

**CITY OF VIDOR  
VIDOR CITY COUNCIL  
REGULAR MEETING  
October 10, 2024**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Mayor Songe  
Councilmember McGowan  
Councilmember Thompson  
Councilmember Barker  
Councilmember Weldon

**MEMBERS ABSENT:**

Councilmember Lee  
Councilmember Bourque

**Administrative Personnel:** Robbie Hood, City Manager; Pebbles Eckhoff, Finance Director; Rachel Duplechain, City Secretary; Chris Leavins, City Attorney; Rodney Johnson, Captain;

**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 7:01 p.m., Misty Songe, Mayor, presiding.

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

Chris Leavins, City Attorney, gave the Invocation and led the Pledge to the United States Flag and the State of Texas Flag.

**A -3. Proclamation – Breast Cancer Awareness October 2024**

Mayor Songe, reads Breast Cancer Awareness Proclamation, then asks if there are any survivors in the audience. There was not so Songe, presented the Proclamation to Council Member Nicole McGowan.

**A -4. Citizen Comments**

Mayor Songe, calls Nick Lagusis, to speak. Nick Lagusis, citizen of Vidor, I do live in Vidor. Well, it seems that we just can't seem to move forward. City seems to have been moving forward for quite a few years and all of a sudden last year, we had some unfortunate oh whatever you want to call it, things at the City, scandals about the City Manager, Mayor and whoever else investigation a lot of money spent. City Manager was reinstated and 5-0 vote Mayor, only Mayor in the history of Vidor, Texas, 5-0 vote of no confidence our current Mayor Misty Songe. At the Library well previously to the Library a lot of lies and half-omissions by the current Mayor. Then she wants to email me directly to clear the air. Well, I never responded to her email, but what I have here I got when I came to City Hall is for your request and whatever else they sent, no big deal, kinda weird. Still troubles me why some of you go through so much trouble to cause discourse in the City, post lies on social media and then want to go directly to me to clear the air. Why not go on social media and clear the air? I can only assume, and I hate using the word assume what her intentions are. We also have push back on giving a number of things like the 5-year vesting and the Police Officers', raises they earn, you have to give them the raises they deserve in order to keep good officers. We have lost some good officers to

other agencies. Now my biggest question is how the City is going to move forward and you (Mayor) quit talking gibber jabber when you don't get your way. I mean all of this from last year to this year all the discourse is coming straight from her, not the City Manager. I mean number of people have stood up and spoke last time about how things were. Councilmember Weldon interjects three (3) minutes, three (3) minutes. Mayor Songe, I do not have time it's my meeting. Weldon, three (3) minutes. Songe, that's fine a quorum has already been called. Council Member Weldon and Councilmember Thompson, both exit the Chambers. Lagusis, three minutes, well anyway, plenty of people came forward past two to three meetings, standing room only, when ya'll were working on this room, it was out front, this according to the current Executive Team up front. You're just tacking on extra items trying to cause problems. The other for your request that I have got here, I could not find one time that the Mayor in the past for four (4) years ever questioned the budget at all. Robbie Hood, City Manager, and Chris Leavins, City Attorney, both exit the Chambers. Now all of a sudden there is a problem, back at the school with these two ladies, Ms. Weldon stated that Jessica Barker and Misty Songe, are withholding information about the formulas being broke from the previous CFO and it's up to ya'll to inform and ya'll didn't inform the current CFO. I mean what is it going to take to move forward and stop trying to stab people in the back when you don't get your way. That's what I would really love to know. Hood, Leavins, Weldon, and Thompson all return to the meeting. I could sit here and talk for eight (8) hours and not get in trouble. Yeah there is a three (3) minute rule, but for some reason our Mayor does not want to enforce that because she likes to keep her friends at the end and come up and talk for ten minutes and cover stuff that no one else or keep rambling on like sexual harassment she's going to file against the City, I mean really okay tell me what you see, very odd kinda deranged, if you ask me personally, that's just my opinion. And I know or found out something that y'all's citizens should hear that the City saved \$280,000 by removing the HAS, but they didn't take anything away they gave a better plan with better coverage and everyone in this courtroom would agree. You gotta get over it, you gotta work at some type of meeting and move forward. But I guess we will see what's going to happen. Thank ya'll. Mayor Songe, thank you.

