



# The City of West University Place

*A Neighborhood City*

## CITY COUNCIL

Susan Sample, Mayor  
John Montgomery, Mayor Pro Tem  
John P. Barnes, Councilmember  
Melanie Bell, Councilmember  
Shannon Carroll, Councilmember

## STAFF

David J. Beach, City Manager  
Scott Bounds, Olson and Olson, City Attorney  
Thelma Gilliam, City Secretary

## CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

The City Council of the City of West University Place, Texas, met in a regular meeting on **Monday, March 14, 2022**, at **6:30 p.m.**, in the Municipal Building at 3800 University Boulevard, to consider the agenda of items listed. The meeting was in person and via Zoom.

Agenda of Items:

### 1. **Call Meeting to Order**

Mayor Sample called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. In attendance were Mayor Pro Tem Montgomery and Councilmembers Barnes and Bell. Councilmember Carroll attended via Zoom.

Staff in attendance were City Manager Beach, City Secretary Gilliam, Assistant to the City Manager Thompson, Public Works Director Barrera, Finance Director Kalka, and Police Chief Walker

The following were also present: Carol Harrison with IDS Engineering

### 2. **Pledge of Allegiance** – Councilmember Bell led the Pledge.

### 3. **METRO Update**

Matters related to an update from METRO. ***Mr. Bob Fry, Member of the METRO Board of Directors***

Metro Board Member Bob Fry gave an overview to Council on how and why the METRO Board was created, how it is structured, and how West U fits into that structure. He said his job is to keep West U informed of what the METRO Board does that is pertinent to West U and to keep the METRO Board informed of any issues West U might have. He also reported on current ridership, which he said is down about 50 percent compared to pre-pandemic and that park and ride has been almost nonexistent.

Mr. Fry expressed that if anyone on Council has any questions or needs to communicate with the METRO Board, discuss it with the mayor who will bring it to his attention.

### 4. **Public Comments**

This is an opportunity for citizens to speak to the Council relating to agenda and non-agenda items.

**Alida Drewes**, 6112 Fordham, spoke regarding various issues including drivers in West U, dogs not being on leashes, and people riding bicycles and skateboards on sidewalks by the library.

### 5. **Arbor Day Proclamation**

Matters related to proclaiming April 29, 2022 Arbor Day in West University Place. ***Recommended Action: Proclaim April 29, 2022 as Arbor Day in the City of West University Place. Mr. Gerardo Barrera, Public Works Director***

Public Works Director Barrera presented and said National Arbor Day is April 29, 2022, but the proclamation is to proclaim April 9, 2022 as Arbor Day in West University Place, which is the day the City will hold its event in celebration of the day.

Before Mayor Sample read the proclamation, Councilmember Bell moved to approve April 9, 2022 as Arbor Day in West University Place. Councilmember Barnes seconded the motion. **MOTION PASSED.**

**Ayes:** Sample, Montgomery, Barnes, Bell, Carroll  
**Noes:** None  
**Absent:** None

**6. Contract Extension with Southside Place**

Matters related to a two-month extended agreement with Southside Place. *Recommended Action: Extend the existing agreement with Southside Place for two months in an amount of \$53,330.80 (\$26,665.40 per month) for the City to provide building regulation and emergency medical services to Southside Place and authorize the City Manager to execute the contract. Mr. Dave Beach, City Manager*

City Manager Beach presented and said the current agreement with Southside Place for Emergency Medical Services expires at the end of this month and while staff negotiates a new agreement, it is being requested that Council approve an extension to the existing agreement for two months with the goal of coming to terms with a new agreement before May.

Mayor Pro Tem Montgomery noted that he thinks the terms of this contract are fine, but would like to be sure that there is a “hard stop” at the end of the two months so that the extension is not indefinitely.

Mayor Pro Tem Montgomery said the partnership with Southside Place is a good one and longstanding, but he wants to impress on staff when talking to Southside Place that the issue of safety has become disproportionate in terms of what the City pays and what Southside pays and he feels that it is time that the City reconciles that. Mayor Pro Tem Montgomery went over the data provided by staff and said looking at Fire and EMS spending combined for each city, Southside Place households pays \$257 per year and households of West U pay 60% more at \$710 per year. He reiterated that though he is okay with the extension, he wants staff to review and reconcile the numbers that will work for both cities and continue to work towards the spirit of partnership as it has been for generations.

