

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

**Meeting Minutes  
October 11, 2022**

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

The meeting was called to order at 6:02 pm by Mayor Rachel Lumpee, followed by roll call (Laurie Cassidy) announcing a quorum was present. The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Mayor Lumpee. Council members present: Mayor Lumpee, Mayor Pro-Tem Barron, and Council Members McClellan and Thraikill. Council Members Smith and Divine were absent.

City staff present: Warren Escovy, Laurie Cassidy, Sasha Ricks, Jonathan Wheeler, and Chief Scott Rubin.

Mayor Lumpee made the following announcements:

- I am so excited to announce that the City of Blanco has achieved Gold Status for Scenic City Certification. The Scenic City Certification Program is “to support and recognize the Texas municipalities that implement high-quality scenic standards for public spaces” which include having higher municipal standards, environmental conservation, economic growth and growth management, and high quality of life for citizens. There are currently 91 certified Scenic Cities. This application was completed by citizens (myself included) who volunteered their time- not City Staff. City Staff was present alongside me at the Scenic City Award Ceremony that took place at the Texas Municipal League Conference last week because they were attending the conference and wanted to support the City’s achievement. I would like to give a big thanks to all those who helped with this application.
- Blanco County burn ban remains on at this time and is set to expire at noon on Oct. 25.
- The City of Blanco remains on Stage 2 water restrictions.
- I usually announce all the upcoming events around town during this time, but I realize this is a lot of information. I encourage everyone to look at the calendar of events that can be found on the City’s website and I also encourage citizens to sign up for the Chamber’s bi-weekly blast which contains information about upcoming events around town as well.
  - The Blanco Rotary Club is collecting coats for H.O.P.E. ministries from Oct. 6-21, 2022.
  - The United Methodist Church’s pumpkin patch is open Monday - Friday 4-7 and Sat-Sun from 11-7 until Oct. 31.
  - Blanco Market Days will take place on Oct. 15 from 9 to 4 on the Courthouse lawn.
  - The library is hosting a Family Fall Day event on Oct. 15 from 10:30 to 12.
  - Our next HWY 281 Task Force meeting will be at 11 a.m. on Oct. 24 at the Byars Building.
  - Texas Marigold Festival will take place Oct. 22-29.
  - Real Ale Ride will take place on Oct. 29. Parking and on-site registration will open at Real Ale Brewing Company at 6:30 a.m.
  - Echo Gallery will be hosting its second “Noche en Blanco” event on Oct. 30 from 5-8.
  - Trick or Treat on the Square will take place on Halloween, Monday, Oct. 31 at 5:30 p.m.

- The Buggy Barn Museum will host its Family Fun Day on Nov. 5 from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.
- Trails, Tales, and Tunes event will be held at the Gem of the Hill on Nov. 6 at 5 p.m.
- We are about a year away from the annular solar eclipse which will occur on Oct. 14, 2023. The Blanco County Eclipse Task Force is actively working to help prepare for this eclipse. More information can be found at [Blancocountyecclipse.org](http://Blancocountyecclipse.org).
- Lastly, I would like to congratulate our City Secretary, Laurie Cassidy, for passing her final Texas Municipal Clerks Association exam last month. Mrs. Cassidy is officially a certified municipal clerk. We appreciate her taking the initiative to obtain her certification and are beyond proud of her accomplishment. Congratulations, Mrs. Cassidy!

**Public Comments:**

- Wendy Smith, Blanco resident spoke regarding Rocky Road Estates, asked the City to resend the establishing of that subdivision plat which she stated was subdivided illegally based on deed restrictions.
- Gail McClellan, resident at 1510 Greenlawn Pkwy, spoke regarding the Heritage Oaks within the Greenlawn Subdivision. She stated on Friday, October 7 she witnessed a large Heritage Oak being cut down on the property and that this goes against their building permit. She is also concerned with Oak Wilt at this time of year. She is interested in knowing if they will be fined (there is no bringing back the tree). She suggested their permit be revoked or they be punished by taking away one house for every tree removed.
- Wayne Gosnell, Blanco resident for the past 25 years, spoke regarding city ordinances. Why does the city need ordinances? He is in favor of current ordinances. Ordinances keep Blanco Blanco and are needed to keep order in place. The annual Trash-Off helps keep the city cleaned up. Shout out to Andrew Forsberg for cleaning up lot off 4<sup>th</sup> Street and hauling off old house and also for placing trash cans by the river, Also thanks to Mike Arnold for cleaning up and renovating the old nursing home. It is up to the Council to make revisions to current ordinance where needed and these ordinances should reflect Blanco's rural character and help preserve what we have and keep Blanco a recognized Scenic City and beautiful for the future.

