

OSCAR LEESER
MAYOR

TOMMY GONZALEZ
CITY MANAGER



CITY COUNCIL
PETER SVARZBEIN, DISTRICT 1
ALEXSANDRA ANNELLO, DISTRICT 2
CASSANDRA HERNANDEZ, DISTRICT 3
JOE MOLINAR, DISTRICT 4
ISABEL SALCIDO, DISTRICT 5
CLAUDIA L. RODRIGUEZ, DISTRICT 6
HENRY RIVERA, DISTRICT 7
CISSY LIZARRAGA, DISTRICT 8

CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION MINUTES
August 2, 2021
9:05 AM

Due to the temporary suspension of specified provisions of Open Meetings laws due to the COVID-19 emergency this meeting was conducted via telephonic and videoconference formats.

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The City Council of the City Council met on the above time and date via videoconference. Meeting was called to order at 9:29 a.m. Mayor Oscar Leeser was present and presiding and the following Council Members answered roll call: Alexsandra Annello, Cassandra Hernandez, Joe Molinar, Isabel Salcido, Claudia Rodriguez, Henry Rivera and Cissy Lizarraga. Peter Svarzbein requested to be excused.

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AGENDA

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1. Presentation and discussion by the COVID-19 Response and Recovery Cross-Functional Team providing information on key activities, efforts and processes.

1. Overview (Tommy Gonzalez)

Mr. Tommy Gonzalez, City Manager, introduced the item and explained that while the City’s vaccination rates remained above the State and National rates, the City was experiencing an increase in the number of positive COVID-19 cases reported. He expressed the need to continue practicing safety protocols in order to reduce the spread of the virus.

Mayor Leeser stated that Fort Bliss was now requiring face coverings inside their facilities and said the CDC had designated El Paso as an area of high COVID-19 transmission.

2. Team Lead Report:

a) Health Focus (Hector Ocaranza, M.D.)

Dr. Hector Ocaranza, Public Health Authority, provided an update on the current pandemic situation by stating there was an upward trend in the number of positive cases and hospitalizations attributed to COVID-19. He said the majority of these cases reported were from unvaccinated individuals and stressed the need to vaccinate in order to prevent large outbreaks as the Delta variant was more infectious. Dr. Ocaranza presented the results from a recent external study which proved that the Pfizer vaccine was effective in combating the Delta variant and said there was no word yet on the need for a booster.

3. City Manager Wrap Up

Mr. Tommy Gonzalez, City Manager, closed the presentation by restating that the City was experiencing an increase in positive COVID-19 cases although the numbers were not as high as State or national averages. He said 81% of the El Paso population had received a first vaccination dose while 70% was fully vaccinated which indicated the City was close to reaching herd immunity.

Mayor Leeser and Representatives Annelo, Molinar, and Lizarraga.

NO ACTION was taken on this item.

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2. **Discussion and action to direct the City Manager and City Attorney to draft a resolution requesting the El Paso Water Utilities/Public Service Board & PSB staff provide quarterly updates to the City Council regarding customer service, capital improvement projects, sale of property held in trust by PSB, open space land management and plans, and prepare a presentation on the creation and governance structure of the water utility.**

Representatives Annelo, Hernandez, and Molinar commented.

Motion made by Representative Annelo, seconded by Representative Hernandez, and unanimously carried to **APPROVE** the item.

AYES: Representatives Annelo, Hernandez, Molinar, Salcido, Rodriguez, Rivera, and Lizarraga

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Representative Svarzbein

Discussion on items 3 and 4 were taken together

3. **Presentation and submission of the No-New Revenue Tax Rate, Voter-Approval Tax Rate for FY 2021-2022.**
4. **Discussion and action on the FY 2021 - 2022 Budget.**

The following City staff members presented a PowerPoint presentation (copy on file in the City Clerk's Office) and/or responded to questions posed by Members of the City Council.

