

MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING OF THE CITY OF SAN JUAN COMMISSION

DATE: Tuesday, March 25, 2025

TIME: 6:00 p.m.

PLACE: San Juan Memorial Library
Multipurpose Meeting Room
1010 S. Standard
San Juan, Texas 78589

MEMBERS PRESENT: Mario Garza, Mayor
Marco "Markie" Villegas, Mayor Pro Tempore, Place 4
Mario Cantu, Commissioner Pl. 2
Jesus "Jesse" Ramirez, Commissioner Pl. 5
Rick Palacios, City Attorney

STAFF PRESENT: Tirso Garza, Interim City Manager
Brenda Escalante, City Secretary
Carlos Alaniz, Chief of Fire
Leandro Sifuentes, Chief of Police
Adelaida Cordero, Director of Human Resources
Leroy Gonzales, Finance Director
Christina Perez, Library Director
Ruben Guajardo, Director of Parks & Recreation / PAL Director
Jorge Garcia, Director of Planning
Israel Garza, Director of Sanitation/ Public Works
Juan Carlos Martinez, Director of Utilities
Mary Enriquez, Court Administrator
Pat Karr, Director of Information Technology

ORDER OF BUSINESS

- I. **CALL MEETING TO ORDER:**
Mayor Mario Garza called meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.
- II. **INVOCATION:**
Tirso Garza, Interim City Manager led the Invocation.
- III. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:**
Mayor Mario Garza led the Pledge of Allegiance.
- IV. **PUBLIC COMMENTS:** Mae Anzaldúa Treviño, a resident of San Juan, expressed her concerns regarding recent decisions made by the City Commission. She emphasized the importance of transparency and accountability in the Commission's actions and urged the city to consider the community's perspective in future decision-making. Luis Peña raised concerns about the process for issuing permits, particularly for members of the City Commission. He alleged that a member of the Commission may have relocated a house without obtaining the proper permits and requested that the matter be reviewed to ensure all regulations are being followed consistently.
- V. **PRESENTATIONS**
 - A. **Proclamation Recognizing Mr. Vicente S. Rodriguez Jr. for 27 Years of Service with the City of San Juan Department of Utilities.**

DISCUSSION: A proclamation was presented recognizing Mr. Vicente S. Rodriguez Jr. for 27 years of dedicated service with the City of San Juan Department of Utilities. The mayor read the proclamation and expressed gratitude for Mr. Rodriguez's commitment and hard work.

 - B. **Presentation on Departmental Reports: Department of Finance, Fire Department, Police Department, Municipal Court, and Department of Utilities.**
 1. **Department of Finance Monthly Report.**
 2. **Fire Department Monthly Report.**
 3. **Police Department Monthly Report.**
 4. **Municipal Court Monthly Report.**
 5. **Department of Utilities Monthly Report.**

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DISCUSSION: There is a growing need for a unified proposal that addresses several key areas, including auction transit terminal operations, fire hydrant inspections, and the monitoring of 16 active ambulance reports. Chief Sifuentes has proposed implementing a QR system to support these efforts. Additionally, a program is needed to manage both incoming and outgoing cellphone calls. The status of the Master Plan requires updating, along with the integration of a data saver or system to support its ongoing management.

VI. PUBLIC HEARING/ORDINANCES

- A. Hold a Public Hearing and Consider an Ordinance Regarding a Conditional Use Permit for the Sale of Alcoholic Beverages (MB – Mixed Beverage Permit and LB – Mixed Beverage Late Hours Permit) at “Ultima Ronda Bar & Grill” located at 1618 N. Veterans Boulevard Suite E, legally described as the West 335 feet of the North 440 feet of Lot 12, Block 5, John Closner Subdivision, as Requested by Ramon Flores III. [Jorge J. Garcia, Director of Planning]**

DISCUSSION: Jorge J. Garcia, Director of Planning and Zoning, stated that the applicant had requested a Conditional Use Permit for the sale of alcoholic beverages for on-premise consumption, along with late hours permit allowing operations until 2:00 a.m. (MB – Mixed Beverage Permit and LB – Mixed Beverage Late Hours Permit) at the “Ultima Ronda Bar & Grill” restaurant. The property was located within a commercial plaza at the southeast corner of Veterans Boulevard and FM 495. The surrounding zoning was designated as General Business District (C-2) along both FM 495 and Veterans Boulevard. Mr. Garcia further stated that the applicant proposed the sale of wine, beer, and mixed beverages to complement the restaurant’s food offerings. The proposed days and hours of operation were Tuesday through Saturday from 3:00 p.m. to 2:00 a.m., with the establishment remaining closed on Sundays and Mondays. Staff mailed public hearing notices to nine (9) property owners within a 200-foot radius of the site and received no responses either in favor of or against the request.

