

MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING OF THE CITY OF SAN JUAN COMMISSION

DATE: Tuesday, July 14, 2026

TIME: 5:30 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
Criselda Palacios, City Attorney

STAFF PRESENT: Ruben Guajardo, City Manager
Brenda Escalante, City Secretary
Tirso Garza, Fire Chief
Leandro Sifuentes, Chief of Police
Adelaida Cordero, Director of Human Resources
Maria "Lulu" Beltran, Director of Finance
Christina Perez, Library Director
Monica Gomez, Director of Planning
Eric Munoz, Assistant Director of Sanitation/ Public Works
Alfredo De Leon, Interim Director of Utilities
Mary Enriquez, Court Administrator
Daira Natividad, Interim Director of Information Technology
Patrick Willingham, Director of Parks & Recreation

ORDER OF BUSINESS

- I. CALL MEETING TO ORDER:**
Mayor Mario Garza called meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.
- II. INVOCATION:**
Ruben Guajardo, 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.

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DISCUSSION: Jorge Villarreal, a representative of the nonprofit organization VAIL, addressed the Mayor and Commission to accept a proclamation recognizing the 36th anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

Mr. Villarreal noted that VAIL recently relocated to Alamo after 20 years in McAllen to better serve the Mid-Valley community. He expressed gratitude to the commission for celebrating the ADA, highlighting its critical role since 1990 in ending discrimination and improving physical accessibility for individuals with disabilities. Emphasizing that people with disabilities should be treated as equal citizens, he thanked the city for officially designating ADA Awareness Day locally.

To conclude the presentation, Mayor Garza and Commissioners read aloud the proclamation and officially declared July 26, 2026, as Americans with Disabilities Act Awareness Day in San Juan.

**B. Presentation on the 1st Annual RGV Battle of The Heroes Event Hosted by Redemption Boxing.
[Patrick Willingham, Director of the San Juan Police Athletic League]**

DISCUSSION: Patrick Willingham, Director of Parks and Recreation, presented the first annual "RGV Battle of the Heroes," a USA Boxing-sanctioned amateur event scheduled for August 29th at the new Parks and Rec Center. Modeled after national "Battle of the Badges" competitions, the event will feature local first responders—including police officers, DPS, and firefighters—competing in three-round amateur boxing matches.

Event organizers Josh and Rubaldino highlighted that this is the first event of its kind in the Rio Grande Valley and aims to provide local youth with positive, real-life role models. Addressing safety and liability questions from the commission, the representatives confirmed that all participants must pass physicals and hold amateur licenses, and that the event is fully insured and bonded through USA Boxing.

C. 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 and 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]

No Questions or Concerns.

VI. PUBLIC HEARING/ORDINANCES

- A. Hold a Public Hearing and Consider an Ordinance for the Conditional Use Permit for the Sale of Alcoholic Beverages (BQ – Wine and Malt Beverage Retailer's Off-Premise) at M&M Chill Spot Drive-Thru located at 301 S. Cesar Chavez Road, legally described as Lot 1, M&M Subdivision, as Requested by MAR & MR 1994, LLC. [Monica Gomez, Director of Planning]**

DISCUSSION: Monica Gomez, Director of Planning and Zoning, stated that this public hearing is to consider an ordinance for a conditional use permit allowing the off-premise sale of wine and malt beverages at the M&M Chill Spot Drive-Thru. Ms. Gomez explained that the business has been in operation since 2010, but the new permit is required due to a recent change in ownership. With proposed operating hours from 10:00 a.m. to midnight daily, the city notified eight nearby property owners and received no objections.

Mayor Mario Garza opened the public hearing at 5:52 p.m.

Ismael Morin, a representative speaking on behalf the M&M business owners, assures full compliance with the city planning and zoning guidelines.

Mayor Mario Garza closed the public hearing at 5:53 p.m.

Mayor Pro Tem Jesus "Jesse" Ramirez made a motion to approve and was seconded by Commissioner Gilbert Garza. Motion passed (4-0).

