

MINUTES OF REGULAR CALLED MEETING OF THE CITY OF SAN JUAN COMMISSION

DATE:

Tuesday, May 12, 2026

TIME:

6:00 P.M.

PLACE:

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

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Jesus “Jesse” Ramirez, Mayor Pro Tempore
Mario Cantu, Commissioner
Gilbert Garza, Commissioner
Marco “Markie” Villegas, Commissioner
Rick Palacios, City Attorney

STAFF PRESENT:

Ruben Guajardo, City Manager
Brenda Escalante, City Secretary
Leandro Sifuentes, Chief of Police
Adelaida Cordero, Director of Human Resources
Maria L. Beltran, Director of Finance
Christina Perez, Library Director
Monica Gomez, Director of Planning
Israel Garza, Director of Sanitation/ Public Works
Alfredo De Leon, Interim Director of Utilities
Mercedes Benzanilla, Administrative Assistant II
Daira Natividad, Interim Director of Information Technology
Patrick Willingham, Director of Parks & Recreation
Chief Tirso Garza, Fire Chief

ORDER OF BUSINESS

I. CALL MEETING TO ORDER:

Mayor Pro Tem Jesus “Jesse” Ramirez called meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

II. INVOCATION:

Ruben Guajardo, City Manager led the Invocation.

III. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

Mayor Pro Tem Jesus “Jesse” Ramirez 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 of the PSJA Service Unit Girl Scouts Expressing Appreciation to City of San Juan for serving as a Program Partner.

DISCUSSION: On behalf of the PSJA Service Unit, Girl Scout Cadet April De Leon expressed their gratitude to city officials for the partnership providing the Amigo Del Valle location as a safe space for Girl Scout activities. This support has enabled the organization to host seven events for 22 troops, facilitating service projects, badge work, and the cookie program. These initiatives play a vital role in building courage, confidence, and character within our community.

In recognition of this continued partnership, the Girl Scouts proudly presented the 2025 Outstanding Support Award to Mayor Mario Garza and the City of San Juan.

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B. Presentation of the Scholarship Award by the City of San Juan Miss San Juan Scholarship Pageant Board.

DISCUSSION: Samaya Cantu was presented with a \$1,000 scholarship in recognition of her service as the 2025 City of San Juan Pageant Queen. City officials thanked her for her dedication, her attendance at numerous events throughout the year, and her contributions to the community. We wish her continued success in her future endeavors.

C. Presentation on a Proclamation Proclaiming May 11–16, 2026, as National Police Week.
[Leandro Sifuentes, Chief of Police]

DISCUSSION: Chief of Police Leandro Sifuentes presented a proclamation recognizing National Police Week and Peace Officers Memorial Day. The proclamation honors law enforcement officers for their dedication, sacrifice, and service to the community. Chief Sifuentes acknowledged the challenging work officers perform daily to maintain public safety. Special recognition was given to fallen officers, including Deputy Marshal Jose Garza, who was killed in the line of duty in 1930, as well as officers seriously injured in the line of duty in 2024.

Issued by Mayor Mario Garza and the San Juan City Commission, the proclamation officially declared May 11–16, 2026, as National Police Week and May 15 as Peace Officers Memorial Day in San Juan. We would like to publicly thank the members of the San Juan Police Department for their loyal service and commitment to protecting our community.

D. Presentation on Departmental Reports: Department of Planning and Zoning, Department of Parks and Recreation, Department of Sanitation, and San Juan Memorial Library.

1. Department of Planning and Zoning Monthly Report. [Monica Gomez, Director of Planning]
2. Department of Parks & Recreation Monthly Report. [Patrick Willingham, Director of Parks and Recreation]
3. Department of Sanitation Monthly Report. [Israel Garza, Director of Sanitation]
4. San Juan Memorial Library Monthly Report. [Christina Perez, Library Director]

DISCUSSION: Mayor Pro-Tem Jesus “Jesse” Ramirez inquired with Patrick Willingham, Director of Parks & Recreation, regarding weather-related damages and the timeline for reopening the park. Mr. Willingham reported that a shade structure was uprooted, creating a safety hazard due to exposed sharp edges. He further stated that contractors have been notified, and the damaged structure is scheduled for removal. The park is expected to reopen by the end of the week.