Mayor Pro Tem Montgomery motioned that Council allow the mayor and himself to be able to approach the (Southside Place) government in conjunction with staff as part of this discussion. Mayor Sample seconded the motion.

Councilmember Bell requested more information as to (1) why the extension is for emergency services only and not building regulations, too, and (2) what Southside’s concerns are. She said while she agrees that she does not want this to continue when it comes to good partnership and being good neighbors, having a better understanding of what some of their concerns are in these contract negotiations would be helpful.

City Manager Beach said he misspoke previously about the agreement being only for EMS services and stated that it does also includes building regulation services.

In response to what Southside Place’s concerns are and what might be delaying an agreement, City Manager Beach said staff sent out the cancellation notice to Southside Place at the end of the year and said the first month delay was on West U while waiting for the new Finance Director. He said the delay was also due to Fire Chief Drake assuming the Chief position and having to dig into the numbers provided by former Chief Taylor.

City Manager Beach said West U staff met with Southside Place staff at the end of last month and informed them that the City would be reviewing the contract to make sure that it is up-to-date and is equitable and fair to the taxpayers in West U. Mr. Beach said he will be putting together information relating to the data and numbers that he will provide to Council next week.

Mayor Pro Tem Montgomery said this community invests in safety, police, fire and EMS, and so he does not want the partnership inequitable when it comes to something that is so important to West U residents who pay so much for it. He said that is why he would like for him and Mayor Sample to have an opportunity to participate in the conversations with Southside Place. He said he feels residents elected all of them to represent them, and to keep with the spirit of partnership for Southside Place's interests and taxes as well.

Councilmember Barnes said with the assumption that in order for the contract to be finally approved it will have to be approved by the City of Southside Place Council, too, he asked if the City has received any type of feedback, directly or indirectly, from their City Council in terms of where their heads are on this. City Manager Beach responded that he has not heard anything from their City Council or their City Manager other than the response from staff's request for \$53,000 for the two-month extension. He said Finance Director Marie Kalka does have concern that Southside Place may have to do a budget amendment to cover the amount of the extension.

Mr. Beach said he did convey to Southside Place during initial discussions that the current annual one-time payment may change to quarterly payments in the new agreement so that the payments are for services received as they go in case the City's costs increase during the year.

Councilmember Barnes said he is leaning towards telling Southside Place that the City will give them a one-month extension with a one-time, one-month extension in the middle of that month if it seems the City is making progress by the end of that month. Mayor Sample said the City needs the time (two months) to run the numbers. City Manager said with the logistics, two months is more adequate as one month would be tough.

At this time a vote was made to Mayor Pro Tem Montgomery's motion, which was seconded by Mayor Sample, to accept the recommendation from staff to do a two-month extension in the amount of \$53,330.80, \$26,655.40 per month, for staff to provide building regulation and emergency services to Southside Place and authorize the City Manager to execute the contract in addition to representation in communication with Southside Place government to include the Mayor of West University Place and the Mayor Pro Tem. Councilmember Carroll seconded the motion. **MOTION PASSED.**

**Ayes:** Sample, Montgomery, Barnes, Bell, Carroll  
**Noes:** None  
**Absent:** None

## **7. Weslayan Traffic Signals Design**

Matters related to the design of Weslayan Traffic Signals at both the University and Rice intersections. *Recommended Action: Award the engineering design contract to IDS Engineering Group in an amount of \$73,550 and authorize the City Manager to executive the contract. Mr. Gerardo Barrera, Public Works Director*

Public Works Director Barrera presented and said the contract before Council is for the design of the traffic signals, cabinets, internal components and pedestrian signals at the intersections of Weslayan and University and Weslayan and Rice.

Mr. Barrera said design services include a topographic survey, traffic signal design, and bid and construction phase services and recommended that Council award the contract to the City's engineer, IDS Engineering Group, due to their knowledge of the City and of the equipment required for this project.