1. Mr. Robert Cortinas, Chief Financial Officer
2. Mr. Tommy Gonzalez, City Manager
3. Mr. Sam Rodriguez, City Engineer

Mayor Leeser and Representatives Hernandez, Molinar, and Lizarraga commented.

Motion made by Representative Rivera, seconded by Representative Hernandez, and unanimously carried to allocate \$3,012,718 of additional revenue available from certified values to fund a pavement condition update (PCI), advance streets to complete current lists by FY2023 (second 2-year cycle) and \$1.1M in surface treatments.

AYES: Representatives Annello, Hernandez, Molinar, Salcido, Rodriguez, Rivera, and Lizarraga
NAYS: None
ABSENT: Representative Svarzbein

REGULAR AGENDA - FIRST READING OF ORDINANCES:

5. Introduction of an Ordinance levying FY 2021 - 2022 taxes.

PUBLIC HEARING WILL BE HELD ON AUGUST 24, 2021

Motion made by Representative Annello, seconded by Representative Salcido, and unanimously carried that the Ordinance, having been introduced pursuant to Section 3.9 of the El Paso City Charter, be **ADVERTISED** for public hearing.

AYES: Representatives Annello, Hernandez, Molinar, Salcido, Rodriguez, Rivera, and Lizarraga
NAYS: None
ABSENT: Representative Svarzbein

6. Presentation and update by Texas Gas Service on current customer and operations investments in its gas distribution system, and related regulatory application to be filed with or currently before the Railroad Commission of Texas.

Ms. Elizabeth Triggs, Strategic Partnerships Officer, introduced the item.

The following representatives from Texas Gas Service members presented a PowerPoint presentation (copy on file in the City Clerk's Office).

1. Ms. Elizabeth O'Hara, Regional Manager Community Relations
2. Ms. Stacey McTaggart, Rates and Regulatory Director

Mayor Leeser and Representative Hernandez commented.

NO ACTION was taken on this item.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Motion made by Representative Rivera, seconded by Representative Salcido, and unanimously carried that the City Council retire into **EXECUTIVE SESSION** at 11:04 a.m. pursuant to Section 3.5A of the El Paso City Charter and the Texas Government Code, Sections 551.071 - 551.089 to discuss the following:

Section 551.071 CONSULTATION WITH ATTORNEY
Section 551.072 DELIBERATION REGARDING REAL PROPERTY
Section 551.087 DELIBERATION REGARDING ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT NEGOTIATIONS

AYES: Representatives Annello, Hernandez, Molinar, Salcido, Rodriguez, Rivera, and Lizarraga
NAYS: None
ABSENT: Representative Svarzbein

Motion made by Representative Rivera, seconded by Representative Lizarraga, and unanimously

carried to **ADJOURN** the Executive Session at 12:20 p.m. and **RECONVENE** the meeting of the City Council.

AYES: Representatives Annello, Hernandez, Molinar, Salcido, Rodriguez, Rivera, and Lizarraga

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Representative Svarzbein

EX1. Claim by Antoinette Kenny. Matter No. 21-1036-3445 (551.071)

Motion made by Alternate Mayor Pro Tempore Lizarraga, seconded by Representative Rivera, and carried that the City Attorney's Office be authorized to **DENY** the claim of Antoinette Kenny of the Estate of Kenmaj Graham in Matter Number 21-1036-3445, in its entirety.

AYES: Representatives Annello, Hernandez, Molinar, Salcido, Rodriguez, Rivera, and Lizarraga

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Representative Svarzbein

EX2. Claim by Keith Shannon. Matter No. 21-1001-298 (551.071)

Motion made by Alternate Mayor Pro Tempore Lizarraga, seconded by Representative Rivera, and carried that the City Attorney's Office be authorized to **DENY** the claim of Keith Shannon, in Matter Number 21-1001-298, in its entirety.

