

MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING OF THE CITY OF SAN JUAN COMMISSION

DATE: Tuesday, January 13, 2026

TIME: 6:00 p.m.

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

MEMBERS PRESENT: Mario Garza, Mayor
Jesus "Jesse" Ramirez, Mayor Pro Tempore
Mario Cantu, Commissioner
Gilbert Garza, Commissioner
Marco "Markie" Villegas, Commissioner
Rick Palacios, City Attorney

STAFF PRESENT: Brenda Escalante, City Secretary
Tirso Garza, Fire Chief
Leandro Sifuentes, Chief of Police
Adelaida Cordero, Director of Human Resources
Maritza Phillips, Assistant Director of Finance
Christina Perez, Library Director
Ramiro Moreno, Interim Director of Parks & Recreation
Monica Gomez, Director of Planning
Israel Garza, Director of Sanitation/ Public Works
Alfredo De Leon, Interim 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, Acting City Manager led the Invocation.
- III. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:**
Mayor Mario Garza led the Pledge of Allegiance.
- IV. **PUBLIC COMMENTS ON AGENDA ITEMS**
 - A. The Public Comment portion of the meeting ensures a fair and transparent process in the governance of the City. In accordance with the Texas Open Meetings Act, the Mayor and City Commissioners do not respond to comments during this time; they listen. Individuals wishing to address the governing body must register with the City Secretary fifteen (15) minutes prior to the scheduled start time of the meeting by completing the registration form. The City reserves the right to refuse a speaker if the registration form is incomplete. Registered speakers may only speak on items listed on the agenda and are limited to three (3) minutes. A registered speaker may not donate time to another speaker. To promote efficiency and minimize repetitive commentary, the governing body may request that an identifiable group appoint a spokesperson to represent their views. Additionally, the number of speakers representing the same group may be limited. Once the public comments under this section conclude, no further public comments will be permitted.

Any Public Comments regarding items listed under the Public Hearing section will be accepted when the governing body formally opens each item for discussion under the Public Hearing portion of the meeting.

No Public Comments

- V. **PRESENTATIONS**
 - A. **Presentation by Perdue Brandon Fielder Collins & Mott LLP of the Collection Report October 1, 2024 – September 30, 2025.**

DISCUSSION: The presentation summarized delinquent court fine and fee collections for the City of San Juan from October 1, 2024, to September 30, 2025. During this period, the firm utilized letters, skip tracing, phone calls, and text messages to contact defendants. These efforts resulted in over \$100,000 collected in cash and approximately \$124,000 resolved through cases cleared or dismissed by the court. While delinquencies were concentrated primarily in San Juan and the surrounding areas, collection efforts extended nationwide. Since the beginning of the firm's partnership with the city, approximately \$1.023 million in delinquent cases has been resolved, including \$348,000 in

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cash and over \$675,000 in dismissed or cleared cases. During the presentation, Commissioners discussed the potential use of location data to support warrant officers; the firm confirmed it can provide this information upon request.

- B. Presentation on Departmental Reports: Department of Planning and Zoning, Department of Parks and Recreation, Department of Sanitation, San Juan Memorial Library, Department of Finance, Fire Department, Police Department, Municipal Court and Department of Utilities.**
1. Department of Planning and Zoning Monthly Report. [Monica Gomez, Director of Planning]
 2. Department of Parks & Recreation Monthly Report. [Interim Director of Parks & Recreation, Ramiro Moreno]
 3. Department of Sanitation Monthly Report. [Israel Garza, Director of Sanitation]
 4. San Juan Memorial Library Monthly Report. [Christina Perez, Library Director]
 5. Department of Finance Monthly Report. [Maria L. Beltran, Director of Finance]
 6. Fire Department Monthly Report. [Tirso Garza, Fire Chief]
 7. Police Department Monthly Report. [Leandro Sifuentes, Chief of Police]
 8. Municipal Court Monthly Report. [Mary Enriquez, Court Administrator]
 9. Department of Utilities Monthly Report. [Alfredo de Leon, Interim Director of Utilities]

DISCUSSION: Mayor Pro Tem Jesus “Jesse” Ramirez raised questions regarding city branding and the use of current, updated logos and permits, specifically referencing those seen at the food park. Additionally, there was an inquiry about the status of the city’s health division. Monica Gomez, Director of Planning confirmed that the city does have an active health inspection department.

