

**REGULAR MEETING AND PUBLIC HEARING
OF THE GOVERNING BODY OF
THE CITY OF BLANCO**

**Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, February 8, 2022, 6:00 pm**

A regular meeting and Public Hearing of the City Council, City of Blanco, Texas was held on Tuesday, February 8, 2022, at 6:00 pm at the Gem of the Hills, 2233 US 281, Blanco, Texas.

The meeting was called to order at 6:04 pm by Mayor Rachel Lumpee, followed by roll call (Laurie Cassidy) announcing a quorum was present. The invocation was presented by Pastor Jim Boatright and the Pledge of Allegiance was led by Mayor Lumpee. Council members present: Mayor Lumpee, Mayor Pro-Tem Saucedo, Councilmembers Smith, Barron, McClellan, and Divine.

City staff present: Warren Escovy, Laurie Cassidy, Lt. Jerry Thornhill, and Zach Dorris.

Mayor Lumpee made the following announcements: as of February 4, active COVID cases is 260; candidate packets are available for pick-up at city hall and applications are due by 5:00 pm on February 18; Gem of the Hills is hosting Indie Film Festival, Saturday, February 26; Blanco County burn ban has been lifted effective at 5:00 pm today.

Public Comments:

- Neil Neyens, resident at 1022 Oakridge Drive, spoke in favor of Inframark. He commented water standards have not passed the last 9 years and we need Inframark, Secondly, he said he does not find Susan Moore (Planning & Zoning Chair) to be objective, she is demeaning to others and not appropriate Chair.
- Jett Sophia, resident at 622 8th Street, spoke in support of Inframark and thanked Council for all they do.
- Debra Erickson, resident at 622 8th Street spoke in support of the Inframark contract.
- Heinz Roesch, resident at 1049 Cielo Springs, spoke regarding Old Business, Item #2, in support of Susan Moore, Planning & Zoning Chair. He said she ran the meetings expertly. He urged Council to support Mrs. Moore and thanked Council for their work.
- Matt Herden, resident at 33 Elm Street (Blanco resident for 30 years), spoke in favor of Inframark. Said they have been here before, spoke of Dripping Springs moratorium and said he highly supports Inframark.

- John Sone, Partner, Echo Gallery, 1725 US Highway 281, spoke of the Grand Opening on February 24, 2022. After retirement searched for place to open new business and chose Blanco. Appreciates the Chamber and the vibrant action in Blanco.
- Richard Standifer, resident at 218 Live Oak, spoke in favor of contract with Inframark. Hope they put procedures in place to correct issues.
- Wayne Gosnell, owner since 1997, 1374 River Run spoke regarding change coming to Blanco, want to maintain our small town charm. Said Inframark is a professional company and we need to support them.
- Jay Palmer, resident at 1072 RR 165, spoke as contiguous landowner to City of Blanco. Said for years has had water spill onto his property, could not get previous Council's attention. He now has plans for large event center, for 450 people, including a winery. His agreement continues to be violated, feels like Council is now finally doing something, mismanagement of wastewater treatment plant, violation of TCEQ permit and our agreement. Feels like City is trying to get resolved. He did not know who Inframark was but if this change will be positive, he strongly supports Inframark.

Proclamations:

- George Washington's Birthday, February 22, 2022, Blair Rudy spoke, and Mayor Lumpee read the proclamation.
- Red Cross Month – March 2022, Mayor Lumpee read the proclamation.

PUBLIC HEARINGS:

Closed regular meeting and opened Public Hearing at 6:31 pm.

1. Discussion on Re-Zoning Request at 413 9th Street & 281.
2. Discussion on Variance Request at 631 Academy St.
3. Discussion on Variance Request at 205 Hackberry St.

Susan Villarreal, spoke regarding property at 631 Academy Street, rental of short term and additional two rentals. Three units on 9.2 acres, think about the residential neighborhood, Owners were given permission to remodel but not to operate a short term rental. Property Owner does not live in the neighborhood. Who is ensuring the safety of persons in the area? Please consider the neighbors when contemplating these issues.

Pamela Capps, resident at 317 Pittsburg, spoke regarding property at 631 Academy. She said her understanding was the back two units were long term rentals. They take care of their property. Air B&B is not a good fit for this area. Neighbors all take care of their properties. All contribute to tax base, we care about our investments. Do not understand confusion with permits. Should not have been zoned this way. Considers the Sullivans friends, but does not agree with this business.