**Proclamation:**

Mayor Lumpee read the Texas Recycles Day Proclamation.

**Presentations:**

1. Chamber of Commerce Quarterly HOT Funds Report: Libbey Aly gave a presentation and spoke regarding how quarterly funds have been spent on advertising for tourism, etc. She shared that the visitors center is staffed 7 days a week. Mayor Pro-Tem Barron, asked to consider other ways to use the funds such as a kiosk guide for other businesses not located on the square, paid for by HOT funds. Mayor Lumpee thanked Ms. Aly for all her hard work.

2. Capital Improvement and Asset Management Advisory Committee (CIAMAC) Report: Mike Rieken, Chair shared the accomplishments achieved to date by all the committee volunteers. The formation of the CIAMAC has provided a means of leveraging community resources to assist the city improve and maintain infrastructure and to provide continuity for elected officials. In the year and a half, they have been meeting they have found old maps created for water system and developed interactive map of City streets. They have constructed a capital improvement plan, clarified the billing process and water leaks and inefficiencies. Work in progress include water system GIS map, capture leak and jetting data, continued refinement of the Capital Improvement Plan, utility reporting, compliance support (getting the right information to the right people), information management, map digitization (sorted through maps and found **one** worth digitalizing) and creative funding. Key take aways include formation of committee, maintenance of city infrastructure which has been historically underfunded and now requires normal maintenance plus 50 or more years of catch up-roughly \$45 million, fixing requires innovative solutions, funding and continuous improvement, and long term planning. We will need to strengthen interaction between elected officials and groups working on long term endeavors. Roads, water, and sewer are all interconnected, not realistic to work on one system at a time. Need to prioritize and work on all together and complete one project at a time. Continue to look for funding alternatives. Cannot fix overnight and cannot pay for all with rate increases. Long term volunteer committee helping council. Make a long term plan and willingness to increase revenue. Need to make it a priority. Mayor Lumpee and Mayor Pro-Tem Barron thanked Mr. Rieken and his committee for their hard work. Mr. Rieken said the committee has several priorities that have been identified. Council Member McClellan asked how near to capacity is the WWTP, how much growth can we take, and the answer is WWTP is currently at 56% capacity.

**Oath of Office** was administered to New Police Officers, Daniel DeLaRosa, and Zachary Rice by Police Chief Rubin.

Closed regular meeting at 6:55 pm and open public hearing.

**PUBLIC HEARINGS:**

1. Approval of Special Use Permit to Allow for a Food Court, Located at John Taylor Addition Block 2, Lot 1, Property located in R-5 (Owner: Andrew Forsberg & Clint West, Shrimpies, Inc.)
2. Appeal of Administrative Decision Denying Application for Building Permit to Install Two Intermodal Shipping Containers (ISCs) at 1725 S. US Hwy 281, Blanco, Texas (Owner: Second Echo LLC).
  - Laurie Cassidy, City Secretary read comment submitted by Lynn DeVincenzo Speaking out in opposition of the shipping containers being used for storage on properties. She does not believe these types of containers are consistent with the city's guidelines. NOT in the spirit of the city's codes, or in line with the city's beautification desires that the city is working hard to achieve.

- Mike Arnold, Blanco business owner next to Second Echo, spoke out in favor of shipping containers. He said they (Second Echo) have invested in the property. He has seen shopping centers and high dollar homes built from the containers that look well done. This is one instance where technology and building practices have advanced faster than city ordinances. These containers are environmentally and energy friendly, will be well constructed and will make the property look better. It's a technology that can be used well, this is why it is a special use permit for review on a case by case basis. He hopes they will be allowed in this instance.

Closed public hearing at 7:00 pm and opened regular meeting.