Mayor Mario Garza opened the public hearing at 6:18 p.m.

Mayor Mario Garza closed the public hearing at 6:19 p.m.

Commissioner Jesus “Jesse” Ramirez made motion to approve and was seconded by Commissioner Adina “Dina” Santillan. Motion passed (5-0)

- B. Hold a Public Hearing and Consider an Ordinance Regarding a Conditional Use Permit for the Sale of Alcoholic Beverages (BG – Wine and Beer Retailer’s Permit) at “Hibachi by Ruben” Restaurant located at 205 W. Nolana Avenue Suites 5 and 6, legally described as Lot 1, Plaza San Juan Subdivision, as Requested by Hibachi by Ruben, LLC. [Jorge J. Garcia, Director of Planning]**

DISCUSSION: Jorge J. Garcia, Director of Planning and Zoning, reported that the applicant had requested a Conditional Use Permit for the sale of alcoholic beverages for on-premise consumption (BG – Wine and Beer Retailer’s Permit) at “Hibachi by Ruben.” The subject property was located in a commercial plaza approximately 500 feet west of Raul Longoria Road, along the south side of Nolana Avenue. Adjacent zoning consisted of General Business District (C-2) along both Nolana Avenue and Raul Longoria Road. He stated that the applicant proposed to sell wine and beer to complement the Japanese cuisine offered at the restaurant. The proposed days and hours of operation were Sunday through Friday from 7:00 a.m. to 12:00 a.m., and Saturday from 7:00 a.m. to 1:00 a.m. Mr. Garcia stated that staff had mailed a notice of the public hearing to eighteen (18) property owners within a 200-foot radius of the site and received no comments either in favor of or in opposition to the request.

Mayor Mario Garza opened the public hearing at 6:21 p.m.

Mayor Mario Garza closed the public hearing at 6:21 p.m.

Mayor Pro Tem Marco “Markie” Villegas made motion to approve and was seconded by Commissioner Ernesto “Neto” Guajardo. Motion passed (5-0)

VII. APPOINTMENTS

- A. Consider Removal and Appointment of the Ex-Official Related to the San Juan Noche de Paz Pageant Board.**

Commissioner Jesus “Jesse” Ramirez made a motion to remove Commissioner Adina “Dina” Santillan and appoint Mayor Pro Tem Marco “Markie” Villegas as Ex-Officio member of the San Juan Noche de Paz Pageant Board. The motion was seconded by Mayor Mario Garza. Commissioners Adina “Dina” Santillan and Ernesto “Neto” Guajardo opposed. Motion passed (3-2)

VIII. DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION ON ALL THE FOLLOWING MATTERS:

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- A. Preliminary Plat Approval of the DG Veterans Subdivision being a 2.164-acre tract of land out of Lot 8, Block 5, John Closner Subdivision, located at the Southeast corner of Eldora Road and Veterans Boulevard, as Requested by AEC Engineering, LLC. [Jorge J. Garcia, Director of Planning]**

DISCUSSION: Jorge Garcia, Director of Planning and Zoning, reported that the developer proposed to subdivide a 2.164-acre tract of land located at the southeast corner of Eldora Road and Veterans Boulevard. The proposal involved creating a one-lot subdivision with access along Veterans Boulevard. Mr. Garcia noted that the property lies within Flood Zone "AH," which is characterized by 100-year shallow flooding with depths ranging from one to three feet. He stated that water service would be provided by the North Alamo Water Supply Corporation and sewer service by the City of San Juan. Mr. Garcia concluded by stating that staff recommended approval of the proposed plat.

Commissioner Jesus "Jesse" Ramirez made motion to approve and was seconded by Commissioner Ernesto "Neto" Guajardo. Motion passed (5-0)

- B. Discussion and Possible Action to Award CSP# 25-004-03-13 San Juan Police Building Expansion and Authorize the Interim City Manager to Execute all Related Documents as Needed to the Most Responsible Bidder.**

DISCUSSION: Lori Maldonado, Purchasing Agent, stated that on February 19, 2025, and February 26, 2025, staff advertised in the Advance News Journal Project #25-004-03-13 San Juan Police Building Expansion. A Pre-Bid conference was held on March 4, 2025, and a bid opening was held on March 13, 2025. The following bids were submitted:

Gerlach Builders-Edinburg, Texas
ICE International Consulting Engineers-Edinburg, Texas
NM Construction-Mcallen, Texas

Top 3 Ranking Contractors
Gerlach Builders-Edinburg, Texas at \$14,518,000.00
NM Construction-Mcallen, Texas at 13,319,300.00
ICE International Consulting Engineers-Edinburg, Texas at \$14,405,485.00