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Dollar General store (No. 25987) located at 2703 North Veterans Boulevard.

Ms. Gomez confirmed that notices were sent to nine nearby property owners with zero objections received, and both staff and the planning and zoning commission recommend approval.

Mayor Mario Garza opened up the public hearing at 5:54 p.m.

Following the approval of the conditional use permit for the new Dollar General, a district representative and the local store manager addressed the commission to formally introduce themselves. They expressed their corporation's gratitude and strong commitment to serving the San Juan community.

The mayor and commission warmly welcomed them to the city and informed the representatives that their agenda item had already successfully passed prior to their comments.

Mayor Mario Garza closed the public hearing at 5:54 p.m.

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

- C. Hold a Public Hearing and Consider an Ordinance for the Conditional Use Permit for the Sale of Alcoholic Beverages (BG – Wine and Malt Beverage Retail Dealer's On-Premise Permit) at Santa Chelada Drive-Thru located at 4101 N. Veterans Boulevard, legally described as the West 132.37 feet of the North 120 feet of Lot 5, Block 5, John Closner Subdivision, as Requested by Santa Chelada, Inc. [Monica Gomez, Director of Planning]**

DISCUSSION: Monica Gomez, Director of Planning and Zoning, stated that this public hearing is to consider a conditional use permit allowing on-premise wine and malt beverage sales at the Santa Chelada drive-thru on North Veterans Boulevard.

Ms. Gomez noted that the business has been operating since 2010 but requires a new permit due to a recent change in ownership to remain compliant with city and TABC regulations. She also confirmed that notices were mailed to 13 nearby property owners and that the Planning and Zoning Commission recommended approval.

Mayor Garza opened the public hearing at 5:57 p.m.

Mayor Garza closed the public hearing at 5:57 p.m.

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

- D. Hold a Public Hearing and Consider an Ordinance for the Rezoning Request from Single-Family Residence District (R-S) to Multi-Family Residence District (R-MF) for the property located at 307 E. 11th Street, legally described as Lot 2 & 3, Block 1, Gossage Block Subdivision, as Requested by Elias Jair Gutierrez. [Monica Gomez, Director of Planning]**

DISCUSSION: Monica Gomez, Director of Planning and Zoning, presented a request to the Mayor and Commission to consider a rezoning ordinance. The request seeks to change the property at 3307 East 11th Street from a single-family to a multi-family residential district.

Ms. Gomez noted that a similar request for adjacent lots was denied in 2024. Additionally, both city staff and the Planning and Zoning Commission recommended denying the current application after receiving multiple emails in opposition.

Mayor Mario Garza opened the public hearing at 5:59 p.m.

During the public hearing, a resident named Raquel Jimenez spoke on behalf of several neighbors against the rezoning, raising safety and infrastructure concerns such as increased traffic on a busy street near a middle school and a lack of sidewalks.

Mayor Mario Garza closed the public hearing at 6:00 p.m.

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additional information from the COSJ therefore recommended that the item be tabled. Mayor Pro Tem., Jesus “Jesse” Ramirez questioned whether the item will be going back to the Planning and Zoning committee or will it be presented back with the commission. Ms. Gomez clarified that tabling the item would keep it at the City Commission level rather than sending it back to the Planning and Zoning committee.

Mayor Pro Tem Jesus “Jesse” Ramirez made a motion to table the item and was seconded by Mayor Mario Garza. Motion tabled (4-0).

- F. Consider the First Reading of an Ordinance to Establish a Fee to Defray Costs of Collecting Recorded Municipal Liens Pursuant to Subchapter A of Chapter 54, Texas Local Government Code and Subchapter A of Chapter 214, the Texas Local Government Code; Providing for Effective Date; Providing for Publication; Providing for a Severability Clause; and Providing for Repealer Clause.**

DISCUSSION: Mayor J.R. Garza, representing Perdue Brandon Fielder Collins & Mott, LLP, presented an ordinance to establish a fee that offsets the costs of collecting municipal liens on overgrown and vacant “weedy lots.”

