# REGULAR MEETING OF THE GOVERNING BODY OF THE CITY OF BLANCO

## Meeting Minutes January 9, 2024

A regular meeting of the City Council, City of Blanco, Texas was held on January 9, 2024, at 6:00 pm at the Byars Building, 308 Pecan Street, Blanco, Texas.

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 pm by Mayor Arnold, followed by roll call announcing a quorum was present. The Invocation was led by Council Member Smith and the Pledge of Allegiance was led by Mayor Mike Arnold. Council members present: Mayor Arnold, Mayor Pro-Tem Thrailkill and Council Members Smith, Swinson, McClellan, and Moses.

City staff present: Warren Escovy, Laurie Cassidy, and Police Chief Scott Rubin.

Mayor Arnold made the following announcements:

- Water restrictions have been lowered to Stage 2.
- There is currently no burn ban in effect.

#### Comments:

• Retta Martin, spoke regarding Blanco Streetscape, began in 2004 with a visionary preservation program, Texas Historic Preservation/night skies, Resolution passed in 2009 to form committee to come up with a master plan. Have been working on goals and now have an architect (Mainstreet Architects), a surveyor, and Phase 1 complete. Phases 2, 3, and 4 are in process. She shared a presentation with the City Council.

#### Staff Presentations:

- City Hall, Warren Escovy, City Administrator, discussed the following: City Hall will be
  closed next Monday in observance of Martin Luther King Jr., City Council candidate window
  opens January 17, Meter Audit Completed, City interest earned for 2023 year is \$142,238 in all
  accounts, using taxpayer dollars to grow interest, next month Sasha will provide quarterly
  financial report, and new lift station completion February 2024.
- Police Department Chief Rubin discussed the December Monthly Report. October/November data is still being processed from when County data was compromised so those columns have been left blank. Chief Rubin also discussed the Body-Worn Camera E-Grant and the Bullet-Resistant Shield E-Grant Programs.

Consent Agenda: The following items may be acted upon in one motion. No separate discussion or action is necessary unless requested by the Mayor or a Council Member, in which those items will be pulled for separate consideration.

1. Approval of Minutes from the December 12, 2023, Regular Meeting and Public Hearing.

Mayor Arnold pulled items two and three from the consent agenda.

Council Member Smith made a clarification from the previous meeting saying he had stated the Council approved a relief route. Correction: The city requested a relief route study and that is where we currently are with the State.

A motion was made by Council Member Smith to approve the consent agenda item one (Minutes from December 12, 2023) as presented (excluding items two and three), seconded by Council Member Moses, all in favor, motion carried unanimously.

- 2. Approval of Resolution 2024-R-0XX Criminal Justice Division Grant Application For Body-Worn Camera Grant (25% City Match) (Police Department).
- 3. Approval of Resolution 2024-R-0XX Criminal Justice Division Grant Application For Bullet-Resistant Shield Grant (No Match Requirement) (Police Department).

A motion was made by Council Member Smith to Approve Consent Agenda items two and three (for individual discussion) Approval of Resolution 2024-R-002 Criminal Justice Division Grant Application For Body-Worn Camera Grant (25% City Match) and Resolution 2024-R-003 Criminal Justice Division Grant Application For Bullet-Resistant Shield Grant (No Match Requirement), seconded by Council Member Swinson, all in favor, motion carried unanimously.