Rodney Thrailkill, resident at 117 Trainer spoke regarding property at 631 Academy. Said multi-unit is not in the spirit of this lot and he does not believe this short term rental conforms to commercial multi-unit business, not economy housing. Substantial investment, does not believe the Sullivans would want this next to their residence.

Helen Knoll, resident at 633 Academy, thanked Council for allowing residents to speak. She spoke regarding the property at 631 Academy. She said she grew up in Blanco and has lived on Academy for 31 years. She saw the construction of garage and workshop but did not know this was developing into cabin rentals. Zoning of R2 with no more than three dwellings. She is opposed to this variance and special use permit request. She is considered a senior citizen, not comfortable with this arrangement and not in favor of this request.

Joe Sullivan, resident at 631 Academy spoke explaining the remodel was completed in two parts. June 15, 2020, purchased 1,700 sq ft, four bedroom, two bath home with garage and workshop. Prior to purchase, spoke to Mr. Will Daves, Code Compliance, was told zoned mixed use. Kelly Kuenstler verified. In July-August 2020 converted to long term rental. Rio Blanco Contractors, determined remodel permit was required. The two existing structures needed water and sewer added. Mixed use, residential and commercial. Worked with Public Works on water and sewer. Remodel was completed in late 2021. Received letter from Ms. Kuenstler late 2021, not in compliance. Ms. Kuenstler said he needed to request special use permit through Planning & Zoning Commission. Since purchasing the property has operated under good faith with the City, clean safe, reliable units.

Closed Public Hearing at 6:51 pm.

Staff Presentations:

- City Hall, Warren Escovy introduced himself as the new City Administrator and said he is happy to be in Blanco. He updated Council on Inframark contract, auditor RFQ (no responses received to date), city engineer RFQ (received 8 RFQ's, team will be reviewing and will provide an update in March). He is working on list of projects and will be putting on website for better transparency.
- Public Works, Zach Dorris, Interim Public Works Director – No updates.
- Police Department, Lt. Thornhill presented the monthly statistics report for January 2022 and also presented the annual racial profiling report.

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 January 11, 2021, Regular City Council Meeting.
2. Discussion, Consideration and Possible Action on Ordinance 2022-O-002 General Election Order, providing for the holding of a General Election on May 7, 2022.

A motion was made by Council Member Smith to approve Consent Agenda Items one and two, seconded by Council Member Barron, all in favor, motion carried unanimously.

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

1. Approval of Amendment to the City of Blanco Personnel Policy Manual Section 2.05.E.3. **A motion was made by Council Member Smith to approve the amendment to the Personnel Policy Manual, seconded by Council Member Barron, all in favor, motion carried unanimously.**
2. Discussion, Consideration, and Possible Action on the Removal of the Planning & Zoning Chairperson. **A motion was made by Council Member McClellan to keep Susan Moore as Chair of the Planning & Zoning Commission, seconded by Council Member Smith, all in favor, motion carried unanimously.**
3. Discussion, Consideration, and Possible Action on Approval of Contract with Inframark to Operate the City's Water Treatment and Wastewater Treatment Plants (Warren Escovy). Mr. Escovy discussed the purpose and goals of request for qualifications. He also discussed the key components of the agreement with Inframark including fixed guaranteed fees for all "fixed costs". Managed and capped funds for variable costs, discussed scope of work. Mr. Escovy recommends approval of the contract with Inframark. Council Member Divine asked Attorney Tuggey and Ed Schwab, Inframark questions concerning the contract. Inframark will operate according to industry standards. Council Member McClellan asked about the cost of services and how can we afford this? Inframark is committing to City to control costs, stay within budget, run as efficiently as possible and provide record of accounts. Going to help make employees more efficient, will provide needed equipment to make pothole repairs. Bringing on the current four employees, in addition to a project manager to oversee all projects and train all employees. Also speaking with Ronnie for sixth and final position/opening. What is the status of the vehicles? Will work with City in the best, cost effective way for both parties. Council Member Saucedo spoke with employees to address concerns. Council Member Smith thanked all for the hard work that went into this agreement.

