

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

DATE:

Tuesday, November 26, 2024

TIME:

6:00 p.m.

PLACE:

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

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Ernesto “Neto” Guajardo, Commissioner
Adina “Dina” Santillan, Commissioner
Jesus “Jesse” Ramirez, Commissioner
Rick Palacios, City Attorney

STAFF PRESENT:

Benjamin Arjona, City Manager
Brenda Escalante, City Secretary
Tirso Garza, Fire Chief
Leandro Sifuentes, Chief of Police
Leroy Gonzales, Director of Finance
Adelaida Cordero, Director of Human Resources
Christina Perez, Interim Library Director
Monica Gomez, 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
Ruben Guajardo, Director of Parks & Recreation/PAL Director

ORDER OF BUSINESS

I. CALL MEETING TO ORDER:

Commissioner Adina “Dina” Santillan called meeting to order at 6:02 p.m.

II. INVOCATION

Benjamin Arjona, City Manager led the invocation.

III. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Commissioner Adina “Dina” Santillan led the Pledge of Allegiance.

IV. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Luis Pena asked to remove his public comment submission.

V. PRESENTATIONS

A. 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.

DISCUSSION: Commissioner Jesus “Jesse” Ramirez inquired about the general fund budget and the utility and sanitation funds included in the report. Leroy Gonzales, Director of Finance, clarified that there is only one utility fund. Mr. Gonzales also confirmed that items are tagged upon purchase.

Commissioner Ramirez asked Fire Chief Tirso Garza regarding the status of the volunteer fire department. Chief Garza stated they plan to meet the first Monday of December.

Commissioner Ramirez noted that MedCare’s average response time was 9:59, but expressed concern over approximately 10 responses exceeding 15 minutes. He requested Chief Garza bring this to MedCare’s attention. In response to Commissioner Ernest “Neto” Guajardo’s question regarding route navigation given the closures at Raul Longoria and Veterans, Chief Garza explained that crews were using Cesar Chavez to reach the Southside. Effective today, following a discussion with Mr. Arjona, crews have been relocated to the new station.

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Commissioner Adina "Dina" Santillan requested that Chief Garza add company names to the yearly inspection report.

Commissioner Santillan noted ten court hearings with Judge Hernandez and eight with Robert Garza, and asked if those were the only hearings held that month. Court Administrator Mary Enriquez clarified that magistrates also conducted hearings. In response to Commissioner Ramirez's question about an amnesty program, Ms. Enriquez stated they are considering implementing one from February through April.

VI. PUBLIC HEARING/ORDINANCES

- A. Consider the Second Public Hearing for a Voluntary Annexation Petition of the 7.82-Acre Tract of Land out of Lot 12, Block 27, Alamo Land and Sugar Company's Subdivision, as Requested by OC Development, LTD.**

DISCUSSION: Monica Gomez, Interim Director of Planning and Zoning, presented the second public hearing for a voluntary petition submitted by OC Development, LTD, regarding a 7.82-acre tract of land. The property is located out of Lot 12, Block 27, Alamo Land and Sugar Company's Subdivision, approximately a quarter mile west of Cesar Chavez Road along the south side of Hall Acres Road.

Mrs. Gomez stated that the City Commission accepted the petition at its meeting on October 22, 2024. The first public hearing was presented to the Commission on November 12, 2024, and was advertised in the newspaper. No public comments were received in favor of or against the request. Staff recommends approval.

Commissioner Adina "Dina" Santillan opened the Public Hearing at 6:09 p.m.

Commissioner Adina "Dina" Santillan closed the Public Hearing at 6:10 p.m.

Commissioner Jesus "Jesse" Ramirez motion to approve and was seconded by Commissioner Ernesto "Neto" Guajardo. Motion Passed (3-0).

VII. RESOLUTIONS

- A. Consideration and Action on a Resolution Submitting Entitlement Vote for Candidate(s) to the Hidalgo County Appraisal District Board of Directors 2025-2027.**

DISCUSSION: Benjamin Arjona, City Manager, confirmed that the Appraisal District's packet was available. Mr. Arjona noted that the commission holds 55 votes. Ricardo Palacios, City Attorney, advised that the city commission should now allocate those votes to the nominees identified through the nomination process.

Commissioner Jesus "Jesse" Ramirez motion to allocate 27 votes to Fernando Castillo and 28 votes to Pete Garcia and Commissioner Adina "Dina" Santillan seconded the motion. Motion Passed (3-0)

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

- A. Discussion on Update Regarding Vexus Fiber, LLC.**

DISCUSSION: Benjamin Arjona, City Manager, noted that Vexus Fiber was present as requested.

Commissioner Jesus "Jesse" Ramirez inquired about the agreement for Vexus to provide a public service announcement for the city's Facebook page. Pat Karr, Director of IT, reported that IT is working with Mark Bookout, Regional VP for Vexus, to coordinate a flyer, though work on Noche de Paz was briefly prioritized ahead of this. Commissioner Ramirez clarified his understanding that the announcement regarding originate from Vexus rather than the city.

