

**CITY OF VIDOR
VIDOR CITY COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING
February 8, 2024**

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Mayor Songe
Councilmember Lee
Councilmember McGowan
Councilmember Thompson
Councilmember Barker

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Councilmember Herrera
Councilmember Weldon

Administrative Personnel: Robbie Hood, City Manager; Chris Leavins, City Attorney; Pebbles Eckhoff, Finance Director; Rod Carroll, Police Chief; Jerry Crumley, Code Enforcement Officer; and Vicki Watson, Interim City Secretary

A. OPENING, PRESENTATIONS, AND CITIZENS COMMENTS

A -1. Call to order and the establishment of a Quorum

A quorum was present, and the Regular Meeting of the Vidor City Council began at 7:00 p.m., Mayor Songe presiding.

A -2. Invocation and Pledge to the United States Flag and the State of Texas Flag

Rod Carroll, Police Chief, gave the Invocation and led the Pledge to the United States Flag and the State of Texas Flag.

A -3. Citizen Comments

There were no citizen comments.

B. COUNCIL CONSENT AGENDA

B -1. Approval of Accounts Paid:

Paid Invoices:	General Fund –	\$251,867.25
	MCBSF –	\$308.44
	Hotel Occupancy –	\$40.22
	Proprietary Fund –	<u>\$32,917.43</u>
	Total:	\$285,133.34

**B -2. Approval of Minutes: Special Called Meeting – January 17, 2024
Regular Meeting - January 25, 2024**

A motion to **approve the Consent Agenda** was made by Councilmember McGowan, seconded by Councilmember Thompson. The Council voted four (4) for and none (0) opposed. The motion carried.

C. COUNCIL REGULAR AGENDA

C -1. Discussion and possible action to approve an Ordinance amending Ordinance No 1456 calling for the Election of Three (3) Council Members in a City Election to be held on May 4, 2024, and setting up the procedures for the Election, the provisions for the Officers of the Election, establishing a Voting Precinct, and Polling Place, ordering a Runoff Election, if necessary to be held on June 15, 2024

Discusión y posible acción para aprobar una Ordenanza que modifique la Ordenanza No.1456 convocar la Elección de Tres (3) Miembros del Concejo en una Elección Municipal que se llevará a cabo el 4 de mayo de 2024, y establecer los procedimientos para la Elección, las disposiciones para los Oficiales de la Elección, establecer un Precinto de Votación y un Lugar de Votación, ordenando una Segunda Elección, si es necesario que se lleve a cabo el 15 de junio de 2024

Vicki Watson, Interim City Secretary, explained an additional Early Voting location was added, and a correction was made to the Elections Administration's email address as requested via an email from the Elections Administrator in Orange.

A motion was made by Councilmember McGowan, seconded by Councilmember Thompson to **approve the Ordinance**. The Council voted four (4) for and none (0) opposed. The motion carried.

C -2. Discussion and possible action to approve a Resolution amending authorized representatives for TexPool

Pebbles Eckhoff, Finance Director, explained this is to remove her predecessor and add her name as administrator, so she can have access to the account and start balancing it.

A motion was made by Councilmember Barker, seconded by Councilmember Thompson, to **approve the Resolution amending authorized representatives for TexPool**. The Council voted four (4) for and none (0) opposed.. The motion carried.

C -3. Discussion and possible action to approve and authorize the purchase of new bodycams and cameras for police interceptor vehicles

Rod Carroll, Police Chief, explained they were having bodycam issues during the last budget process, but he had hoped they would last another year. Chief Carroll stated at first they were just not charging, but now they are showing to be recording, but they are not recording. Chief Carroll stated the manufacturer was WatchGuard, but they were bought out by Motorola in 2022, and have come out with new ones, so they will no longer be supported. Chief Carroll explained funds will be taken from Police Seizure Funds for the remainder of this year, but it will be a budgeted line item going forward. Robbie Hood, City Manager, stated for years two through six, the City will either budget funds or perhaps use leftover ARCA funds.

Councilmember McGowan made a motion to **approve the purchase of new bodycams and cameras for police interceptor vehicles**. Councilmember Thompson seconded. The Council voted four (4) for and none (0) opposed. The motion carried.

C -4. Discussion and possible action to approve a Resolution authorizing the appointment of a reserve officer to the Vidor Police Department Reserve Force

Rod Carroll, Police Chief, stated the proposed reserve officer is a young man who was recently with Port Arthur Police Department and has seven years of experience with SWAT and as a K-9 officer. Chief Carroll explained he has been informed that one of the current reserve officers will be leaving soon, and he would like to have the new one ready to go with uniforms and equipment, etc.

A motion to **approve the Resolution authorizing the appointment of a reserve officer to the Vidor Police Department Reserve Force** was made by Councilmember McGowan, seconded by Councilmember Barker. The Council voted four (4) for and none (0) opposed. The motion carried.

C -5. Discussion and possible action to approve a Resolution authorizing the renewal and/or amendment of the Contract for Emergency and Non-Emergency Ambulance Services with Acadian Ambulance Service of Texas, LLC

Rod Carroll, Police Chief, stated we are coming up on our annual renewal time with Acadian and explained Acadian has been rolling calls back and forth between themselves and Allegiance, when necessary.

Councilmember McGowan discussed a recent incident at a patient's house where she called 9-1-1 and was dispatched to the ambulance service and got a voicemail which then hung up on her. Robert Crain, Acadian Ambulance Services, asked for the location and a screenshot so that he could investigate. Chief Carroll explained the location (*on Four Oaks Ranch Road*) would have gone to Beaumont's tower. A brief discussion ensued.

