

**CITY OF LAREDO  
RECOGNITION AND COMMUNICATION NOTICE  
M2019-R-06  
CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS  
1110 HOUSTON STREET  
LAREDO, TEXAS 78040  
April 15, 2019  
5:00 P.M.**

**The Mayor presented the following:**

1. Recognizing Dr. Amado F. Garza III, a pediatric practitioner in the City of Laredo for over 30 years who has devoted his medical services to help child abuse victims overcome their maladies. He has also worked tirelessly with law enforcement and advocacy groups like the Child Advocacy Center and the District Attorney's Office to bring awareness of child abuse concerns and help make a positive impact on the lives of Laredo children.

No recognition made.

**CITY OF LAREDO CITY  
COUNCIL MEETING  
M2019-R-06  
CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS  
1110 HOUSTON STREET  
LAREDO, TEXAS 78040  
April 15, 2019  
5:30 P.M.**

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

Mayor Pete Saenz called the meeting to order.

**II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Mayor Pete Saenz led in the pledge of allegiance.

**III. MOMENT OF SILENCE**

Mayor Pete Saenz led in a moment of silence. Cm. Vielma asked for prayers for the recent passing of Raquel Gutierrez Ramirez.

**IV. ROLL CALL**

In attendance:

Pete Saenz	Mayor
Rudy Gonzalez, Jr.	District I
Vidal Rodriguez	District II
Mercurio "Merc" Martinez, III	District III
Alberto Torres, Jr.	District IV
Norma "Nelly" Vielma	District V
Dr. Marte Martinez	District VI

George Altgelt  
Roberto Balli  
Jose A. Valdez, Jr.  
Rosario Cabello  
Robert Eads  
Kristina L. Hale

District VII  
District VIII  
City Secretary  
Interim Co-City Manager  
Interim Co-City Manager  
City Attorney

Cm. Vielma joined at 5:52 p.m.

## **V. MINUTES**

Approval of the minutes of April 1, 2019 and April 4, 2019.

Motion to approve the April 1, 2019, and April 4, 2019, minutes.

Moved: Cm. Torres

Second: Cm. Balli

For: 7

Against: 0

Abstain: 0

Cm. Vielma was not present.

### **Citizen comments**

Lauren San Miguel voiced opposition to the proposed utility rate increase, noting that construction began in 2006 on a river plant. From that time until 2017, three pumps failed. The community will be paying off those costs, \$96 million, until 2037. She noted her loss of trust in the Laredo City Council after their mismanagement of Laredo's water, and she noted her frustration at learning of the proposed utility rate increase through social media instead of local broadcast news. Ms. San Miguel reminded Council that community members live paycheck to paycheck, some with a fixed income. She asked why this proposed increase was not reported on local news.

Dolores Medrano spoke in opposition of this item and reminded Council Members that they were elected to act in the best interest of their constituents rather than catering to special interest groups. Cm. Balli, Vielma, and Gonzalez were absent from the special Council meeting in which this item was approved. She noted that the absent Council Members, who serve a significant portion of the community, should have requested a postponement and failed their constituents by not doing so. In 2006, the residents of Laredo began paying a fee to fund the securement of a secondary water source. To-date, no source has been secured, and the citizens of Laredo are in the same or worse situation. The people of the community cannot afford this rate increase. Ms. Medrano noted that at the special-called Council meeting, the room was filled with developers and engineers, special interest groups who seek to benefit off of the backs of the residents. She noted that, like Lauren San Miguel stated, she did not learn of this special-called Council meeting until afterward through social media; it was not reported in the local newspaper or on local broadcast news. She voiced her opinion that this issue was "railroaded through" Council. The waste and abuse of taxpayer funds has to stop.

## **VI. VETERAN RECOGNITION**

a. Honoring Veteran of the Month Samuel Ruben Ayala as a member of the United

States Army and recognizing his distinguished service to our country.