Alex Montalvo, Construction Manager, shared that Vexus posts contact information on signs in subdivisions during construction and offered his business card for the city to distribute. He assured the commission that Vexus will resolve any issues, such as damaged pipes or sewage lines. Commissioner Ramirez reiterated that the city needs Vexus's contact information made publicly available to prevent residents from calling the city directly for these issues.

Commissioner Adina "Dina" Santillan requested that Mr. Arjona schedule a follow-up meeting to address these ongoing concerns.

- B. Preliminary and Final Plat Approval for Rafael Estates Subdivision being a 24.74-acre tract of land out of Lots 14 and 15, Stewart's Addition to the Conway Gardens and Lot 14, Block 27, Alamo Land and Sugar Company's Subdivision, located approximately a quarter of a mile West from Cesar Chavez Road, along the South side of Hall Acres Road, as Requested by Quintanilla, Headley and Associates, Inc.**

DISCUSSION: Monica Gomez, Interim Director of Planning & Zoning, stated this was a preliminary and final plat approval for the Rafael Estates Subdivision. The property is a 24.74-acre tract of land located approximately a quarter-mile east of Stuart Road along the south side of Hall Acres Road. Mrs. Gomez mentioned that the developer is proposing a 239-lot residential subdivision. Water service will be provided by the Military Highway

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Water Supply Corporation and sewer service by the City of San Juan. She further noted that, according to the FEMA map, the subdivision is located in Flood Zone B (areas between the limits of 100-year and 500-year floods).

The developer is requesting the following variances:

1. To not comply with the 60-foot frontage for lots. They are proposing 55 feet for Lots 134-150, 153, 181, 203-219, and 222-238.
2. To not comply with the 65-foot frontage for corner lots. They are proposing 60 feet for Lot 182.
3. To not comply with the 800-foot block length. They are proposing 1,075 feet.
4. To not comply with the 15-foot utility easement. They are proposing 10 feet.
5. To not comply with the 20-foot rear setback. They are proposing 10 feet.
6. To not comply with the 6-foot side setback for non-corner lots. They are proposing 5 feet.
7. To allow sanitary sewer manholes fiberglass monolithic open bottom with a concrete foundation poured in place.
8. To not comply with the 100-foot lot depth. They are proposing 96.86 feet for Lots 191-193 and proposing 96.86 feet to 99.23 feet for Lots 152-171.
9. To not comply with the 6,500 square feet lot area for corner lots for the Single-Family Residential District (R-S). They are proposing 6,049.18 square feet for Lot 168 and proposed 6,386.41 square feet for Lots 191 and 193.

Mrs. Gomez informed the commission that staff recommends denial of the subdivision plat and variances, as they oppose the city's subdivision ordinance and Standard Manual. However, the Planning and Zoning Commission recommends approval of the preliminary and final plat. Mrs. Gomez noted that the requested variances have been approved for other subdivisions in the past two years (including Valley Ranch 1, II, III, Meadows on Ridge, and Carroll Estates). The only new request is Variance No. 3, which was recently adopted. Specific denied items include a block length of 600 feet instead of the required 800 feet. Additional fire hydrants must be placed every 500 feet for residential use and every 300 feet for commercial use. Water lines must also be looped to the 8-inch water line per San Juan Fire Department requirements.

Commissioner Adina "Dina" Santillan sought clarification on why Planning and Zoning approved the request despite staff's recommendation for denial due to the variances.

Commissioner Jesus "Jesse" Ramirez noted that the request opposes the subdivision standard manual and asked why the commission approved it; Mrs. Gomez confirmed precedent from other subdivisions.

Benjamin Arjona, City Manager inquired about the specific items denied.

Commissioner Eddie Cantu noted that while they adhere to city ordinances as much as possible, variance requests are sometimes necessary due to the differing widths, lengths, and sizes of certain lots.

Commissioner Adina "Dina" Santillan motion to table this item and was seconded by Commissioner Jesus "Jesse" Ramirez. Motion Passed (3-0)

- C. Preliminary and Final Plat Approval for Villas de Angelina Subdivision being a 14.64-acre tract of land out of Lot 12, Block 27, Alamo Land and Sugar Company's Subdivision, located approximately a quarter of a mile West from Cesar Chavez Road, along the South side of Hall Acres Road, as Requested by Quintanilla, Headley and Associates, Inc.

Commissioner Adina "Dina" Santillan motion to table this item and was seconded by commissioner Jesus "Jesse" Ramirez. Motion Passed (3-0)

- D. Discussion and Possible Action to Authorize the City Manager to Declare as Surplus and for Final Disposal for Auction.