In response to Councilmember Barnes' question as to the life expectancy of the new equipment, Mr. Barrera said 30 to 40 years.

Councilmember Bell asked how much life remains on the current equipment and would it make more sense to hold off on this design until the impending traffic study towards the south end of Wesleyan is complete and the results are received. She also asked if the City has that flexibility to wait with the equipment nearing its end of life.

Mr. Barrera said, staff can make it work and extend the life of the equipment, which is no different from what is being done now. City Manager Beach interjected and noted that this design work is separate from the traffic study discussed for Wesleyan Street. He said the design of these traffic signals is solely for the planned replacement of these traffic signals.

Councilmember Bell said not knowing what the results of the traffic study will be, her thought is that if the results show the need for the installation of a new traffic light to improve safety a new crew would have to be mobilized to do design work, so it seems that it would be more cost efficient to wait the six months and have one crew do the work all at that time.

Carol Harrison with IDS Engineering spoke and said there would be a little savings, but not much. Councilmember Beach asked if the savings to do it now potentially outweigh the cost of inflation and Ms. Harrison said yes. She said with the cost of inflation now it makes more sense to go ahead with this and if later on another signal needs to be added the City would have saved money to do these now rather than postponing until later.

Councilmember Barnes moved to award the engineering design contract to IDS Engineering Group in an amount of \$73,550 and authorize the City Manager to execute the contract. Councilmember Bell seconded the motion. **MOTION PASSED.**

**Ayes:** Sample, Montgomery, Barnes, Bell, Carroll  
**Noes:** None  
**Absent:** None

## 8. Consent Agenda

All Consent Agenda items listed are considered to be routine by the City Council and will be enacted by one motion. There will be no separate discussion of these items unless a Council member requests in which event the item will be removed from the Consent Agenda and considered in its normal sequence on the agenda.

### A. City Council Meeting Minutes

Approve City Council Minutes of February 28, 2022. *Recommended Action: Approve City Council Minutes of February 28, 2022. Ms. Thelma Gilliam, City Secretary*

Councilmember Barnes moved to remove the Minutes for discussion. He said specifically in regards to Agenda Item 4, Page 7 (of the 02/28/22 Minutes), there are questions he asked at the last meeting relating to benches along the Edloe Street Pathway Project. He said his specific concern is related to the fact that there was a difference between the number and density of benches between Sunset and Georgetown versus those between Georgetown and Rice. He said in that entire long stretch between Sunset and Georgetown there were three benches and then later there were four benches in the schematic design proposed on the 28<sup>th</sup> between Georgetown and Rice. Councilmember Barnes said per the agenda memo, those benches were added after the January 10<sup>th</sup> meeting, at which comments received from Council relating to wanting benches and, although the Minutes of that meeting do not reflect what the context of those comments were, the audio recording does and the comments essentially related to a desire on the

part of several councilmembers to add benches in that area as essentially, expressly or impliedly, an amenity for Tiny's and Milk and Cookies. Councilmember Barnes said while he certainly has nothing against Tiny's and has expressed his gratitude publicly to the owner of Tiny's and Milk and Cookies, Gregg Thompson, for his collaboration with the City on this project, he has concerns related to the fact that the City would be spending public dollars, be it tax dollars or grant money received by the City, for the purchase, construction, and maintenance of amenities that will essentially benefit a private, for profit business.

Councilmember Barnes said one of the things he had asked was a specific question relating to this number and density of the benches and he wanted that added to the Minutes of that meeting.

Mayor Sample asked City Secretary Gilliam to review the audio and revise the Minutes appropriately for approval at the next meeting.

**9. Adjourn Meeting**

With no other business before the Council, the meeting adjourned at approximately 7:15 p.m.

Prepared by: Thelma A. Gilliam, TRMC, City Secretary

Council Approved: April 11, 2022

*Note: Audio of this meeting in its entirety is on the City's website. If for any reason you are unable to download the audio from the website, contact the City Secretary's office to obtain a copy, as well as a copy of any presentation.*