## New Business: Consider, discuss, and take appropriate action on the following:

- 1. Consideration, Discussion, and Take Possible Action on Recommendation to TXDOT Regarding Possible Relief Route on Hwy 281 Council Member Swinson discussed her points and has spoken with Joe Muck, TxDOT. Council Member Swinson's proposal is for a relief route to be located outside the city limits of Blanco and its ETJ, have no exits except for where it connects to the existing Highway 281 north and south of town, have no frontage roads, and at a minimum, send these recommendations to TxDOT and all our state representatives. TxDOT has not selected a route at this time. The council has NOT approved of a relief route. The council discussed. Mayor-agrees should have say in decision, committee is currently working on this, but we need community involvement, in favor of taking a stand, need community wide consensus. Mayor Pro-Tem Thrailkill spent the last few days reaching out to persons in community, very enthusiastic and supportive of this measure. Attorney Tuggey suggested discussing in more detail in executive session for legal purposes. Once TxDOT narrows routes down they may present completely new routes. Item tabled to executive session.
- 2. Consideration and Discussion (No Action) to Amend Contract between the City of Blanco and Inframark to add seventh employee dedicated to street repair and maintenance of the ROW and Discussion of Asphalt Zipper. Warren Escovy, City Administrator discussed a street and infrastructure program with funding consisting of three items: new employee, equipment and materials, and a funding source. Fiscal Impact is \$163,000 annual cost with tremendous benefits to the citizens of Blanco. Council discussed, No Action Taken.
- 3. Consideration, Discussion and Take Possible Action on an Update to the City's Grants Affecting the 2023 Fiscal Year. Warren Escovy, City Administrator discussed grants and shared informational spreadsheet regarding the number of grants applied for in 2023 as well as the past few years, cost, and the money that has been allocated to the City. No Action Taken.

- 4. Consideration, Discussion, and Take Possible Action on Approval of Resolution 2024-R-0\_Authorizing City of Blanco Participation and Support of the "Blanco Bike Project". Council Member Swinson asked for the permission from the City to give away surplus bikes as part of a bike program through the Pedestrian Alternative Transportation Modes Subcommittee where bikes are received, restored, and given away to persons in need of a bike. The subcommittee currently has about 15 adult bikes to be given away in January/February. Requesting the Council's permission to move forward. Blanco Blue Bikes was created and used about 10 years ago for this same purpose. This would be a budget neutral item with little staff time required of the city secretary to keep records. Subcommittee to do all of the work, volunteers only, release forms required to participate. Giving away "city property" through donations only. A motion was made by Council Member Swinson to approve Resolution 2024-R-004 Authorizing the City of Blanco's Participation and Support of the Blanco Bike Project, seconded by Council Member Moses, all in favor, motion carried unanimously.
- 5. Consideration, Discussion and Take Possible Action on Approval of Resolution 2024-R-001 Authorizing the Submission of a Community Development Block Grant Mitigation-Resilient Communities Program Project Application to the General Land Office. Warren Escovy, City Administrator discussed the upcoming two RFP's. The first one is for the purpose of selecting a grant writer/administrator (which is the reasoning behind the Resolution to be approved tonight) and the second RFP is for the purpose of updating/revising our comprehensive master plan, land use updates, etc. once a grant administrator has been selected and if we receive grant funds of up to \$300,000. A motion was made by Council Member Smith to approve Resolution R-001 Authorizing the Submission of a Community Development Block Grant Mitigation-Resilient Communities Program Project Application to the General Land Office, seconded by Council Member Swinson, all in favor, motion carried unanimously.
- 6. Consideration, Discussion and Take Possible Action on Approval of Resolution 2024-R-0\_\_\_\_\_ Creation of Comprehensive Master Plan (CMP) Task Force. Warren Escovy said this is a Council resolution to support the creation of a Comprehensive Master Plan Task Force. The CMP task force will be an invaluable tool for whoever is hired to update the Comprehensive Plan. The city needs participation from Blanco residents and members of the Blanco community, a council liaison, as well as members from both the Planning & Zoning Commission and Historic Preservation Commission to encompass a variety of ideas. Bobby McClung is willing to volunteer for the committee. A motion was made by Council Member Smith to approve Resolution R-005 Creation of Comprehensive Master Plan (CMP) Task Force and to tender offer to Bobby McClung to Chair Committee, seconded by Council Member Moses, all in favor, motion carried unanimously.
- 7. Consideration and Discussion (No Action) on Possible Amendments to UDC Sections 1.13 and 5.7, Reducing the Maximum Block Size to 275 Feet and Applying the Same to all Zoning Types, subject only to Council-approved Exceptions. Warren Escovy shared currently the City requires the total block length shall not exceed one-thousand-three hundred twenty (1,320) feet, 5.7 residential standards, cul-de-sac streets shall not exceed one thousand (1,000) feet in length, measured from the centerline of the intersecting roadway to the center of the turnaround (Sec.7.2). Council Member Swinson provided her suggested changes to include a block length of 275' which is the typical City of Blanco block. R-1 would be exempt from this requirement. Council discussed, Planning & Zoning Commission seemed in favor of idea, process could take approximately 3 years. If the Council moves forward, there would be public notice in paper and public hearing at P&Z and CC in February 2024. Will take about 6 months to obtain grant and two years to complete per Warren. No Action Taken.