Mayor Mario Garza explained that while the city frequently expends resources to clean these unmaintained properties, it often struggles to collect the resulting property liens. Under this new ordinance, the firm—which already handles the city’s municipal court collections—will collaborate with code enforcement to recover these outstanding debts. This will be done at no cost to the city or its taxpayers, as the newly established fees will cover the administrative collection costs.

Mayor Pro Tem Jesus “Jesse” Ramirez made a motion to approve and was seconded by Commissioner Mario Cantu. Motion passed (4-0).

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

- A. Discussion and Possible Action, if any, to Authorize Staff to Solicit a Request for Qualifications for Engineering Services. [Lori A. Maldonado, Purchasing Agent]**

DISCUSSION: Lori Maldonado, Purchasing Agent, presented an item authorizing city staff to solicit Requests for Qualifications (RFQs) for engineering services. During the discussion, Ms. Maldonado confirmed that interested firms will have 30 days to submit their qualifications before the options are presented to the commission.

Mayor Mario Garza reiterated that this solicitation is part of an annual rotation process, which is necessary to onboard two or three additional engineering firms to help manage the city’s ongoing workload.

Mayor Pro Tem Jesus “Jesse” Ramirez made a motion to approve and was seconded by Commissioner Mario Cantu. Motion passed (4-0).

VIII. CONTRACTUALS

- A. Discussion and Action, if any, to Adopt Written Findings as to the Collection Services Contract and Approve a Contingency Fee Contract with Perdue Brandon Fielder Collins & Mott LLP for the Collection of Delinquent Municipal Liens owed to the City of San Juan and Notice of said Contract is Posted with the Agenda in accordance with Section 2254 of the Government Code.**

DISCUSSION: Mayor Mario Garza addressed the formal contract for these services. The agenda item authorized the adoption of written findings and the approval of a contingency fee contract with Purdue Brandon Fielder Collins and Mott, LLP for the collection of delinquent municipal liens owed to the City of San Juan. Recognizing this as the formal execution of the previously discussed partnership.

Mayor Pro Tem Jesus “Jesse” Ramirez made a motion to approve and was seconded by Commissioner Gilbert Garza. Motion passed (4-0).

IX. CONSENT AGENDA

- A. Consider Approval of City Commission Meeting Minutes:**

- May 8, 2018

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Mayor Pro Tem Jesus "Jesse" Ramirez made a motion to enter executive session at 6:12 p.m. and was seconded by Commissioner Gilbert Garza. Motion passed (4-0).

Mayor Pro Tem Jesus "Jesse" Ramirez made a motion to reconvene at 6:34 p.m. and was seconded by Commissioner Mario Cantu. Motion passed (4-0).

XI. RECONVENE

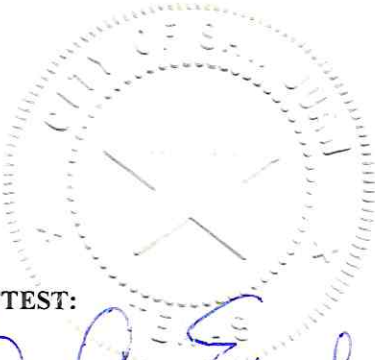
A. The San Juan City Commission will Reconvene in Open Session to Take Necessary Action, if any, in Accordance with Chapter 551, Open Meeting Subchapter E, Procedures Relating to Closed Meeting 551, Requirements to Vote or Take Final Action in Open Meeting.

1. Pursuant to Section §551.071 Consultation with Attorney; Discussion Regarding any Matters Related to Legal Advice on Pending or Contemplated Litigation, Settlement Offer.

No action taken.

XII. ADJORNMENT

Mayor Pro-Tem Jesus "Jesse" Ramirez made a motion to adjourn at 6:34 p.m. and was seconded by Commissioner Gilbert Garza. Motion passed (4-0).


ATTEST:

Brenda Escalante, City Secretary

CITY OF SAN JUAN, TEXAS


Mario Garza, Mayor