



The City of West University Place

A Neighborhood City

CITY COUNCIL

Bob Higley, Mayor
Kevin Trautner, Mayor Pro Tem
John P. Barnes, Councilmember
Lauri Lankford, Councilmember
Ed Sobash, 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 virtual regular meeting on **Monday, May 24, 2021**, for the purpose of considering the agenda of items listed.

Agenda was as follows:

1. Call Special Meeting to Order/Roll Call

Mayor Higley called the special meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. Mayor Pro Tem Trautner, Councilmembers Barnes, Lankford and Sobash were also in attendance.

City Manager Beach, City Secretary Thelma Gilliam, City Attorney Bounds, and Assistant to the City Manager Will Thompson, Finance Director DuBose, Fire Chief Taylor, Parks and Recreation Director White, Public Works Director Barrera, and Police Chief Walker were also present.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

Councilmember Sobash led the Pledge.

3. Star Citizens Awards

Matters related to the presentation of Star Citizens Awards. ***Ms. Susan White, Parks and Recreation Director***

Parks and Recreation White presented and noted that the Star Citizen Award is to recognize exemplary efforts by citizens whose volunteer efforts improve quality of life in West U.

After the introduction, Mayor Higley provided awards to awardees Mary Frances and David DuMay and Kimberly and John Carr Eads for co-chairing the 2020 Park Lovers' Ball, which netted in excess of \$220,000 for West U parks. Additionally, Sami and Jud Morrison and Christine Parker and Owen Parker received awards for their volunteer efforts co-chairing the 2021 Park Lovers' Golf Ball, which due to COVID, was held in lieu of the traditional Park Lovers' Ball. The Morrisons and the Parkers also co-chaired the last Fathers & Flashlights event in 2019. Combined, the Park Lovers' Golf Ball and the Fathers & Flashlights events netted \$200,000 for West U parks.

4. Public Comments

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

Councilmember Lankford spoke to say that she has become concerned about the accuracy of voting results. She said she discovered that one of the City's constituents appears to not had his voted counted

because he is not on the list of total voters received from Harris County and so it makes her wonder about the accuracy of all the counts by Harris County. Councilmember Lankford said her other concern is about mail-in ballots and the lack of notification so that people understand that they need to track the mail-in ballots to be sure they are received. She said those issues, along with new voting machines, made her wonder about the accuracy of the counts and now it is too late to request a recount, because it had to be done two days after the canvassing, which was May 12th.

Bill Forney, 3774 Georgetown Street, spoke regarding Palace Social located at 4191 Bellaire Boulevard, which is the former site of Palace Bowling Lanes. He said bowling is coming back to the site, a nearly 30,000 square foot facility, and will also include over 50 arcade games, virtual reality stations, golf simulators, meeting rooms for karaoke and parties, 200-seat restaurant and lounge and more.

5. COVID-19

Matters related to COVID-19. *Recommended Action: Discuss and take any desired action.* **Mr. Aaron Taylor, Fire Chief and Emergency Management Coordinator**

Chief Taylor reported:

- Governor Abbott issued an Executive Order GA-36, which prohibits cities from requiring masks. The City has implemented changes for compliancy and now masks are optional inside city facilities.
- COVID hospitalizing for trauma service in West U area (area Q) is down to 4.2 percent
- One-thousand new COVID cases reported in Texas on May 21, which are some of the lowest numbers seen since the beginning of the pandemic.
- Texas positivity rate is 3.2 percent.
- Harris County positivity rate is 6.5 percent.
- Texas Medical Center positivity rate is 3.2 percent.
- Total confirmed cases in West U are 586, 581 recovered cases, and active cases and deaths range from 0-5.
- Data indicates that 42 percent of Texans have received at least the first dose of vaccines and 34 percent are fully vaccinated.
- City staff is continuing to review city programs and make incremental changes as things get back to normalcy.

6. 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 Minutes

Approve Special Minutes of May 6, 2021, Minutes of May 10, 2021, Special Minutes of May 12, 2021, and Special Minutes of May 14, 2021. *Recommended Action: Approve Minutes of May 6, 2021, May 10, 2021, May 12, 2021, and May 14, 2021.* **Ms. Thelma Gilliam, City Secretary**

B. Friends of West University Parks Fund, Inc., Bylaws and Certificate of Formation

Matters related to Friends of West University Parks Fund, Inc., Bylaws and Certificate of Formation. *Recommended Action: Discuss and take any desired action.* **Ms. Donna LaMond, Director of the Friends of West University Parks Fund, Inc., and Mr. Matt Foytlin, Friends Board Member**

C. Amendment to the Code of Ordinances – Chapter 2

Matters related to an ordinance amending Chapter 2 of the Code of Ordinances on the first and final reading. *Recommended Action: Approve ordinance on the first and final reading.* **Ms. Katherine DuBose, Finance Director**

D. Accept Study Reports

Matters related to accepting the Facility Condition Assessment Report and the Drinking Water Capacity and Efficiency Study Report. *Recommended Action: Accept reports.* **Mr. Gerardo Barrera, Public Works Director**

Councilmember Lankford removed item 6C for discussion.

Councilmember Sobash moved to approve the remaining items on the Consent Agenda as presented. Councilmember Barnes seconded the motion. **MOTION PASSED.**

Ayes: Higley, Trautner, Barnes, Sobash, Lankford
Noes: None
Absent: None

Regarding 6C, Councilmember Lankford inquired about Section 2-132(f)(3) relating to the addition that “changes to the contract time will be allowed to be changed by the mayor or city manager. She said in thinking about the contract for the Virtual Gate project, this would mean the City would be allowing only the mayor or city manager to change the timing and therefore not change the liquidated damages provisions without the vote of the entire council.

City Attorney Bounds said he suggested that the city manager be authorized to make the changes to contract time because those changes are fairly common and routine. Mr. Bounds said if there was something out of the ordinary, he said he suspects the city manager might bring it to Council for approval. He also said the contracts would be limited to those contracts that do not involve expenditures, but rather only involving weather days.

City Attorney Bounds said he is comfortable with the provision and so Councilmember Lankford said she is satisfied and moved to approve the amendment to Chapter 2 of the Code of Ordinances as presented. Councilmember Barnes seconded the motion. **MOTION PASSED.**

Ayes: Higley, Trautner, Barnes, Sobash, Lankford
Noes: None
Absent: None

7. Adjourn

With no other business before the Council, Councilmember Sobash moved to adjourn the meeting at approximately 4:06 p.m. Councilmember Lankford seconded the motion. **MOTION PASSED.**

Ayes: Higley, Trautner, Barnes, Sobash, Lankford
Noes: None
Absent: None

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

Council Approved: June 14, 2021