regarding requirements included in the policy such as a posted floorplan and the size of fire extinguishers as well as the estimated hotel revenue tax expected.

Further discussion provided direction to Director Ducay for changes to the proposed ordinance including an updated definition of “short term rental,” eliminating fire extinguisher size regulations, and eliminating guest safety requirements.

- Motion:** Motion was made by Councilmember Malone and seconded by Councilmember Skier to approve Ordinance 1516-24 amending Chapter 18 “Businesses”, of the Code of Ordinances of the City of Richland Hills, Texas, by adding Article XIII “Short-Term Rental Registration” in order to establish regulations and registration processes for the use of residential property as a short-term rental with changes to include the following:
- Update “short term rental” definition
 - Eliminate fire extinguisher size regulations
 - Eliminate guest safety requirements

Motion carried by a vote of 5-0.

4B. Approved Ordinance 1517-24 amending the FY 2025 Municipal Fee Schedule effective January 1, 2025

City Manager Candice Edmondson introduced the item to the City Council and advised that during the October 28 2024 City Council meeting, Jason Gray of Wildan presented a comprehensive utility rate study outlining proposed rate adjustments over the next five years. As approved by the Council, the ordinance under consideration incorporates the first year of these adjustments, specifically increases to the City's sewer and wastewater rates within Chapter 86 (Utilities). These changes are scheduled to take effect on January 1, 2025. The proposed increases are essential for ensuring a sustainable utility system and continued high-quality service for our residents.

Revisions to Chapter 66 (Solid Waste) of the fee ordinance incorporate Republic Waste's annual rate adjustments for solid waste collection and recycling services. In accordance with the City's agreement with Republic Waste, these updates reflect a four percent increase in fees.

Additionally, the ordinance includes adjustments to utility-related fees, increasing the meter tamper fee from \$50 to \$250 and the construction meter rental fee from \$40 to \$60. These revisions address the significant lapse in updates, as these fees have not been revised since at least 2014.

The Municipal Fee Schedule revision eliminates certain fees, reflecting recent legislative and operational changes within the City's municipal court and fire services divisions. To address these adjustments, this update includes the removal of Chapter 30 (Emergency Services) and Chapter 54 (Municipal Court).

During the 2019 legislative session, Senate Bill 346 consolidated local option municipal court fees into one fee structure of a \$14.00 fee and eliminated the need for cities to authorize the fees through ordinance approval. The new fee establishes four (4) different accounts within the \$14.00 allotted collection fee for the Local Truancy Prevention and Diversion Fund (\$5.00), Municipal Court Building Security Fund (\$4.90), Municipal Court Technology Fund (\$4.00) and the Municipal Jury Fund (\$0.10).

The elimination of Emergency Medical Services fees aligns with the Council's recent decision to transition these services to MedStar. This change ensures a seamless transfer of medical transport responsibilities to the City of Fort Worth, which will take effect in July 2025.

Additionally, Ms. Edmondson advised that fees related to the short term rental ordinance approved by the City Council in the previous agenda item will come back for Council consideration in January 2025.

Motion: Motion was made by Councilmember Estep and seconded by Councilmember Skier to approve Ordinance 1517-24 amending the FY 2025 Municipal Fee Schedule effective January 1, 2025.

Motion carried by a vote of 5-0.

CONTRACTS, AGREEMENTS, BID AWARDS AND OTHER RELATED ITEMS

5. None.

OTHER ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION

6. None.

REPORTS & DISCUSSIONS

7A. Street Improvement Projects

Director of Public Works and Capital Projects Kip Dernovich presented the street improvement projects update and advised that Quality Construction has completed most utility work and will move to roadway work for the Magnolia Park (Mimosa Park to Rosebud Lane) project. He provided additional updates regarding illuminated street signs, proposed FY2025 County Street project (Oak Park Drive from Ash Park to Elm Park), and an update on a submittal for the 50th annual Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) project from Tarrant County.

7B. October and November Department Reports

Each department presented their monthly reports for October and November 2024 beginning with the Development Services Department, followed by the Fire Department, Library, Municipal Court, Parks and Recreation, Police Department including Animal Services and Community Compliance, and the Public Works Department.

COMMUNITY INTEREST ITEMS

8. Councilmember Estep advised of several upcoming events:

- Now through Tuesday, December 10, 2024, Teen Angel Tree, The Link;
- Now through Wednesday, January 15, 2025, The Link Membership Sale, The Link;
- Monday, December 9, 2024 through Saturday, December 21, 2024, Jingle & Mingle, City Marketplace, 6:00 to 9:00 p.m.;
- Thursday, December 12, 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.;
- Saturday, December 14, 2024, Santa Paws pictures, Richland Hills Animal Services, 12:00 to 2:00 p.m.;
- Every Thursday, Coffee Talk, Public Library, 10:00 to 11:30 a.m.

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. There being no further business to come before the City Council, Mayor Pro Tem Knowlton declared the meeting adjourned at 9:33 p.m.

ATTEST:

APPROVED:

Lindsay Rawlinson, City Secretary

Curtis Bergthold, Mayor