Mayor Songe, Ms. Deborah. Councilmember Thompson, before Ms. Deborah speaks am I able to call the point to order now or is this something that I have to wait on. Chris Leavins, City Attorney, would be why the rule was in play so at this point it wouldn't be able to be done. Thompson, so I can do it now. Songe, yeah. Leavins, there is no rule violation right now, so the point of order only comes to a point if there is violation of something of a policy or a rule. Thompson, okay Ms. Fetherlin, you're good to go. Deborah Fetherlin, and I don't need three (3) minutes, and it doesn't take very long to say what I got to say, thank you very much. One, Council Member McGowan, interjects what was the name of your city, Ms. Fetherlin? Fetherlin, Beaumont. McGowan, okay thank you. Fetherlin, I was asked exactly 32 times last week, why do I have my nose where it doesn't belong and if you would like the names, I can rattle them off. But there are about fifty (50) senior citizens, and I can give you their names right now that are struggling month to month, day to day, to do what they have to do and the prices all around are going up. So when you see me standing here visualize those fifty (50) senior citizens that are just struggling and that last week a councilman made the, last meeting a councilman made the comment that she is a nurse not a CPA or accountant that's technically correct but when you sit in that chair right there you represent every dime spent and accounted for in the City of Vidor. McGowan interjects do not tell me what my position is. Songe, aye you cannot argue with her, it's her three (3) minutes. McGowan, then I will be the one that really leaves, and McGowan, exits the chambers. Songe, okay. Robbie Hood, City Manager, Mayor may I say something please when she gets through. I know I didn't sign up, but I have something to say when she gets through. Songe, please. Hood, I'm sorry to interrupt. Songe, I didn't interrupt Nick when was speaking same with you, you should be able to speak without interruptions as well. Fetherlin, I spoke with you this morning and you were quite angry with me when I got finished. Songe, mmhmm. Fetherlin, this clown show you're the director, you tell them sit down, you call points of order, it's your show. He gets up and says Misty doesn't get her way, in this room it is your show. We need to go back and read the City Charter of meetings and how they are to attend, you do not get to intimidate a citizen while she is making a citizen comment. I can't rattle off the

Charter right off the top of my head, but it's somewhere in the 300s, I'm sure the Attorney can bring it up. Songe, thank you.

Mayor Songe calls Ms. Elaine Fitzwater to speak. Elaine Fitzwater, my name is Elaine Fitzwater, and I am new to Vidor, Mayor, and Councilmen. My daughter was bitten on October 1<sup>st</sup>, by three (3) pit bulls running loose on our street, I have pictures if you all would like to see them. Mayor, it's not for a shock factor or drama, it realistically what a pit bull can do with its capability to bite. I'm here telling my daughter's story because she is at work, she has two jobs second shift. My point in being here is to hopefully keep this from happening to someone else. I'm here to inform the Vidor Citizens that if you have a dangerous dog or pack of dogs on your street, you may have to find yourself protecting yourself and your family, even though city ordinance clearly states that a dog is to be confined to the owner's property. Once a dog bites it's considered dangerous the owner has a set of rules to go along with that. That's just my introduction. There's a pack of pit bulls that have been running loose on S. Tannahill for a year that I know of, I have not lived here for a year by the way. They have continually barked and intimidated people from walking or riding bicycles for months, I have chased them out of my yard many times, with their hair raised and growling. I have noticed the barking seemed to have ramped up in the days before this incident with more aggression than before. Several people have commented on Crime Watch of Vidor, that they have called on these same dogs with nothing being done. One being Jessica Montoya, she gave me permission to use her name. I have requested calls and complaints, Fitzwater, all calls, and complaints in regard to all pit bulls running loose, running loose in the area on S. Tannahill within the last year. I was told this by the Police Department, that they don't release records that haven't resulted in arrest. I told them they don't arrest dogs; this is a dog bite incident. This is something to make you go hmmm, they didn't say there weren't any they just said they don't release them. So, my daughter went out on her walk on October 1<sup>st</sup> in the evening, she has done this many times before, she has lived at our address for a year and the dogs have seen her many times. But as she walked in front of 360 S. Tannahill this particular night of October 1<sup>st</sup>, the pack of three (3) pit bulls came charging at her more aggressively than before, she yelled get back, but instead they began to circle her and then one of them bit her. She screamed out in pain and for help, the neighbor came out from across the street and the boy that resides at 350 S. Tannahill where the dog resides and chased them off causing them to retreat long enough to get to our house. She didn't realize at the time, but the boy had an industrial broom to run them off with, that's the boy at 360 at 350 excuse me. She grabbed a bat to protect herself and she called 911, I grabbed my pepper spray as backup. And she as she. Councilmember Thompson, I would like to call the point of order please, I'm sorry to interrupt you where I stand on this issue of the speaking times, regardless of the content of whoever is speaking, we have rules in place, we have things in writing for the three (3) minutes. Songe, so why did we not call it Nick Lagusis, was speaking. If one gets to do it all three (3) should get to do it. Thompson, the reason I did not call it to Nick to be honest I did not know the process to be able to do that, because it is not something we usually have to do. Songe, but it's not fair to do it to her when we did not do it to the others. Fitzwater, believe me I only have about a minute left. Leavins, it just needs to be consistent that the point of order be raised to the presiding officer, which is you, Mayor, for you to make your ruling on it. Songe, we will be consistent as allowing her to continue as Nick was allowed to continue. Thompson, so since you're not willing to uphold the rules as they are clearly stated on the form that everybody signed in bold writing and since you refuse to uphold the rules of the Council as they should be done anyway. Because if you remember I did try to call the point of order at the end of Nick's statement and again I had to ask Chris, so for that reason I cannot do this tonight, I am not going to stand by while you just let the rules go by the wayside. Have a nice night. Councilmember Thompson exits the chambers. Fitzwater, do I continue? Songe, yes mam you may. Fitzwater, as she said I am calling the cops, the woman at 350 S. Tannahill calmy said call the cops, she didn't seem worried by that statement at all I heard her say it. But the two dogs from 360, had run up in the trailer and the one from 350 the boy had restrained in his yard. I did notice the broom lying at the side of the road. When the officers arrived, the male officer told me he had knocked on that door at 350 many times and that that dog wasn't right, he didn't tell me why he had knocked on that door many times just the dog wasn't right. At that time, I told him they did pack up on her and he said oh yeah, they will bite if they pack up. The female officer advised my daughter to get checked out at the hospital and so they ambulance was called for her. In the chaos she had thrown her drink and wet herself, if