VI. PUBLIC HEARING/ORDINANCES

- A. Hold a Second Public Hearing Regarding the Voluntary Annexation Petition of the 20.00-Acre Tract of Land Out of Lot 7, Block 47, Alamo Land and Sugar Company's Subdivision, Located Approximately Half of a Mile West from Cesar Chavez Road Along the North side of Minnesota Road, as Requested by Bona Fide Re LLC. [Monica Gomez, Director of Planning]

DISCUSSION: Monica Gomez, Director of Planning and Zoning explained and confirmed that the request has completed the required public hearing process. Staff has recommended approval for the Voluntary Annexation Petition.

Mayor Pro Tem Jesus “Jesse” Ramirez opened the public hearing at 6:16 p.m.

Polo Flores expressed concerns regarding potential drainage, sewer, and infrastructure issues related to future development. He noted that while developers’ profit, the community may be left with long-term problems. Mae Anzaldua Trevino voiced concerns regarding past Planning and Zoning decisions being overturned by the City Commission.

Mayor Pro Tem responded stated that the project underwent a thorough review with engineers and other departments to address infrastructure concerns prior to reaching the commission.

Mayor Pro Tem Jesus “Jesse” Ramirez closed the public hearing at 6:22 p.m.

Commissioner Marco “Markie” Villegas made a motion to approve and was seconded by Commissioner Gilbert Garza. Motion passed (4-0).

- B. Hold a Public Hearing and Consider the First Reading of the Ordinance Regarding the Conditional Use Permit for the Sale of Alcoholic Beverages (BG- Wine and Malt Beverage Retail Dealer's On-Premise Permit) at Vapes and Smoke Shop El Primo located at 3306 N. Raul Longoria Road Suite 5, legally described as Lots 6 through 10, Block 1, South Ridge Estates Subdivision, as Requested by Georgina Garza de Lujan. Tabled. [Monica Gomez, Director of Planning]

DISCUSSION: Monica Gomez, Director of Planning and Zoning, informed that an applicant is requesting a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) to allow the sale of alcoholic beverages at a vape shop located at 3306 N. Raul Longoria Road. The request specifies that the permit is for the opening of containers and preparation of alcoholic beverages for off-site consumption only; on-site consumption will not be permitted.

The proposed hours of operation are:

- Monday through Thursday: 7:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m.

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- Friday through Sunday: 7:00 a.m. to 12:00 a.m.

Mrs. Gomez noted that the public hearing notice was published in the newspaper, and notification letters were mailed to fourteen property owners within the required 200-foot radius. No comments were received. Consequently, staff recommends approval of the CUP request as presented.

It was also noted that while there are currently six vape or smoke shops operating within San Juan, none of them currently hold alcoholic beverage permits.

Commissioner Marco “Markie” Villegas made a motion to untable the item and was seconded by Commissioner Gilbert Garza. Motion passed (4-0).

Mayor Pro Tem Jesus “Jesse” Ramirez opened the public hearing at 6:24 p.m.

Georgina Garza de Lujan, applicant has requested that the commission consider approving the permit. She noted her previous experience and her ownership of another business. Also, alcohol is served for off-site consumption only, rather than for consumption on the premises.

Mayor Pro Tem Jesus “Jesse” Ramirez closed the public hearing at 6:27 p.m.

Commissioner Marco “Markie” Villegas made a motion to approve and was seconded by Commissioner Mario Cantu. Motion passed (4-0).

- C. Hold a Public Hearing and Consider the First Reading of an Ordinance Amending the Code of Ordinances of the City of San Juan, Chapter 1 General Provisions, Article 2 Administration, Division 4. City Commission, Section 1.02.092 Procedures by adding Paragraph (k) to Provide the City Commission Meeting Date and Time; Providing for Effective Date; Providing for Publication; Providing for Codification; Providing for a Severability Clause; and Providing for Repealer Clause.

DISCUSSION: Brenda Escalante, City Secretary presented a proposal to amend the official meeting time of the San Juan City Commission meetings from 6:00 p.m. to 5:30 p.m., while continuing to hold meetings on the second and fourth Tuesdays of each month.

Mayor Pro Tem Jesus “Jesse” Ramirez opened the public hearing at 6:28 p.m.

