

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

**Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, January 11, 2022, 6:00 pm**

A regular meeting of the City Council, City of Blanco, Texas was held on Tuesday, January 11, 2022, at 6:00 pm at the Gem of the Hills, 2233 US 281, Blanco, Texas.

The meeting was called to order at 6:09 pm by Mayor Rachel Lumpee, followed by roll call (Laurie Cassidy) announcing a quorum was present. The invocation was presented by Bryn Caddell and the Pledge of Allegiance was led by Mayor Lumpee. Council members present: Mayor Lumpee, Mayor Pro-Tem Saucedo, Councilmembers Smith, Barron, and McClellan. Councilmember Divine was absent.

City staff present: Warren Escovy, Kelly Kuentler, Laurie Cassidy, Lt. Jerry Thornhill, Police Chief Scott Rubin and Zach Dorris.

Mayor Lumpee made the following announcements: Lavender Festival artwork call-deadline is January 28; Water Fluency Workshop by the Texas Water Foundation will be on January 19, 6-8 pm at Gem of the Hills; Hometown Habitat at Gem of the Hills January 30 from 5-7:30pm; Hill Country Trail Ride Annual Cowboy Breakfast at Yett Park starts at 7:00 am on January 19; Save the date for Blanco Chamber of Commerce Mardi Gras Banquet & Ball, February 26; A movie is being filmed at Twin Sisters Dance Hall and around the square, next week; Annual trail ride will occur through Blanco, February 4-6; As of January 5 current active Covid cases is 202, the current risk level is severe, and the current level of community transmission is high; Blanco County burn ban is on until February 8, 2022.

Public Comments:

- Christine Anderson, resident at 380 Blanco Ave, thanked City staff, Laurie Cassidy, Olga Gamez, and former staff member, Will Daves for their support. Also acknowledged the support of Mayor Lumpee, enjoyed working with her on the Planning & Zoning Commission. She spoke in favor of Ms. Moore stating Ms. Moore is professional, has a strong work ethic, is focused and driven, and has completed a numerous list of long overdue tasks as Chairman of Planning & Zoning Commission.
- Nancy Arnold, resident of Blanco, asked a few questions: 1) How can you prove to us that TCEQ is investigating the incident with the water, 2) Why won't you admit the real reason is the old outdated equipment and infrastructure, 3) Isn't the real reason you are looking at Inframark is so you can get rid of the best Public Works Director Blanco has had, Ronnie Rodriguez, just because you don't like him and you don't know what to do in the first place?,

4) Why don't the citizens of Blanco get a vote if we want our local water and sewer run by a company 300 miles from Blanco that doesn't care about us? And good luck next election!

- Heinz Roesch, member of the Planning & Zoning Commission, spoke regarding New Business Item #3 regarding Susan Moore and the hard work and dedication she puts into her position as Chair. After speaking with Mrs. Moore, he learned she was asked to resign as Chair due to complaints regarding the way she was leading the meetings. Mr. Roesch said he believes this is harsh and she should have been warned and been able to correct her behavior and be more mindful when choosing her words.
- Susan Moore, 390 Blanco Ave, Chairman of Planning & Zoning Chair, said she has provided the December meeting minutes and her statement regarding issues discussed at the meeting (with the Mayor and Ms. Kuentler) and at that time has declined from resigning because she feels she has abided by all the records given by the administration to her and has upheld the UDC to the best of her ability. Will let my service the past two years stand. It has been an honor to serve on the Commission and my intent has always been the best for the City.
- Scott Anderson, resident at 1981 Mesquite spoke regarding New Business Item #3 Susan Moore, said Blanco is a small community who comes together in times of need to help each other. At the same time, you run the risk of leaders focusing on personal interests and objectives. Sue Moore in his opinion is the standard of how leaders should be measured. She is a strong leader, dedicated and most important has integrity. She wants what is best for the City as opposed to a personal agenda, she is a blessing for the City.
- Marcella Murrah, resident at 1008 9th Street since 1991 said she has been a business owner over 27 years and in management prior to that and has put out numerous RFQ's and that much time has gone into the review of each one. She said the customer service score of Inframark is 1.3. Does Council and administration want to force this lackluster management company on the residents of Blanco? Go back to the drawing board and put forth the time and effort to find someone better. Don't just hire the best of the worst.
- Wesley Murrah, resident at 815 Greenlawn, appalled with the possibility of hiring this out of town company that does not care about Blanco. The Public Works employees were handing out water during the freeze. He is also appalled at the removal of Ronnie Rodriguez and said this Council will be changed this next election.
- Gail McClellan, resident at 1510 Greenlawn spoke of the new 2 acre development on Greenlawn Parkway (notice mailed by the City). She has spoken with Mr. Doucet, and he seems to have some good ideas. She is concerned with the statement in the letter that says intent is to save all the trees, "if possible". The City has a policy that all Heritage Oaks must be left standing and there is a small fine if this is violated.