## Old Business: Consider, discuss, and take appropriate action on the following:

1. Consideration, Discussion, and Take Possible Action on Approval of Extension of City Services or Disannexation of 4.99 Acre Property at 1917 N. US Hwy 281 located in the H. Eggleston Survey No. 24, Abstract No. 0001, Blanco County, Texas. Item moved to executive session.

Closed regular meeting and convened into executive session at 7:31 pm.

Executive Session in accordance with Texas Government Code: in accordance with the authority contained in the Texas Government Code, Sections 551.071, 551.072, and 551.074.

- Texas Government Code Sections 551.071 (Consultation with City Attorney) and Section 1.05, Texas Disciplinary Rules of Professional Conduct; Confer with City Attorney regarding City Water Agreements with Texas Water Company
- 2. Texas Government Code Sections 551.071 (Consultation with City Attorney), 551.072 (Real Estate) and Section 1.05, Texas Disciplinary Rules of Professional Conduct; Confer with City Attorney regarding Pharr Paradise Utility Easement Agreement.
- 3. Texas Government Code Section 551.071 (Consultation with City Attorney) and Section 1.05, Texas Disciplinary Rules of Professional Conduct. Confer with City Attorney regarding legal issues associated with the Water Treatment Plant Project; Bids, Contract. Award and Notice to Proceed.
- 4. Texas Government Code Section 551.071 (Consultation with City Attorney) and Section 1.05, Texas Disciplinary Rules of Professional Conduct. Confer with City Attorney regarding Approval of Extension of City Services or Disannexation of 4.99 Acre Property at 1917 N. US Hwy 281 located in the H. Eggleston Survey No. 24, Abstract No. 0001, Blanco County, Texas.
- 5. Texas Government Code Section 551.071 (Consultation with City Attorney) and Section 1.05, Texas Disciplinary Rules of Professional Conduct. Confer with City Attorney regarding TXDOT Study of Possible Relief Route on Hwy 281 and related City Transportation Planning.
- 6. Texas Government Code Section 551.074 (Personnel Matters) to deliberate the appointment, employment, evaluation, reassignment, duties, discipline, or dismissal of City Administrator.
- Texas Government Code Section 551.071 (Consultation with City Attorney) and Section 1.05, Texas Disciplinary Rules of Professional Conduct. Confer with City Attorney regarding Pending Legal Matters.

### Closed executive session at 8:41 pm and convened into regular meeting.

NB #1: Consideration, Discussion, and Take Possible Action on Recommendation to TXDOT Regarding Possible Relief Route on Hwy 281. A motion was made by Council Member Moses to take no legal stance or action until after the 281/Transportation Committee has met, seconded by Council Member McClellan, motion failed 2-3 with Mayor Pro-Tem Thrailkill and Council Member Swinson and Smith opposed.

A Motion was made by Council Member Swinson in the event that TxDOT builds a relief route for Hwy 281, we recommend that: the relief route be located outside the city limits of Blanco and outside of its ETJ, the relief route has no exits except where it connects to the existing Hwy 281 north and south of town, the relief route has no frontage roads, and at a minimum, we send this recommendation to TxDOT and to all our state representatives, seconded by Council Member Smith, motion carried 3-2 with Council Members Moses and McClellan opposed.

# Adjournment:

A motion was made by Council Member Smith to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Council Member Moses, all in favor.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:43 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Mike Arnold, Mayor

ATTEST:

Laurie A. Cassidy, City Secretary

These minutes were approved on the 13 day of February, 2024.