VI. PUBLIC HEARING/ORDINANCES

- A. Hold a Public Hearing and Consider an Ordinance Amending Chapter 13 Utilities, Article 13.02; Solid Waste and Stormwater Pollution Prevention, Division 1. Generally, Section 13.02.005 Receptable; Placement of Waste for Collection and Section 13.02.006 Exemptions, Divisions 2. Rate Charges and Billing, Section 13.02.051 Customer Classification; Rate Schedule and Divisions 3. Private Collectors to Amend Placement of Waste, Modify Rate and Deposit Fees, Eliminate Private Collections and Other Related Regulations; Providing for Effective Date; Providing for Publication; Providing for Codification; Providing for Severability Clause; and providing for Repealer Clause.**

No Action Taken

VII. APPOINTMENTS

- A. Consider the Appointment of a Representative and Alternate for Fiscal Year 2026-2027 to the Amigos Del Valle Board of Directors. [Brenda Escalante, City Secretary]**

Mayor Pro Tem Jesus “Jesse” Ramirez made a motion to table item and was seconded by Mayor Mario Garza. Motion Passed (5-0)

- B. Consider Removal, Appointment or Re-Appointment of Board Member(s) Related to the Miss San Juan Pageant Board. [Brenda Escalante, City Secretary]**

No Action Taken

- C. Consider the Removal, Appointment, or Reappointment of Member(s) to the Keep San Juan Beautiful Board. [Brenda Escalante, City Secretary]**

No Action Taken

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

- A. Discussion and Possible Action, if any, Authorizing the City Manager to Approve a Budget Amendment to Increase the San Juan Fire Department’s Other Equipment (30-470.7957) Account for \$62,400 for the Fiscal Year 2025-2026. [Tirso Garza, Fire Chief]**

DISCUSSION: Fire Chief Tirso Garza stated this item is to authorize the City Manager to approve a budget amendment. This amendment would increase the general parks equipment line item by \$62,400 for the current fiscal year. The increase is associated with a FEMA grant awarded in November and discussed in subsequent December meetings. Please note that the grant requires a city match of \$5,000.

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

IX. CONTRACTUALS

- A. Consideration and Action, if any, to Approve the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the San Juan Police Department Law Enforcement Emergency Regional Response Team, and First Line Response. [Leandro Sifuentes, Chief of Police]**

DISCUSSION: Chief of Police Leandro Sifuentes has established this Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the City of San Juan Police Department and First Line Response. This MOU allows First Line Response to collaborate with the police department’s Law Enforcement Regional Response Team and SWAT. The partnership will provide joint training, tactical medic instruction, coordination, and planning support to improve team operations. Commissioner Marco “Markie” Villegas made a motion to approve and was seconded by Commissioner Mario Cantu. Motion passed (5-0)

- B. Consideration and Action, if any, to Approve the Interlocal Agreement between Hidalgo County Urban County Program and the City of San Juan for the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Funds Allocated for FY 2025. [Monica Gomez, Director of Planning]**

DISCUSSION: Monica Gomez, Director of Planning, has presented the 2025 fiscal year agreement between the City of San Juan and the Hidalgo County Urban County Program regarding Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds. This annual agreement ensures the proper administration and use of CDBG funds. Staff recommends approval of this agreement to proceed with the street improvements project scheduled for 2025.

Commissioner Marco “Markie” Villegas made a motion to approve and was seconded by Commissioner Gilbert Garza. Motion passed (5-0)

X. RESOLUTION

- A. Consideration and Action, if any, on a Resolution Approving the FY 2026 Final Workplan for the Hidalgo County Urban County Program. [Monica Gomez, Director of Planning]**

DISCUSSION: Monica Gomez, Director of Planning, reported that the City of San Juan has been awarded \$279,996. These funds will be used for street improvements on Guadalupe Drive and San Ramon Street, as well as for administrative costs and support for several community service agencies, including Amigos del Valle, the Lower Rio Grande Valley Development Council, Nuestra Clinica del Valle, and services for abused and neglected children. During the discussion, Commissioners inquired about the specific service areas for one of the funded agencies and confirmed that the funding supports countywide services. Mrs. Gomez stated that staff recommended approval of the resolution.

Commissioner Mario Cantu made a motion to approve and was seconded by Commissioner Marco “Markie” Villegas. Motion passed (5-0)

- B. Consideration and Action, if any, on a Resolution Accepting Petition for Voluntary Annexation; Setting Dates and Times of Public Hearings; and Directing the Planning Department to Prepare a Service Plan. [Monica Gomez, Director of Planning]**

DISCUSSION: Monica Gomez, Director of Planning, stated that this item involves a resolution to accept a petition for the voluntary annexation of six properties located along South Steward Road and Juan Balli. The properties range from approximately 4.78 to 7.70 acres. Acceptance of this petition will allow the city to schedule public hearings and direct the planning department to prepare the necessary annexation ordinance.

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

- C. Consideration and Action, if any, on a Resolution Authorizing the City of San Juan to Accept the FY25 Hiring Program Grant from the U.S. Department of Justice Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS). [Leandro Sifuentes, Chief of Police]**

DISCUSSION: Chief of Police Leandro Sifuentes presented a resolution to accept a COPS grant from the U.S. Department of Justice in the amount of \$875,328. This grant will fund four police officer positions, including fringe benefits, for the next three years. It does not require a local match. Following the presentation, there was a brief discussion regarding the funding plan for these positions once the grant period concludes.

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

- D. Consideration and Action, if any, on a Resolution Authorizing the City of San Juan to Accept a Grant Award from the Office of the Governor for Operation Lonestar FY2026. [Leandro Sifuentes, Chief of Police]**

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DISCUSSION: Chief of Police Leandro Sifuentes presented a resolution for the City of San Juan to accept an Operation Lone Star grant from the Office of the Governor. The grant, totaling \$216,725 for the operational fiscal year, requires no local match. These funds will be used for equipment and overtime to reduce border-related criminal activity, including drug smuggling, gang and cartel activity, and human trafficking.