She is speaking for the people who want the City to stand firm, NO Heritage Trees to be cut down!! Worried that this has not been stressed to the Owner and decisions are being made so fast, the details are what makes Blanco so special, and we forget what is important to the citizens and that may be why our people are not being taken care of. We are dealing with water, wastewater, infrastructure, building permits, developers, and a number of other things. The beauty of Blanco was that it was a simple town and now large organizations are being invited in. They want our money, and they want to tell us how to do things, but they don't care about the employees and residents. Blanco is paying the price for this; we have a lot of smart people in Blanco. Susan Moore is one example of this. Last month Planning & Zoning was praised for their hard work on updates to the zoning map. This month Mrs. Moore is up for removal from office. No one in this room is more honest, forth right, and with more integrity than Susan. Is this the way we treat people? Who works harder or more hours than Ronnie? We need to all work together and have better communication between Council and the residents. Blanco is falling apart right now. Maybe the taxpayers should have more input, maybe have more town halls?

- Wendell Moore, resident at 390 Blanco Ave and husband of Susan Moore, spoke about his wife saying she has served on the commission almost three years, he is proud of Susan's service to the City and feels she has given her best. She has spent many long hours researching issues, has asked hard questions and it is absurd the Mayor and Council has asked her to resign or be removed when instead they should be honored to have someone with her integrity and work ethics serving the community for free. Everywhere you look there are help wanted signs, owners are begging for help and Susan, who is a volunteer is asked to leave. She will not resign and if you remove her, it will be City's loss.
- Retta Martin, resident at 302 4th Street spoke in support of Susan Moore, she has integrity and high standards. She wants to help Blanco. Look at the first amendment rights.
- Will Daves, resident at 117 Rust Ranch spoke saying Council has a tough job, not everyone knows all the information that you have. Everyone has said a lot tonight and I will let that stand. Your actions dealing with Ronnie Rodriguez and now Susan Moore, which is a reflection on your character. The character they have that they have given to the City this council does not deserve.
- David Park, resident 1206 7th Street, spoke saying it is his wish for Susan Moore, to be reinstated. He has known Susan and Wendell for a number of years. She is a born leader and born leaders have to make tough decisions sometimes. In his opinion she exercises common sense and leadership. He said he hopes Council will take this into consideration when they evaluate whether to reinstate her, she is a great leader, and it would be a tremendous loss to the community to lose her.

- Kenneth Moore sent email (read by Laurie Cassidy) in support of Susan Moore. He has known Mrs. Moore about 30 years. She is among the most honest and hardworking people he has ever known.
- Laura Swinson sent email (read by Laurie Cassidy) regarding New Business Item #1 – Parking lot at the Blanco United Methodist Church. She urged Council not to transfer ownership of this area but instead keep it as City owned property.

Presentation by Gem of the Hills, Terri Seiler has been moved to February.

Staff Presentations:

- City Hall, Kelly Kuenstler spoke saying she had attended the meeting with Susan Moore and the Mayor and wanted to make it clear, the Mayor had asked Susan Moore to step down as chair, not to be removed from the Planning & Zoning Commission. Secondly, regarding Gail McClellan's comments, Kelly said she walked the property with Mr. Doucet and it is his intention to only remove the scrub trees, he is very well aware of the City's ordinance. Lastly, she introduced Warren Escovy, new City Administrator. Mr. Escovy comes from the City of Sealy. He has a lot of development and flood management experience which will prove helpful for the City of Blanco. Mr. Escovy said hello.
- Public Works, Zach Dorris, Interim Public Works Director spoke regarding loss of pump at the lift station today. Now Pittsburg and the Lift Station are both at 50% capacity. He has calls in to a couple of companies to get quotes on cost to repair and they are monitoring the situation.
- Police Department, Chief Rubin presented monthly statistics report for December 2021.