Commissioner Adina "Dina" Santillan made motion to reject and was seconded by Mayor Pro-Tem Marco "Markie" Villegas. Motion passed (5-0)

- C. Discussion and Possible Action, if any, to Authorize Staff to Request Statements of Qualification for Auctioneer Services.**

DISCUSSION: There was initial confusion regarding the existence of a legal contract with AMT Auction Marketing. It was subsequently confirmed that a three-year signed agreement has been in place since 2022. The contract, signed by then-City Manager Arjona, does not appear to include a legal review or a standard termination clause, such as a 30- or 90-day exit option. Questions were raised about whether a \$1,500 cancellation fee had been paid following a previous attempt to terminate the agreement, as directed by a former city manager. While legal counsel has not yet completed a full review of the contract, it was noted that a potential path for termination may still exist. It was further noted that the city is not restricted from exploring alternative auction service providers, although it must first determine whether it can legally terminate the current agreement. The item was tabled for further review and legal analysis.

Commissioner Jesus "Jesse" Ramirez made motion to approve and was seconded by Commissioner Ernesto "Neto" Guajardo. Motion passed (5-0)

- D. Discussion and Possible Action, if any, to Authorize Staff to Request Statements of Qualification for Scrap Metal Processing Services.**

DISCUSSION: Israel Garza, Director of Sanitation, stated that, to date, he had not been aware of any formal contract related to the current scrap metal processing arrangement. He noted that he had not been involved in the initial negotiations and was never brought to the table during the decision-making process. Mr. Garza further explained that he had been directed by the City Manager to contact the individual currently providing the service.

Commissioner Adina "Dina" Santillan inquired about the start date of the agreement. Mr. Garza responded that it began in 2022. Staff reported that no formal contract had been located for the existing provider, and

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key personnel were unclear on how the arrangement had originated. Although some payments had been received from the provider, there was no detailed tracking of the amount of scrap metal processed (tonnage) or itemized receipts. Concerns were expressed regarding the procedures for weighing materials and the overall lack of transparency in the current setup. Staff recommended issuing a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for scrap metal processing services. It was noted that a new company offering improved service and more favorable payment terms had been identified. The Commission agreed to proceed with the issuance of an RFQ in order to explore more competitive and accountable options for scrap metal processing.

Mayor Mario Garza made motion to approve and was seconded by Commissioner Ernesto “Neto” Guajardo. Motion passed (5-0)

IX. RESOLUTIONS

- A. Discussion and Possible Action, if any, Adopting a Resolution Opposing Texas House Bill 1683. [Tirso Garza, Interim City Manager]**

DISCUSSION: Tirso Garza, Interim City Manager presented the item. The City Commission discussed and approved a resolution opposing Texas House Bill 1683, which would shift control of county roadway project decisions from local commissioners to the state. The bill has already been opposed by the county and other local entities.

Commissioner Jesus “Jesse” Ramirez made motion to approve and was seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Marco “Markie” Villegas. Motion passed (5-0)

X. EXECUTIVE SESSION

- A. The San Juan City Commission will Convene in Executive Session in Accordance with the Texas Open Meeting Act, Vernon's Texas Statutes and Codes Annotated, Government Code Chapter §551.071 (Consultation with Attorney).**
- 1. Pursuant to Section §551.087 of the Texas Government Code (Economic Development Negotiations); Discussion and Possible Action Regarding Economic Development Matters on the Cesar Chavez Project.**

Commissioner Jesus “Jesse” Ramirez made motion to enter into executive session at 6:52 p.m. and was seconded by Ernesto “Neto” Guajardo. Motion passed (5-0)

Mayor Mario Garza exited the City Commission Meeting at 7:12 p.m.

Commissioner Jesus “Jesse” Ramirez made motion to reconvene at 7:13 p.m. and was seconded by Mayor Pro-Tem Marco “Markie” Villegas. Motion passed (4-0)

XI. RECONVENE

- A. The City Commission will Reconvene in Open Session to Take Necessary Action if any, in Accordance with Chapter 551, Open Meeting Subchapter E, Procedures Relating to Closed Meeting 551, Requirements to Vote or Take Final Action in Open Meeting.**
- 1. Pursuant to Section §551.087 of the Texas Government Code (Economic Development Negotiations); Discussion and Possible Action Regarding Economic Development Matters on the Cesar Chavez Project.**

No Action was Taken

XII. ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Jesus “Jesse” Ramirez made motion to adjourn at 7:14 p.m. and was seconded by Commissioner Ernesto “Neto” Guajardo. Motion passed (4-0)

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CITY OF SAN JUAN, TEXAS



Mario Garza, Mayor

ATTEST:



Brenda Escalante, City Secretary