4. Discussion, Consideration, and Possible Action on Approval of Addendum to Contract with Inframark to Operate the City's Water Treatment and Wastewater Treatment Plants (Warren Escovy).

A motion was made by Council Member Barron to enter into Contract with Inframark to Operate the City's Water and Wastewater Treatment Plants, to include Approval of the Addendum, seconded by Council Member Smith, all in favor, motion carried unanimously.

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

1. Discussion, Consideration, And Action on the Four Gateway Signs Declaring Blanco To Be An IDA-approved International Dark Sky Community (Mayor Lumpee) Mr. Escovy said the Blanco County Friends of the Night Sky (BCFNS) are close to achieving the International Dark Sky Community designation. The BCFNS is seeking Council approval of the design size of the signs. Signs will be heavy, durable metal with reflective lettering and will comply with TxDOT requirements and City ordinances. **A motion was made to Council Member Barron to approve the design of the sign, seconded by Council Member McClellan, all in favor, motion carried unanimously.**
2. Discussion, Consideration, and Possible Action on approval of County Hazard Mitigation Agreement (Warren Escovy) County Judge, Brett Bray is looking for, approval of draft letter. Every five years Blanco County updates the Hazard Mitigation Plan for the Texas Division of Emergency Management (TDEM). **A Motion was made by Council Member Smith to approve signing of the County Hazard Mitigation Agreement Letter, seconded by Council Member Barron, all in favor, motion carried unanimously.**
3. Discussion, Consideration, and Action on approval of Capital Improvement and Asset Management Advisory Committee (CIAMAC) recommendation for the Creation of a Water Project Information Form (PIF) and Modification of the Existing Wastewater Project Information Form (PIF) (Warren Escovy). Mr. Escovy said the CIAMAC is a great committee. The committee is recommending the modification of existing wastewater PIF and the creation of a new water PIF. Expenditure authorization requested is \$4,200 to Bill Moriarty for Water PIF prep and submittal and \$8,000 to Bill Moriarty and Freeland Turk for scope definition, cost estimating for a total cost of \$12,200. Bill requires 2 weeks; Freeland Turk will work on at same time. Under very tight deadline. This is a committee of volunteers working hours reviewing our infrastructure, mapping, etc. Working to gain additional funding on clean water grants. Mr. Reiken thanked Zach Dorris for all of his hard work on this project. Council Member Saucedo asked where the funds will be coming from. Mr. Escovy said the money will come from the Water/Wastewater funds. **A Motion was made by Council Member Barron to authorize spending of \$12,200 for 2 PIF's, seconded by Council Member Smith, all in favor, motion carried unanimously.**

Closed regular meetings at 7:52 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, 551.072, and 551.074.

1. Texas Government Code Section 551.071 (Consultation with City Attorney) and Section 1.05, Texas Disciplinary Rules of Professional Conduct and 551.072 (Real Estate). Confer with City Attorney regarding Canyon Lake Water SC (CLWSC) desire to purchase a portion of City's interest undivided interest.
2. Texas Government Code Section 551.071 (Consultation with Attorney) and Section 1.05, Texas Disciplinary Rules of Professional Conduct and 551.072 (Real Estate). Confer with City Attorney regarding +/- 385 AC SH 281 & RR 32.
3. Texas Govt Code Sec. 551.074 (Personnel Matters), to deliberate the appointment, employment, evaluation, reassignment, duties, discipline, or dismissal of a public officer or employee(s) –Finance Director.
4. Texas Government Code Sec. 551.071 (Consultation with attorney) and Rule 1.05, Texas Rules of Professional Conduct. Confer with City Attorney regarding legal issues associated with public information requests, public information inquiries, and on general public or constituent communications.

Closed executive session at 9:57 pm and reconvened into regular meeting.

Item 1: No action taken

Item 2: No action taken

Item 3: No action taken

Item 4: No action taken

Adjournment:

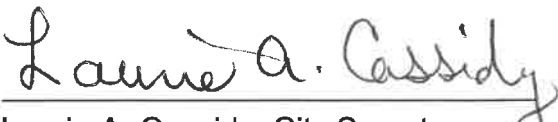
A motion was made by Council Member Smith to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Council Member Divine, all in favor.

Meeting was adjourned at 9:57 pm.

Respectfully submitted,


Rachel Lumpee, Mayor

ATTEST:


Laurie A. Cassidy, City Secretary



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