AYES: Representatives Annello, Hernandez, Molinar, Salcido, Rodriguez, Rivera, and Lizarraga

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Representative Svarzbein

EX3. Claim by Brian Aguirre. Matter No. 21-1026-11610 (551.071)

Motion made by Alternate Mayor Pro Tempore Lizarraga, seconded by Representative Rivera, and carried that the City Attorney's Office be authorized to **DENY** the property damage claim of Brian Aguirre in its entirety; Matter ID 21-1026-11610.

AYES: Representatives Annello, Hernandez, Molinar, Salcido, Rodriguez, Rivera, and Lizarraga

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Representative Svarzbein

EX4. Discussion on purchase or exchange of real property located in Central El Paso, Texas. Matter No. 21-1004-1257 (551.072)

NO ACTION was taken on this item.

EX5. Discussion on the value and purchase/sale of real property located in the West side of the City of El Paso, Texas. Matter No. 21-1008-165 (551.072)

Motion made by Representative Annello, seconded by Representative Molinar, and

unanimously carried to **DELETE** the item.

AYES: Representatives Annello, Hernandez, Molinar, Salcido, Rodriguez, Rivera, and Lizarraga

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Representative Svarzbein

EX6. Economic Incentives for a Manufacturing Company to be located in the City of El Paso. Matter No. 21-1007-2740 (551.071) (551.072) (551.087)

NO ACTION was taken on this item.

EX7. Update - Application of El Paso Electric Company to Change Rates, Public Utility Commission of Texas Docket No. 52195. Matter No. 21-1008-174

NO ACTION was taken on this item.

EX8. Update - Application of El Paso Electric Company for approval to revise its Energy Efficiency Cost Recovery Factor (EECRF) and to request to establish revised cost caps. Public Utility Commission of Texas Docket No. 52081. Matter No. 21-1008-172 (551.071)

NO ACTION was taken on this item.

EX9. Update - Request by Texas Gas Service Company, a division of ONE Gas, Inc., for Written Approval for Continued Use of Financial Instruments for Hedging Gas Costs for the 2021-2022 Heating Season. Matter No. 20-1008-147 (551.071)

Motion made by Alternate Mayor Pro Tempore Lizarraga, seconded by Representative Annello, and unanimously carried that the City Council of the CITY OF EL PASO **APPROVES** the request of Texas Gas Service Company, a division of ONE Gas, Inc., for Written Approval for Continued Use of Financial Instruments for Hedging Gas Costs for the 2021-2022 Heating Season.

AYES: Representatives Annello, Hernandez, Molinar, Salcido, Rodriguez, Rivera, and Lizarraga

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Representative Svarzbein

EX10. HB1520 and Anticipated Request by Texas Gas Service Company, a division of ONE Gas, Inc., for Recovery of Extraordinary Costs Incurred during the 2021 Winter storm and Mitigate Future Costs. Matter No. 20-1008-147 (551.071)

Motion made by Alternate Mayor Pro Tempore Lizarraga, seconded by Representative Rivera, and carried that the City Attorney is authorized to **RETAIN** outside counsel and any other necessary consultants, in consultation with the City Manager, to file an intervention and take any other necessary legal action in the Application for Customer Rate Relief Related to Winter Storm Uri and Regulatory Asset Determination filed by Texas Gas Service Co., a Division of One Gas, Inc., on July 30, 2021, under Texas Railroad Commission Docket No.

00007069.

AYES: Representatives Annelo, Hernandez, Molinar, Salcido, Rodriguez, Rivera, and Lizarraga

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Representative Svarzbein

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ADJOURN

Motion made by Representative Annelo, seconded by Representative Salcido and unanimously carried to **ADJOURN** the meeting at 1:22 p.m.

AYES: Representatives Annelo, Hernandez, Molinar, Salcido, Rodriguez, Rivera, and Lizarraga

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Representative Svarzbein

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APPROVED AS TO CONTENT:

Laura D. Prine, City Clerk