Mr. Crain discussed Acadian's great working relationship with Emergency Services District #1 (ESD1) and Allegiance. Mr. Crain stated, not counting the calls Acadian takes from Allegiance, they probably give Allegiance another 30-40 calls per month that Acadian is given. Mr. Crain explained Acadian will start a response until Allegiance is able to take over, then Acadian will cease their response. Mr. Crain stated that he and Chief Robert Smith, ESD1, do not want someone who needs an ambulance to have to wait until it can be determined if they are in the city limits or not. Mayor Songe questioned Chief Smith, who was in the audience, if he was in agreement with these statements, and he confirmed. Mr. Crain stated this has worked out splendidly for both Acadian and ESD1.

Robbie Hood, City Manager, commended Acadian and stated every time an issue arises, they take ownership of it. Councilmember Lee discussed a recent incident at her home where an ambulance had to be called and arrived in less than seven minutes. A brief discussion ensued regarding Acadian pulling out of Port Arthur and how that will affect the City of Vidor.

A motion was made by Councilmember Barker, seconded by Councilmember Thompson, to **approve the Resolution authorizing the renewal of the contract**. The Council voted four (4) for and none (0) opposed. The motion carried.

C -6. Discussion and possible action to approve a Resolution appointing one or more members to the Zoning Board of Adjustment

This agenda item was tabled.

C -7. Discussion and possible action to set a public hearing regarding the renewal of the designation and/or the designation of the establishment of five (5) residential reinvestment zones for the purpose of residential tax abatements, and providing interested persons the opportunity to be heard

Chris Leavins, City Attorney, explained in order to renew the reinvestment zones we have now, and out of an abundance of caution, we need to set a public hearing to cover our bases. Mr. Leavins stated this public hearing will take place at the meeting on February 22, 2024.

A motion to set a public hearing regarding the renewal of the designation and/or the designation of the establishment of five (5) residential reinvestment zones for the purpose of residential tax abatements, and providing interested persons the opportunity to be heard for Thursday, February 22, 2024, was made by Councilmember McGowan, seconded by Councilmember Thompson. The Council voted four (4) for and none (0) opposed. The motion carried.

C -8. Discussion and possible action to set a public hearing to provide interested persons in the annexation of the property located at 17160 IH-10, Vidor, Texas, owned by Road Ranger, LLC, an opportunity to be heard

Chris Leavins, City Attorney, stated we have to hold a public hearing before the City can consider annexing the property located at 17160 IH-10 as petitioned. Mr. Leavins stated this will also be on February 22, 2024.

A motion was made by Councilmember McGowan, seconded by Councilmember Thompson, to **set a public hearing for February 22, 2024, to provide interested persons in the annexation of the property located at 17160 IH-10, Vidor, Texas, owned by Road Ranger, LLC, an opportunity to be heard.** The Council voted four (4) for and none (0) opposed. The motion carried.

C -9. Discussion regarding Code Enforcement goals and objectives

Jerry Crumley, Code Enforcement Officer, discussed the Code Enforcement Plan for 2024 which included hiring and training new Code Enforcement Assistants (*one now and one mid-year due to a retirement*); improving code enforcement efficiency and effectiveness; continuing public visibility; developing a plan for interaction with Municipal Court; continued enforcement of codes, including violations and citations, as warranted; developing a list of habitual problem areas by wards and making them top priorities; developing a plan for dumpsites; identifying properties that need to be secured, not demolished, for safety and health purposes; enforcing junk motor vehicle codes and contracting with towing companies; demolishing ten properties; and continuing to place liens on properties cleaned up by the City.

Mr. Crumly stated he has recently learned of possible CDBG (*Community Development Block Grant*) opportunities for people who cannot afford to have their property cleaned up. Robbie Hood, City Manager, explained since we are not an entitled city (*over 50,000*), we have to fight with other cities our size to get these funds and stated he will reach out to Traylor & Associates. Mayor Songe stated she would like to continue getting a list so that she can reach out to some of her resources that are willing help with cleanups for the elderly and/or disabled.

Councilmember Barker asked if there is a way to track these things by wards. Mr. Crumley responded that the monthly reports contain this information and can be given to Council at the first meeting of each month. Mr. Hood discussed the Incode Call Center the City will be getting which will be able to track all of this information, once it is in place.

C-10. Discussion and possible action related to Pride and Progress program and development and economic incentives for residential construction

Jerry Crumley, Code Enforcement Officer, reviewed the list given to Council which shows the amount of money the City either paid, or lost, due to Pride and Progress. Mr. Crumley stated the City used to provide two free dumpsters, at a cost of nearly \$28,000 last year, and requested that be changed to one dumpster. Mr. Crumley stated he would also like to do away with the free inspections which cost the City approximately \$17,000 last year just for HVAC and electrical inspections, as the City is still having to pay our inspectors.


Robbie Hood, City Manager, stated basically we want to waive the permit fees like we have been doing, charge inspection fees, and provide one dumpster per residential structure. Mr. Hood explained the average amount we spend per residence on inspections is approximately \$500, and this is a compromise.

A motion to **provide only one dumpster per residence, charge inspection fees, and waive the permit fees** was made by Councilmember McGowan, seconded by Councilmember Thompson. The Council voted three (3) for and none (0) opposed. *(Councilmember Barker abstained.)*

C-11. Consideration of Adjournment

A motion for **Consideration of Adjournment** was made by Councilmember McGowan, seconded by Councilmember Thompson. The Council voted unanimously, and the meeting was adjourned at 7:26 p.m.

These minutes were approved on February 22, 2024.



Misty Songe, Mayor

ATTEST:



Vicki Watson, Interim City Secretary