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

- E. Consideration and Action, if any, on a Resolution Authorizing the City of San Juan to Accept a Grant Award from the Office of the Governor for a Crime Victims Liaison. [Leandro Sifuentes, Chief of Police]

DISCUSSION: Chief of Police Leandro Sifuentes presented a resolution regarding a grant from the Office of the Governor for a Crime Victim Liaison. The grant totals \$36,000 and requires a 30% local match of \$10,800, which will be funded from existing promotional ranks. This grant covers a one-year period.

Commissioner Marco “Markie” Villegas made a motion to approve and was seconded by Commissioner Gilbert Garza. Motion passed (5-0)

- F. Consideration and Action, if any, on a Resolution Authorizing the City of San Juan to accept a Grant Award from the Office of the Governor for Rifle Resistant Body Armor. [Leandro Sifuentes, Chief of Police]

DISCUSSION: Chief of Police Leandro Sifuentes presented a resolution to accept a grant from the Office of the Governor for rifle-resistant body armor. The grant totals \$17,102.54 and requires no local match.

Commissioner Mario Cantu made a motion to approve and was seconded by Commissioner Marco “Markie” Villegas. Motion passed (5-0)

XI. CONSENT AGENDA

- A. Consider Second and Final Reading of an Ordinance Regarding the Voluntary Annexation Petition of the 3.03-Acre Tract of Land out of Lot 12, Stewart's Addition to the Conway Gardens, Located Approximately 600 feet North of Hall Acres Road, along the West Side of Stewart Road, as Requested by Teysha Group, LLC. [Monica Gomez, Director of Planning]
- B. Consider Second and Final Reading of an Ordinance for the Sale of Alcoholic Beverages (BG - Wine and Beer Retailer's Permit) at "Cheer's Food Court and Bar" at 234 E. Business Hwy 83, Legally Described as Lettered Blks (San Juan) Lot 1, Block B, as Requested by Saul Salinas. [Monica Gomez, Director of Planning]
- C. Budget Expenditure Report — September 2025. [Maria L. Beltran, Director of Finance]
- D. Budget Expenditure Report — October 2025. [Maria L. Beltran, Director of Finance]
- E. Budget Expenditure Report — November 2025. [Maria L. Beltran, Director of Finance]

Commissioner Jesus “Jesse” Ramirez made a motion to approve and was seconded by Commissioner Gilbert Garza. Motion passed (5-0)

XII. 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 §551.071 of the Texas Government Code, Consultation with Attorney; Discussion and Possible Action Regarding Legal Matters Concerning the Excavation Permit Applications Submitted by Vexus Fiber for the Installation of Vexus Fiber Cable.
 - 2. Pursuant to Section §551.071 of the Texas Government Code, Consultation with Attorney; Discussion and Possible Action Regarding Legal Issues Concerning 2025 Noche de Paz.
 - 3. Pursuant to Section §551.071 Consultation with Attorney and Pursuant to Section §551.074 Personnel Matters; Discussion Regarding the Appointment, Employment, Evaluation, Reassignment, Duties, Discipline or Dismissal of a Public Officer or Employee: Director of Parks & Recreation.

Mayor Pro Tem Jesus “Jesse” Ramirez made a motion to enter executive session at 6:22 p.m. and was seconded by Commissioner Gilbert Garza. Motion Passed (5-0)

Mayor Pro Tem Jesus “Jesse” Ramirez made a motion to reconvene at 6:43 p.m. and was seconded by Commissioner Gilbert Garza. Motion Passed (5-0)

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XIII. RECONVENE

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 §551.071 of the Texas Government Code, Consultation with Attorney; Discussion and Possible Action Regarding Legal Matters Concerning the Excavation Permit Applications Submitted by Vexus Fiber for the Installation of Vexus Fiber Cable.

Mayor Mario Garza made a motion to approve as discussed under executive session and was seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Jesus "Jesse" Ramirez. Motion passed (5-0)

2. Pursuant to Section §551.071 of the Texas Government Code, Consultation with Attorney; Discussion and Possible Action Regarding Legal Issues Concerning 2025 Noche de Paz.

No Action Taken

3. Pursuant to Section §551.071 Consultation with Attorney and Pursuant to Section §551.074 Personnel Matters; Discussion Regarding the Appointment, Employment, Evaluation, Reassignment, Duties, Discipline or Dismissal of a Public Officer or Employee: Director of Parks & Recreation.


Mayor Mario Garza made a motion to approve Acting City Manager Chief Tirso Garza's recommendation to finalize terms with Patrick Willingham. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Marco "Markie" Villegas Motion passed (5-0)

XIV. ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Pro Tem Jesus "Jesse" Ramirez made a motion to adjourn at 6:44 p.m. and was seconded by Mayor Mario Garza. Motion passed (5-0)



CITY OF SAN JUAN, TEXAS


Mario Garza, Mayor

ATTEST:


Brenda Escalante, City Secretary