

OSCAR LEESER  
MAYOR

TOMMY GONZALEZ  
CITY MANAGER



CITY COUNCIL  
PETER SVARZBEIN, DISTRICT 1  
ALEXANDRA 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  
SEPTEMBER 26, 2022  
COUNCIL CHAMBERS, CITY HALL AND VIRTUALLY  
9:05 A.M.**

.....  
The City Council of the City of El Paso met at the above place and date. Meeting was called to order at 9:22 a.m. Mayor Oscar Leeser was present and presiding and the following Council Members answered roll call: Alexandra Annello, Cassandra Hernandez, Joe Molinar, Isabel Salcido, and Henry Rivera. Peter Svarzbein, Claudia Rodriguez, and Cissy Lizarraga requested to be excused.  
.....

**AGENDA**

.....  
Motion made by Representative Rivera, seconded by Representative Molinar, and unanimously carried to **APPOINT** Representative Hernandez as Mayor Pro Tempore for this meeting.  
.....

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

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Representatives Svarzbein, Rodriguez, and Lizarraga  
.....

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)

Ms. Tracey Jerome, Senior Deputy City Manager, began the presentation by explaining that the community level was at a "medium" classification however it was moving towards "low" as indicated by the declining number of new COVID-19 cases. She stressed the importance of taking preventative measures such as staying up to date with vaccinations and stated that the new Bivalent booster had been made available at City clinics as of September 22, 2022. Ms. Jerome mentioned that the City remained ahead of State statistics related to vaccination rates, encouraged parents to seek vaccinations for school age children, and reminded the public that free testing was still available at the City's designated locations.

2. City Attorney Overview (Karla Nieman)

- a) Greg Abbott, in his official capacity as Governor of Texas v. City of El Paso & Statewide Mask Mandate Litigation
- b) Additional Updates

Ms. Karla Nieman, City Attorney, noted that there had not been any movement in the cases pending in the 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, and 8<sup>th</sup> Texas Courts of Appeal related to mask mandate litigation.

3. Team Lead Report:

- a) Health Focus (Hector Ocaranza, M.D.)
  - i- COVID-19 update
  - ii- Monkeypox Update
- b) Data Analysis (Roberto Tinajero)

Dr. Hector Ocaranza, Public Health Authority, continued the presentation by explaining that although there was an 80% decline in new cases and a 60% decrease in the number of COVID-19 hospitalizations, there was still a need to protect those individuals at a high risk for severe infection. He encouraged the public to seek the new Bivalent vaccine to stay ahead of new infections and the upcoming flu season. Dr. Ocaranza stated that the City continued to work with school districts to provide recommendations even if reporting was no longer required by the Department of State Health Services. As far as the Monkeypox virus, he said that only 2 cases had been reported in El Paso and the number of new cases were also declining across the Country.

Mr. Roberto Tinajero, Assistant Director of International Bridges, provided data analysis related to inflation levels and the El Paso economy. He said the inflation rate was high and currently at 8.3% with rising costs in shelter, food, and medical care despite a decline in energy and fuel prices. Mr. Tinajero said the recent increase in interest rates by the federal government was aimed at relieving inflation. He ended by saying that the unemployment rate was on the decline but still higher in El Paso in comparison to the rest of the State and said the City would monitor the effect of inflation on sales tax allocation numbers which are currently favorable.

4. City Manager Wrap-up (Tommy Gonzalez)

Ms. Jerome, closed out the presentation by saying that the City would monitor economic indicators as the current inflation rate was a threat to future growth. She highlighted the award of \$25 million from the Build Back Better Regional Challenge Phase 2 Grant for the development and construction of an Advanced Manufacturing District in El Paso.

Mayor Leeser commented.

**NO ACTION** was taken on this item.

---

2. International Bridges Department – Management Update – Parking

Mr. Paul Stresow, Assistant Director of International Bridges, presented a PowerPoint presentation (copy on file in the City Clerk’s Office) and introduced Mr. Brian Lake, Parking Meter Operations Manager.

The following City staff members commented:

- Ms. Tracey Jerome, Senior Deputy City Manager
- Mr. Brian Lake, Parking Meter Operations Manager

Representatives Annelo, Hernandez, and Molinar commented.

**NO ACTION** was taken on this item.

.....  
**EXECUTIVE SESSION**  
.....

Motion made by Representative Molinar, seconded by Representative Annelo, and unanimously carried that the City Council **RETIRE** into **EXECUTIVE SESSION** at 10:22 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 executive session items:

Section 551.071 CONSULTATION WITH ATTORNEY  
Section 551.072 DELIBERATION REGARDING REAL PROPERTY

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

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Representatives Svarzbein, Rodriguez, and Lizarraga

Motion made by Representative Annelo, seconded by Representative Molinar, and unanimously carried to **ADJOURN** the Executive Session at 10:53 a.m. and **RECONVENE** the meeting of the City Council at which time a motion was made:

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

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Representatives Svarzbein, Rodriguez, and Lizarraga

.....  
**EX1.** Application of El Paso Electric Company to Revise Its Energy Efficiency Cost Recovery Factor (EECRF) and Establish Revised Cost Caps, Public Utility Commission of Texas Docket No. 53551. Matter No. 22-1008-193 (551.071)  
.....

Motion made by Alternate Mayor Pro Tempore Hernandez, seconded by Representative Rivera and carried that the City Attorney's Office in consultation with the City Manager, be authorized to negotiate the settlement and settle this matter in the case Application of El Paso Electric Company to Revise Its Energy Efficiency Cost Recovery Factor (EECRF) and Establish Revised Cost Caps, under Public Utility Commission of Texas Docket No. 53551, pending in Matter No. 22-1008-193, and to take all steps necessary, including the execution of any required documents, in order to effectuate this authority.

AYES: Representatives Hernandez, Molinar, Salcido, and Rivera

NAYS: Representative Annelo

ABSENT: Representatives Svarzbein, Rodriguez, and Lizarraga

.....  
**EX2.** Purchase, lease, exchange or value of real property located in El Paso, Texas. Matter No. 22-1004-1433 (551.072)  
.....

**NO ACTION** was taken on this item.  
.....

**ADJOURN**

Motion made by Representative Rivera seconded by Representative Hernandez and unanimously carried to **ADJOURN** the meeting at 10:55 a.m.

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

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Representatives Svarzbein, Rodriguez, and Lizarraga

.....  
APPROVED AS TO CONTENT:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Laura D. Prine, City Clerk