#### **Staff Presentations:**

- City Hall, Warren Escovy, City Administrator shared the following: The City is still under Stage 2 Water Restrictions; 4<sup>th</sup> Street by Old 300 BBQ in the downtown Historic District, TxDOT will begin improvements to include re-striping the intersection and adding flashing stop signs on both sides of 4<sup>th</sup> Street, code enforcement is currently focusing on aesthetics; the City is looking to hire the TxDOT contractor to stripe the rest of the downtown square; Planning & Zoning will be holding a Town Hall on October 17, 6:30 pm to get citizen input on UDC updates and also Atlas Design will make presentation on the 281 Overlay zone. Water Treatment Plant update, waiting on electricity from PEC, and receipt of generators, should be substantially complete by mid-November and final completion by end of December.
- Police Department, Chief Rubin presented the September 2022 Monthly Statistics Report. As of oath tonight, fully staffed, one officer on light duty and one in training. Gearing up for upcoming activities including the Veterans Day Parade, Real Ale ride, and Halloween on the Square. Did receive donation of weight equipment from Blanco ISD as they updated their equipment and also received donation of new high tech door entry "buzzer".

**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 Council Member, in which those items will be pulled for separate consideration.

1. Approval of Minutes from the September 13, 2022, Regular Meeting and Public Hearing.
2. Approval of Minutes from the October 4, 2022, Special Meeting.
3. Approval of Appointment of Rodney Thrailkill as City Council Liaison to the Blanco Water Reclamation Task Force facilitated by The Meadows Center for Water and the Environment at Texas State University.
4. Approval of Resolution 2022-R-009 Declaring Certain Personal Property Surplus Equipment and Authorizing Sale (Police Department).
5. Approval of Resolution 2022-R-010 Criminal Justice Division Grant Application.

6. Approval of Resolution 2022-R-011 Declaring Excess City Property Surplus (Public Works Vehicles) and Authorizing Disposal.
7. Approval of Resolution 2022-R-012 Approving Certain Engagement Terms Relating to Preparation and Filing of an Application for Grant Under the US Department of Agriculture's Rural e-Connectivity Pilot Program.

*(Item #4, question by McClellan, Chief clarified the surplus are traded into the vendor during purchase of new equipment)*

**A motion was made by Mayor Pro-Tem Barron to approve items one through seven on the consent agenda as presented, seconded by Council Member McClellan, all in favor, motion carried unanimously.**

**Mayor moved: New Business, Item #2**

1. Discussion, Consideration, and Take Action on Approval of Proposal from Moriarty & Associates, LLC to Prepare a Financial Application for the City of Blanco at a Cost of \$42,000.00. Warren said William Moriarty has been working hard and the City is one of 60 fortunate ones to be selected. TWDB, approved the intended use plan for the DWSRF PIF application by unanimous vote. The next step in the process is that TWDB will send out one letter for each project inviting the City to submit a full application. The City will have 60 days to submit the full application (8-10 months, funds in escrow, subsidized loan, \$600,000 grant funds, federal infrastructure money). Mayor Pro-Tem Barron thanked Mr. Moriarty for helping City find money. Per Warren, the projects effected are the Palomino water line, this is a great way to cover costs. **A motion was made by Mayor Pro-Tem Barron to approve the proposal from Moriarty & Associates, to receive TWDB funds at the cost of \$42,000, seconded by Council Member McClellan, all in favor, motion carried unanimously.**

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

1. Consideration, Discussion, and Take Action on Approval of Financing Options of SCADA Upgrade/ Replacement for Blanco Distribution System at a Cost of \$151,820.00 (Warren Escovy, City Administrator). Warren said in a previous meeting the Council authorized staff to pay 50%, looking for financing for the other 50%. **No Action taken.**
2. Consideration, Discussion, and Take Action on Amendment to Chapter 7 of the Code of Ordinances in Health and Sanitation for the maximum height of weeds and other vegetation and Amendment to Chapter 3 Animal Control Livestock (loose livestock). Warren Escovy, City Administrator said this is a great community, trying to look at the rules and do them the best way we know how. Think about what you want for your community. Currently the ordinances say grass should be at 12" and animals should be restrained, but it does not say that you cannot have animals. Staff recommendation for Chapter 7 of Health and Sanitation (growth) is to change the restriction in single-family occupied homes from 12 inches to (18 or 24 inches) but to require 12 inches on vacant lots and commercial properties. Recommendation for Chapter 3 of the Animal Code would be to move to a Complaint based enforcement primarily as this issue is not very widespread. The council discussed both chapters of the ordinance.