these dogs had tripped her or she had fallen and they attacked her, we would have a very different story to tell today, I promise you. The officer called Animal Control to pick up the dogs for quarantine and I heard the conversation that the dog at 350 didn't bite. Needless to say, I was screaming and yelling in the middle of the street that one is aggressive too, the female officer made sure the third dog was taken as well, and I didn't go in the house until I knew that it was. I told the male officer I wanted to press charges, and he said you can't press charges on a dog, that's a civil suit and indeed that's my only recourse, but if it causes serious injury or death, it becomes a felony in the State of Texas. I have paperwork to back up everything I am saying by the way. I received a call on Monday the 7<sup>th</sup> from Sherri at Animal Control, advising me that the dogs were negative for rabies and that the owners could pick them up on the 11<sup>th</sup>. I said I am not okay with that as they will be back on the street where they have been for months. I said I am in the process of building my fence, but this happened in the street. Get this people her comment was did she have her reflective vest on, like it's her fault she got bit, are you kidding me, I guess the dog couldn't see her, I guess that's so the dog could see her better. That's the attitude I have come up against through this, I have my daughter's witness statement, I have the police report, I have the request for the open records for all the calls that came through, I have the State of Texas rules, I have people that have said they have called on these dogs and nothing has been done. Robbie Hood, City Manager, gets all documentation from Ms. Fitzwater, I will call you to set up a meeting. Fitzwater, thank you sir. Songe, thank you Ms. Elaine. Fitzwater, thank you all for your time. Hood, I will make sure you get all your documents back as well.

Mayor Songe, B Council Consent Agenda. Chris Leavins, City Attorney, interjects Mayor since you have lost a quorum the meeting will have to be recessed until a quorum can be reestablished. Do you want me to take that action? Songe, even though we started with a quorum. Leavins, I believe you still have to have a quorum to conduct business. Songe, so I will call this, Hood interjects may I say something before you do that, please. Songe, go ahead. Hood, do you want to stand up in the middle or is from here okay? Songe, go ahead. Hood, of course ya'll know I'm the City Manager. I live here in Vidor, everything that has been transpiring in the last month or so is doing nothing but showing negative light on our City. If ya'll don't know the Mayor and I work well together even in the year since I have been back, we have had no issues, correct? Songe, nods. Hood, we work very hard, and we are trying to move this City in the right direction and stuff, and we have great departments that work for the City, we have great staff that work for the City, they are very competent in the jobs that they do. I live here and I spend my money here in this City to support this growth and people on the outside are laughing at what is going on here. It's time we put a stop to this and come to an agreement that we are going to move this City forward in a positive way. The Mayor and I have already talked, that's how it needs to be, we are going to get back, we have done more in the last four (4) years than has been accomplished in the last ten (10) years in drainage, street improvements, facility improvements, and annexation, zoning and the whole nine yards. We have accomplished that together and we have worked on that together and together we need to continue to do that together. Songe, so let me point out the fact that we cannot conduct a meeting or do City business because we have Council people that choose to leave instead of listening or hearing as you have to hear things, I have to hear things, we all have to hear things so therefore the things we needed to do specifically on Animal Control, fines and stuff that would help these situations of the dangerous dogs we are now unable to do today because my quorum has exited the room. Hood, just to make it very clear it would have had to come back anyway for a decision as it was only on there as a discussion. Songe, well now it is not even going to be able to be discussed so we will call this meeting closed at 7:26pm, due to the lack of quorum leaving the room. Leavins, Mayor, Mayor, you need to adjourn. Songe, oh I said meeting closed, we are adjourned

***These minutes were approved on October 24, 2024.***



ATTEST:

Rachel Duplechain, City Secretary

Misty Songe, Mayor