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 Councilmember, in which those items will be pulled for separate consideration.

1. Approval of Minutes from the November 9, 2021, Regular City Council Meeting.
2. Approval of Minutes from the November 30, 2021, Special City Council Meeting.
3. Approval of Minutes from the December 7, 2021, Special City Council Meeting and Public Hearing.
4. Approval of Minutes from the December 13, 2021, Special City Council Meeting.
5. Discussion and Possible Action on Capital Improvement Asset Management Advisory Committee.
6. Approval of the Appointment of Heinz Roesch to Replace Christine Anderson on the Capital Improvement Asset Management Advisory Committee (Councilmember Saucedá's Appointment).
7. Presentation, Discussion and Possible Action on the Approval of an Amendment to the Interlocal Agreement Between the City of Blanco and the Blanco Emergency Services District, Number 2.

8. Approval of Update to UDC Section 2.3 (2) Planning & Zoning Commission, (c) Membership and Voting.
9. Approval of Amendment to City of Blanco City Administrator Agreement.
10. Discussion, Consideration and Possible Action on the Approval of Annual UDC Updates Approved by Planning & Zoning Commission (Kelly Kuenstler, Interim City Administrator).

Mayor Lumpee announced she was removing Item #7 from New Business, approval of annual UDC updates and moving to the Consent agenda. Councilmember McClellan asked that Item #9, approval of amendment to personnel policy be pulled from consent agenda and moved to new business.

A motion was made by Councilmember Smith to approve all Consent Agenda Items with the exception of Item #9 being pulled and moved to New Business for further discussion, seconded by Councilmember Barron, all in favor, motion carried unanimously.

New Business: Discuss, Consider, and Take Appropriate Action on the Following:

1. Approval of Amendment to the City of Blanco Personnel Policy Manual Section 2.05.E.3. Attorney Tuggey explained the revision to the policy was to make it more clear what rights the employee has under applicable law. Councilmember McClellan suggested an update to include request to appeal to the City Council. **A motion was made by Councilmember McClellan to table item, seconded by Councilmember Saucedo, two in favor, two opposed, due to tie, Mayor Lumpee also voted in favor of tabling the item, Councilmembers Barron and Smith were opposed, motion carried 3-2.**
2. Presentation, Discussion and Possible Action on Parking Lot at the Blanco United Methodist Church and Extension of Pecan Street Church. Aaron Staas contacted the City, he noticed the church's parking lot appears to be off property based on a projection of the known property line on the east side of the south parcel. They need to establish the northeast property corner to combine parcels and because of this they want to know if the City is interested in transferring the parking area to the church. They want to create a playground for children and create a parking lot where none currently exists. Councilmember Smith has walked the property and suggested head in parking. Ms. Kuenstler said donation of parking lot was at Council discretion, but she recommended that Council take no action on the extension of Pecan Street until a better inventory can be completed. **A motion was made by Councilmember Smith to allow the Blanco United Methodist Church to improve the roadway in compliance with City standards, and place head in parking within the right-of-way for Church and City use, seconded by Councilmember Barron, all in favor, motion carried unanimously.**