**A motion was made by Mayor Pro-Tem Barron to table item for further discussion, seconded by Council Member McClellan, , motion carried 2-1 with Council Member Thrailkill opposed.**

3. Consideration, Discussion, and Take Action on Approval of Voluntary Annexation of 4.09 Acre Property at Rocky Road Estates located in the Horace Eggleston Survey No. 24, Abstract No. 1, Blanco County, Texas. Warren Escovy said he received an email from the Owner, Callan McNett to withdraw his request to annex. Based on public comments the City will be reviewing approval of plat to possibly repeal. **No Action Taken.**

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

1. Discussion, Consideration, and Take Action on Appeal of Administrative Decision Denying Application for Building Permit to Install Two Intermodal Shipping Containers (ISCs) at 1725 S. US Hwy 281, Blanco, Texas (Owner: Second Echo LLC). Warren Escovy said staff recommended this go to planning commission as a request for special use permit. Mr. Sone spoke explaining his situation. Mayor Pro-Tem Barron asked why Mr. Sone did not request a special use permit? The reply: the code did not say that, and he was following the code. Council discussed in detail **A motion was made by Council Member McClellan to approve the application for building permit to install two intermodal shipping containers (ISCs) at 1725 S. US Hwy 281, Blanco, Texas subject to submission and approval of renderings by the City Administrator, seconded by Mayor Pro-Tem Barron, all in favor, motion carried unanimously.**
3. Discussion, Consideration, and Take Action on Approval of Special Use Permit to Allow for a Food Court, Located at John Taylor Addition Block 2, Lot 1, Property located in R-5 (Owner: Andrew Forsberg & Clint West, Shrimpies, Inc.) Will be 5 vendors, need TxDOT input, and more information on parking. Item tabled by Planning & Zoning Commission pending submittal of additional documentation. **A motion was made by Council Member McClellan to table item, seconded by Mayor Pro-Tem Barron , all in favor, motion carried unanimously.**
4. Discussion, Consideration, and Take Action on Approval of Variance from Section 9.03.183(c) Banners on Non-Residential Property to Allow Banners to be Displayed All Year in the Historic District Instead of Four Times for 30 days Each Time. Ryan Moses, Vice Chair asked for variance to be allowed to hang banners., assisted by Gail McClellan, Item passed by Planning & Zoning Commission. Already have the hardware to mount banners. **A motion was made by Council Member Thrailkill to approve the variance from Section 9.03.183(c) banners on non-residential property to allow for banners to be displayed all year in the historic district instead of four times for 30 days each time, and waive fee of \$400, seconded by Council Member McClellan, all in favor, motion carried unanimously.**

Closed regular meeting at 8:37 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 Sections 551.071 (Consultation with City Attorney), 551.072 (Real Estate) and Section 1.05, Texas Disciplinary Rules of Professional Conduct; Confer with City Attorney regarding Pharr Paradise Utility Easement Agreement.
2. 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); Water Valuation with West Water, City's interest undivided interest.
3. Texas Government Code Section 551.071 (Consultation with City Attorney), Section 05, Texas Disciplinary Rules of Professional Conduct: to wit, Discussion with legal counsel Regarding Potential Broadband Grant (Jack Twilley).

Closed executive session at 9:18 pm and convened into regular meeting.

Items 1-3: No action taken.

**Adjournment:**

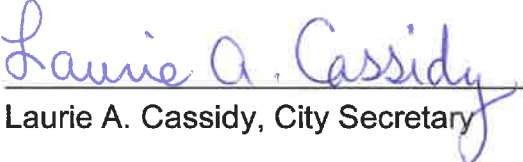
**A motion was made by Mayor Pro-Tem Barron to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Council Member McClellan, all in favor.**

**The meeting was adjourned at 9:18 pm.**

Respectfully submitted,

  
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Rachel Lumpee, Mayor

ATTEST:

  
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Laurie A. Cassidy, City Secretary

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

