

STATE OF TEXAS §
COUNTY OF CAMERON §
TOWN OF LAGUNA VISTA §

**MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING
OF THE LAGUNA VISTA TOWN COUNCIL**

DATE: October 18, 2023
TIME: 6:00 p.m.
PLACE: Town of Laguna Vista City Hall

MEMBERS PRESENT: Michael Carter, Mayor
Johvonne Howard, Mayor Pro-Tem
Bettina Tolin, Council Member Place 3
Rolando Gonzalez, Council Member Place 4
Teresa Bryant, Council Member Place 5
Silke De Gobeo, Council Member Place 6

Alan T. Ozuna, Esq.
Rendie R. Gonzales, City Manager
Crystal Chapa, City Secretary
Anthony David, Chief of Police
Ricky Gonzalez, Commander
Duvie Alcozer, Building Inspector
Norma Barbosa, Court Clerk
Karla De La Pena, City Clerk
Emmanuel Zuniga, Public Works Director

MEMBERS ABSENT: Dr. Christopher Romero, Council Member Place 1

ORDER OF BUSINESS

• **Call to Order**

Mayor Carter called the meeting to order at 6:01pm.

• **Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance**

Invocation lead by Council Member Tolin.

• **Roll Call/Excused Absences-** Council Member Romero

Motion was made by Mayor Carter to excuse Council Members Romero.
Second was made by Council Member Bryant.

VOTE

Council Member Howard	Aye	Council Member Bryant	Aye
Council Member Tolin	Aye	Council Member De Gobeo	Aye
Council Member Gonzalez	Aye	Mayor Carter	Aye

Motion Carried

OPEN FORUM - At this time, audience is allowed 3 minutes per person to address the Council on any topic. There will be no discussion or formal action taken during this agenda item. The speaker must identify themselves before speaking. A Speaker Request Form must be presented to the City Secretary prior to the meeting.

Chet Davis of 57 Bethpage, Donald Haydon of 17 Bethpage, and Nancy Otterson of 93 Bethpage addressed the council on concerns with the health clinic and EMS.

- Mr. Davis spoke about his 40-year experience as a family physician and patient referrals generating income.
- Mr. Haydon spoke about the meeting held at the Golf course, the amount of times he attempted to contact the City Manager before contact was made, and handed out a folder with take a ways of what he attempted to summarize before his time was up.
- Ms. Otterson advised of her experience at the Harlingen office, and the funded EMS service vs. the volunteer services we had.

NEW BUSINESS – Discussion, consideration, and possible action on each of the following items:

- **MINUTES** – Consideration and possible action to approve the following minutes:
 - September 12, 2023, Regular Town Council meeting

Motion was made by Council Member Tolin to approve the September 12th minutes.

Second was made by Council Member Gonzalez.

VOTE

Council Member Howard	Aye	Council Member Bryant	Aye
Council Member Tolin	Aye	Council Member De Gobeo	Aye
Council Member Gonzalez	Aye	Mayor Carter	Aye

Motion Carried

FINANCIAL REPORTS – Review of Monthly Financial Reports. (City Manager)

The Check Register, Bank Reconciliation, Income Statement, and Balance Sheets were provided to Council for review.

Rendie advised of the fiscal year end, we closed out the books as of yesterday and will be providing the Trial Balance to the auditors to begin the audit. Rendie also advised that we ended the year above in our revenue in every category except building permits but that was made up for in the other categories. She further stated that we also spent less on our expenses so we should see an increase in our general fund.

Mayor Carter said very good and good job to everyone.

UTRGV MEDICAL CLINIC – Discussion on the status of the UTRGV Clinic. (City Manager/Mayor)
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Mayor Carter advised everyone that as of December 1st the UTRGV clinic will close their doors, he also stated it was a good partnership for the last five years. Mayor further advised he did attend the meeting last week held at the Golf Club in the HOA room and it was a good turnout, a lot of good information and he took everyone’s concerns to heart.

Mayor advised that he talked extensively to UTRGV’s administration about the reasons for the clinic’s closure and what we can do to save the clinic. UTRGV advised that they lost \$286,000 last year and it is unattainable to keep the clinic open and they didn’t just close our clinic but two others in addition. Mayor stated that moving forward he hopes working together we can get another primary care physician in here.

Council Member De Gobeo advised the audience we didn’t know either and we were as surprised as everyone else that the clinic was closing. She continued that she was a patient at the clinic the entire five years since she likes to support our local businesses, however looking back it didn’t come as a surprise to her because when she went there, there were no other patients in there. She continued to advise that we repeatedly tried and struggled with them to accept walk ins, they said they would accept walk ins but when calling in they would not have a Dr. available to be able to accept them. Council Member De Gobeo added that the city supported them financially and had the hardest time receiving data from them and knowing how many new patients they were receiving. Council member De Gobeo also advised that the city advised them that advertisement was needed to let people know they are there and were encouraged to attend the events, but it was difficult to get them to attend and further added that this is not how business should be and that she is very disappointed in how all this went down.

Mayor Carter allowed a member of the audience (identified as Natalie Ruiz) to make a comment. The member of the audience advised the everyone to refer to documents she passed out and to take a moment to review the timeline to fill the gaps on what was stated by the Council.

Mayor Carter stated that there is no reason to rehash what happened and that we need to move forward, the UTRGV clinic is not coming back. Mayor advised that Dean Michael Patriarca had advised us that we would need to cover every single loss that they may incur in the future in order to remain open and that would put us in the business of running a clinic and that is not what we are in the business to do. Mayor Carter further stated that he hopes we can get someone else in

here and added that if UTRGV had done such a great job they would have been busy and if they had given a great product the people would have shown up to go there and they didn't show up.