DISCUSSION: Israel Garza, Director of Sanitation, noted that the current vehicles are outdated and require excessive maintenance, resulting in high costs for the city. Staff recommends approval as presented. In response to a question from Commissioner Adina "Dina" Santillan, Mr. Garza confirmed the auction date is set for January 14th.

Commissioner Santillan inquired about the destination of the proceeds. Leroy Gonzales, Director of Finance, clarified that general funds go into the general fund, while proceeds from the trucks go into the Sanitation fund.

Commissioner Jesus "Jesse" Ramirez motion to approve and was seconded by commissioner Ernesto "Neto" Guajardo. Motion Passed (3-0)

- E. Discussion and Possible Action to Request Assistance from the Health and Environmental Services within the San Juan City Limits.

DISCUSSION: Monica Gomez, Interim Director of Planning & Zoning, reported that no action was taken on this item at the last city meeting. Mrs. Gomez met with Luis Galvan from the Hidalgo County Health Department to discuss business and restaurant inspection protocols. If the city signs the contract, county inspectors will be available daily. Mrs. Gomez recommended partnering with the Hidalgo County Health Department for the current year, as the city currently lacks the budget to manage health inspections independently.

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Commissioner Adina "Dina" Santillan raised concerns regarding response times for inspections and complaints. Mrs. Gomez noted that Mr. Galvan assured daily inspection availability, and mentioned that several local businesses were found to be non-compliant during a preliminary review.

In response to Commissioner Santillan's question regarding contact procedures for after-hours complaints, Mrs. Gomez confirmed these would go to the county. Commissioner Santillan asked if that contact number could be displayed publicly.

Commissioner Jesus "Jesse" Ramirez inquired about fee collection and city payment obligations. Mrs. Gomez clarified that all fees would be collected directly by the county.

Commissioner Jesus "Jesse" Ramirez motion to approve and was seconded by Commissioner Ernesto "Neto" Guajardo. Motion Passed (3-0)

IX. CONSENT AGENDA

A. Consider Second and Final Reading of an Ordinance Providing for the Conditional Use Permit for the Sale of Alcoholic Beverages (MB – Mixed Beverage Permit and LB – Mixed Beverage Late Hours Permit) at Home2 Suites by Hilton, Located at 1003 E. Carroll Road, Legally Described as Lot 4, Plaza San Juan Subdivision, as Requested by San Juan Foodservice, LLC.

B. Consider Second Public Hearing of an Ordinance Providing for the Rezoning Request from Single-Family Residence District (R-S) to General Business District (C-2) of Lot 2, Nadia Estates Subdivision, as Requested by Chris Lee.

C. Consider Approval of the City of San Juan 2024 Tax Roll Certificate.

Commissioner Jesus "Jesse" Ramirez motion to approve and seconded by Commissioner Ernesto "Neto" Guajardo. Motion Passed (3-0)

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 551.074 (Personnel Matters) and 551.071 (Consultation with Attorney) of the Texas Government Code, Discussion and Possible Action Regarding the Appointment, Employment, Evaluation, Reassignment, Duties, Discipline, or Dismissal of a Public Officer or Employee. (Director of Planning and Zoning, Director of Library, and Municipal Judge(s))

Commissioner Ernesto "Neto" Guajardo motion to enter into executive session at 6:40 p.m. and was seconded by Commissioner Jesus "Jesse" Ramirez. Motion Passed (3-0)

Commissioner Jesus "Jesse" Ramirez motion to Reconvene at 7:28 p.m. and was seconded by Commissioner Ernesto "Neto" Guajardo. Motion Passed (3-0)

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 551.074 (Personnel Matters) and 551.071 (Consultation with Attorney) of the Texas Government Code, Discussion and Possible Action Regarding the Appointment, Employment, Evaluation, Reassignment, Duties, Discipline, or Dismissal of a Public Officer or Employee. (Director of Planning and Zoning, Director of Library, and Municipal Judge(s)).

Commissioner Adina "Dina" Santillan motion to extend the offer to Mr. Jorge Garcia for the position of Director of the Planning and Zoning with salary to be negotiated as discussed under executive session with the alternative to be Joanna Maldonado. Commissioner Ernesto "Neto" Guajardo seconded the motion. Motion Passed (3-0)

Commissioner Adina "Dina" Santillan motion to appoint Miss. Christina Perez for the position of Library Director with salary to be negotiated as discussed under executive session. Commissioner Ernesto "Neto" Guajardo seconded the motion. Motion Passed (3-0)

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Commissioner Adina “Dina” Santillan motion to salaries for all the municipal judges as discussed under executive session and was seconded by Commissioner Jesus “Jesse” Ramirez. Motion Passed (3-0)

XII. ADJORNMENT

Commissioner Ernesto “Neto” Guajardo motion to adjourn at 7:31 p.m. and was seconded by Commissioner Jesus “Jesse” Ramirez. Motion Passed (3-0)

CITY OF SAN JUAN, TEXAS

ATTEST:



Brenda Escalante, City Secretary



Mario Garza, Mayor