3. Discussion, Consideration, and Possible Action on the Rental of the Byars Building. **Councilmember Barron asked to table this item.**
4. Discussion, Consideration, and Possible Action on the Removal of the Planning & Zoning Chairperson. Mayor Lumpee and Ms. Kuentler met with Mrs. Moore and asked her to step down as chairman of the Planning & Zoning Commission (not to step down from the Commission). Ms. Moore refused to resign. Mayor Pro-Tem Saucedo noted if we table this item then Susan Moore is still the Chairman. **A motion was made by Councilmember Smith to table this item, seconded by Councilmember McClellan, all in favor, motion carried unanimously.**
5. Presentation, Discussion and Possible Action on the Elimination of the Sale of Bulk Water at the City of Blanco Until a Procedure Can be Established for Council Approval. Ms. Kuentler recommended discontinued use of the sale of bulk water. The majority of these type of accounts are not for use inside the City limits or are in use for businesses outside of Blanco. The City receives a nominal amount of payment for the water that users purchase, this is hard to track. Ms. Kuentler recommended that Council discontinue the sale of bulk water and if sales are continued, applications should be made to the City Council in an effort to determine if the sale is in the best interests of the Citizens of Blanco. **A motion was made by Mayor Pro-Tem Saucedo to table this item until a procedure has been developed, seconded by Councilmember Smith, all in favor, motion carried unanimously.**
6. Discussion, Consideration, and Possible Action on the City of Blanco Contracting with Inframark to Operate the City's Water Treatment and Wastewater Treatment Plants. Presentation to discuss takeover of management of the City's water and wastewater facilities. Our due diligence was done with Inframark. Mr. Escovy spoke as a customer of Inframark, saying he has had a good experience with them. Ed Schwab spoke about the benefits provided by Inframark to include the hiring of all five public works employees. Ms. Kuentler said the City needs guaranteed fixed cost. Committee has reviewed, staff will receive training, at no additional cost to residents. Yes, Linda has been involved in the entire process. May need a public forum/town hall meeting to better inform the residents. Town Hall possibly in February. **A motion was made by Councilmember McClellan to table this item and direct staff to hold a town hall meeting for residents to ask Inframark questions, seconded by Mayor Pro-Tem Saucedo, all in favor, motion carried unanimously.**
7. Discussion, Consideration and Possible Action on the Creation of a US-281 Overlay Review Committee (Kelly Kuentler, Interim City Administrator). Brandon Melland spoke about the overlay as a zoning process and an extra set of guidelines for the City. This is a development tool to Keep Blanco "Blanco". Ms. Kuentler recommends the immediate creation of the Committee.

A motion was made by Councilmember Barron to adopt the Ordinance 2022-O-001 to proceed with the creation of a Highway 281 Overlay Steering Committee to include the following members: 1) City Council, Connie Barron, 2) Business owner on 281 in Blanco, Emily Becker, 3) Residential owner on 281 in Blanco, Irene Cage, 4) Owner of undeveloped property on 281 in Blanco, Laura Swinson, seconded by Mayor Pro-Tem Saucedo, all in favor, motion carried unanimously.

8. Discussion, Consideration and Possible Action on Expanding the City's Existing GIS Wastewater Maps (Councilmember Barron). HR Green sent 3 work orders for expansion of the city's existing GIS wastewater maps. These include 1) upload and cleanup of the Jones-Heroy water system map, \$3,000 (highest priority), 2) upload of city streets and creation of a database template, which will ultimately lead to a color coded map of City streets depicting the condition of the streets, \$5,500 (second priority), 3) creation of a zoning map layer, which will depict the newly approved zones, \$1,750 (third priority). These GIS map upgrades will help the CIAMA Committee, help Public Works and help the City engineer plan and illustrate future work. Thus, the ultimate beneficiaries are the citizens of Blanco. It is difficult to identify projects and/or develop an execution strategy without knowledge of City infrastructure. **A motion was made by Councilmember Barron to use CLFRF funds of \$10,250, to expand the City's existing GIS wastewater maps based on committee recommendations for uploading GIS Maps, seconded by Councilmember Smith, all in favor, motion carried unanimously.**

Closed regular meeting at 8:50 pm and convened into executive session.

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

1. Texas Government Code Section 551.071 (Consultation with Attorney) and Section 1.05, Texas Disciplinary Rules of Professional Conduct. Confer with City Attorney regarding legal issues associated with Water & Sewer Extension Agreement between the City of Blanco and Six-Wheeler LLC.
2. Texas Government Code Section 551.074 (Personnel Matters) to deliberate the appointment, employment, evaluation, reassignment, duties, discipline, or dismissal of a public officer or employee(s) – Public Works.

Closed executive session at 9:54 pm and reconvened into regular meeting.

Item 1: No action taken

Item 2: No action taken

Adjournment:

A motion was made by Councilmember Smith to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Councilmember Barron, all in favor.

Meeting was adjourned at 9:55 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Rachel Lumpee
Rachel Lumpee, Mayor

ATTEST:

Laurie A. Cassidy
Laurie A. Cassidy, City Secretary

These minutes were approved on the 8th day of January, 2022.