DU IT BY THE BAY–Consideration and possible action to approve the hosting of the sixth annual Du it By the Bay on Sunday, January 28, 2023. (City Manager)

Rendie advised the council that we have been approached again to host the 6th annual Du it By the Bay on Sunday January 28th 2023.

Motion was made by Council Member Tolin to approve the 6th annual Du it By the Bay.
Second was made by Council Member Bryant.

VOTE

Council Member Howard	Aye	Council Member Bryant	Aye
Council Member Tolin	Aye	Council Member De Gobeo	Aye
Council Member Gonzalez	Aye	Mayor Carter	Aye

Motion Carried

RESOLUTION 2023-024– Consideration and possible action to adopt Resolution 2023-024 denying Texas Gas Service Company's statement of intent to increase rates. (City Attorney)

Town Attorney Mr. Ozuna advised the Council that this is the standard resolution, and he is recommending we approve it.

Motion was made by Council Member Gonzalez to approve Resolution 2023-024.
Second was made by Council Member De Gobeo.

VOTE

Council Member Howard	Aye	Council Member Bryant	Aye
Council Member Tolin	Aye	Council Member De Gobeo	Aye
Council Member Gonzalez	Aye	Mayor Carter	Aye

Motion Carried

HOT HOLIDAY INCENTIVE PROGRAM– Discussion, consideration, and possible action to initiate the HOT Holiday Incentive Program. (City Manager)

Rendie advised the council that at the last meeting she came to them to increase the marketing for the short-term rentals and one of the ways to do that is increasing advertising and use HOT funds to purchase promotional items. At the last meeting, she further advised the idea of upgrading holiday Christmas decorations for the Town and promoting December short term stays with a discount during that month.

Rendie further advised of the quotes provided for adding commercial ornaments and tree topper that go with the tree we have. Also, some new decorations for the entrance of 510 and 100.

Mayor allowed a question from the audience (identity unknown). The Audience member asked if the Town has a plan for the clinic or if we intend to develop a plan or are just hoping one shows up. Mayor answered that we do have a plan and are working to bring someone in. The audience member followed up by asking when we will be ready to share that plan. Mayor answered when we do have someone that will come talk with us. Mayor added that we have been talking to people and have had some say no they would not come here and a couple that are thinking about it.

Mayor allowed another question from a different audience member (identity unknown). The audience member asked if we would be addressing the EMT/First responder issues. Mayor answered no, it is not on the agenda.

Council Member Tolin stated that at the last meeting we discussed Laguna Vista themed decorations and asked how that worked out. Rendie answered that timing is an issue for this year as well as lights as decorations might look one way during the day but hard to identify at night as a specific animal. Rendie continued that anything already made and easily accessible would be generic like a fish or like the island's flamingos. Rendie advised getting something special made for photo ops and looked into large letters to spell Merry or a large LV but again timing wise we will have better luck for next year.

EXECUTIVE SESSION– Executive closed session in accordance with the Open Meetings Act, as authorized by the Texas Government Code, regarding any matter listed on the agenda pursuant to Section 551.071 – consultation with Town Attorney; 551.072 – deliberation regarding real property; 551.074 – deliberation regarding personnel matters; and 551.087 – deliberation regarding economic development negotiations.

Motion was made by Mayor Carter to go into executive session.

Second was made by Council Member Howard.

VOTE

Council Member Howard	Aye	Council Member Bryant	Aye
Council Member Tolin	Aye	Council Member De Gobeo	Aye
Council Member Gonzalez	Aye	Mayor Carter	Aye

Motion Carried

Meeting Adjourned for Executive Session at 6:30 p.m.

Meeting resumed at 6:46 p.m.

Mayor advised that he needed to consult with the council and town attorney regarding the clinic. He further added we are in talks with people right now and they wish to remain anonymous for

the time being but will be taking a tour of the facilities this week. Mayor continued to advise that there is no guarantee until the bottom line is signed but at least we are getting closer. Mayor also advised that we are planning on putting together a committee if this doesn't work out to attract economic development for a clinic.

Council Member De Gobeo stated that she is disappointed that our residents don't really think this is important and because we went into executive session everyone left and here we are again the same thing I have been seeing for years and years regarding lack of full participation from citizens.

CITY MANAGER REPORT

Rendie advised the council on the grant updates, we received the \$975,000 contract for the 2019 Floods and Tropical Storm Imelda. Grantworks and Mr. Ozuna is reviewing. This is for the drainage improvements along Palm Blvd, Orange Ln, Ebony, and Mesquite all between Taylor and Hibiscus.

Rendie also advised we hired a company out of Fort Worth that will help with the website and won't have to take it off of Godaddy to do so. They will help clean it up and help make it more interactive.

Rendie updated on the Stripes complaints: She spoke with their regional manager and he advised that there has been changes in management and we hope to see improvements in sanitation.

Lastly Rendie reminded everyone on the upcoming events, the Fall Festival on Friday the 27th, Veterans Day on November 11th, and The Christmas Event on Friday December 8th.

Council Member Howard thanked Rendie for following through on the streetlights on Hibiscus and Ebony, they were all out and now they are up and running.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion was made by Council Member Tolin to adjourn.

Second was made by Council Member Bryant.

VOTE

Council Member Howard	Aye	Council Member Bryant	Aye
Council Member Tolin	Aye	Council Member De Gobeo	Aye
Council Member Gonzalez	Aye	Mayor Carter	Aye


Motion Carried

Meeting Adjourned at 6:46 pm



Michael Carter, Mayor

Attest:



Crystal Chapa, City Secretary