Mae Anzaldua Trevino voiced opposition to the earlier meeting time, that many community members are still getting off work at that hour and may have difficulty attending
Polo Flores voiced opposition and raised concern raised about attendance issues at other local meetings held earlier in the day.

Mayor Pro Tem Jesus “Jesse” Ramirez closed the public hearing at 6:31 p.m.

Commissioner Mario Cantu made a motion to approve and was seconded by Commissioner Gilbert Garza. Commissioner Marco “Markie” Villegas opposed, motion passed (3-1).

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

- A. Discussion and Possible Action, if any, to Award RFB NO. 26-004-05-07 Street Improvements Project Nebraska Ave & Douglas Street to the Most Responsive and Responsible Bidder.
[Lori A. Maldonado, Purchasing Agent]

DISCUSSION: Lori Maldonado, Purchasing Agent provided an update regarding RFB NO. 26-004-05-07 for the Street Improvements Project (Nebraska Ave & Douglas Street). Staff solicited bids on April 22 and April 29, 2026. A pre-bid conference was held on April 28, followed by the bid opening on May 7, 2026. A total of four bids were received from the following contractors:

- RDH Site & Concrete (Pharr, TX)
- 2GS LLC dba Earthworks Enterprise (Penitas, TX)
- Elite Grading and Paving LLC (Pharr, TX)
- Renoworks (Edinburg, TX)

Following a review of the bid packets, including all tabulated items and references, LeFevre Engineering recommends awarding RFB NO. 26-004-05-07 (Street Improvements Project) to Elite Grading and Paving, LLC. Their low bid was \$447,027.70.

Additionally, Commissioner Marco Villegas confirmed that the company has successfully completed previous work for the city on Ridge Road without issues.

Commissioner Marco “Markie” Villegas made a motion to approve and was seconded by Commissioner Gilbert Garza. Motion passed (4-0).

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X. CONTRACTUALS

- A. Consideration and Action, if any, on an Interlocal Cooperation Agreement Between the County of Hidalgo and City of San Juan to provide Efficient and Effective Library Services for County Residents. [Christina Perez, Library Director]

DISCUSSION: Patrick Willingham, Director of Parks and Recreation indicated that the interlocal agreement provided by County Precinct 2 includes a \$250,000 contribution toward the construction of the all-inclusive playground at the new north side park. Mr. Willingham noted that approval of this agreement is necessary to facilitate the release of these funds.

Commissioner Gilbert Garza made a motion to approve and was seconded by Commissioner Marco “Markie” Villegas. Motion passed (4-0).

XI. CONSENT AGENDA

- A. Consideration Consider the Second and Final Reading of the Ordinance Regarding the Rezoning Request from the Single-Family Residence District (R-S) to the General Business District (C-2) of a 1.99-acre tract of land out of Lot 10, Block 5, John Closner Subdivision, Located at the Southeast Corner of Sioux Road and Veterans Boulevard, as Requested by James Keller. [Monica Gomez, Director of Planning]

- B. Consider Approval of City Commission Meeting Minutes:

- February 26, 2019
- November 25, 2025

Commissioner Gilbert Garza made a motion to approve all items under consent agenda and was seconded by Commissioner Mario Cantu. Motion passed (4-0).

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 Issues Concerning Website Content Requirements.

Commissioner Marco “Markie” Villegas made a motion to enter executive session at 6:36 p.m. and was seconded by Commissioner Mario Cantu. Motion passed (4-0).

Commissioner Marco “Markie” Villegas made a motion to reconvene at 6:57 p.m. and was seconded by Commissioner Gilbert Garza. Motion passed (4-0).

XIII. 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 §551.071 of the Texas Government Code, Consultation with Attorney; Discussion and Possible Action Regarding Legal Issues Concerning Website Content Requirements

No Action taken

XIV. ADJORNMENT

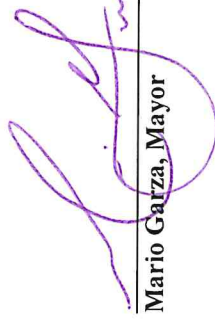
Commissioner Marco “Markie” Villegas made a motion to adjourn at 6:58 p.m. and was seconded by Commissioner Mario Cantu. Motion passed (4-0)

CITY OF SAN JUAN, TEXAS

ATTEST:



Brenda Escalante, City Secretary


Mario Garza, Mayor