Arturo Garcia, Community Development Director, introduced Samuel Ayala, who was drafted into the Army in the 82<sup>nd</sup> Airborne Division as a Paratrooper in the Panama Canal at the age of 18. He was then transferred to Vietnam to serve in the 101<sup>st</sup> Airborne Division, where he participated with a Special Forces group conducting long range reconnaissance missions and combat action during the Tet Offences. He was decorated for Heroism from his participation in the Tet Offences. Sgt. Ayala's medals and commendations include the Service Medal, the Silver Service Star, the National Defense Service Medal, the Vietnam Campaign Medal, and the Army Commendation Medal with a distinction for Valor, as well as a Combat Badge and Airborne Badge. He achieved the rank of Sergeant and was honorably discharged from active duty in 1968. Mr. Garcia presented a video displaying Sgt. Ayala's military highlights, current career in veteran outreach services, and his thoughts and feelings from his military experience.

Sgt. Ayala received a standing ovation and recognized his family and coworkers, thanking them for their support and commitment to veterans in Laredo and surrounding counties. He thanked Arminda Peña, the coordinator for the 406<sup>th</sup> District Court along with the judges for their work to end drug abuse among citizens, especially veterans, and he reminded the public that veterans are willing to give their own lives to ensure the liberty of others.

Mayor Saenz thanked Sgt. Ayala for his service to the country and presented him with a certificate of recognition.

## **VII. COMMUNICATIONS**

1. Presentation by Driscoll Health Plan on the 6th Annual Back 2 School Health Fair Event scheduled for Saturday, August 3, 2019 at the Sames Auto Arena.

Rose Santos, Driscoll Health Plan Community Outreach Manager, explained that DHP is a nonprofit organization which offers health care coverage to the communities of South Texas in 24 counties. They provide information, education, and resources for those in need, including children of migrant farm workers and colonia residents at no cost to the families. The Back 2 School Health Fair Event provides dental screenings, sports physicals, immunizations, vision screenings, blood pressure testing, TB testing, and height/weight checks. These services are also offered to the parents of the children going back to school. She reported that the sixth annual Back to School Health Fair will be held Saturday, August 3, 2019, from 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. at the Sames Auto Arena; she asked each Council Member to be a part of the community initiative by providing financial support to pay for the venue, which is no longer manageable given the amount of school supplies and backpacks that the organization provides.

Cm. Torres asked if the City can waive the fee for the arena given the City's contract with SMG. Rosario Cabello, Interim Co-City Manager, confirmed that the fee waiver is possible. Cm. Torres asked for this item to be brought back to the next Council meeting for action. Cm. Vielma agreed to cosponsor Cm. Torres's request.

Mrs. Cabello noted that a bus shuttle to the event cannot be arranged at this time.

Dr. Marte Martinez suggested setting up an arrangement in which Driscoll Health Plan does not have to keep coming to Council asking for support. If an organization needs resources to put on an event for a public purpose, then some criteria could be put into place to provide those resources. Mrs. Cabello countered that the City would have to absorb this type of expense. Robert Eads, Interim Co-City Manager, agreed that if the City absorbs this type of expense, then it will have to budget for it.

2. Presentation by the Laredo Commission for Women regarding the selected nominees for the 2019 Hall of Fame with possible action; and any matters incident thereto.

Cm. Torres asked if these nominees could be discussed in closed session, as he was concerned that if someone were to be removed from the list of nominees, that would be an embarrassment to do so in open session.

Kristina L. Hale, City Attorney, confirmed that this discussion is for open session; the Commission presents the list of nominees for Council approval.

Sandra Rocha Taylor, Laredo Commission for Women Chair, stated that originally, 14 individuals were nominated, but 10 nominees are being presented to Council. The same criteria that have been used for the past 24 years were used this year: a selection subcommittee reviews all applications and determine the nominees' contribution to the community. The subcommittee brings the nominations to the full Commission, which was done on March 4, 2019, and the Commission voted on the nomination selections.

Cm. Altgelt voiced his understanding that the Commission was directed to meet with various women's organizations to get collective input on the criteria and then apply that criteria to this year's application pool before bringing them back before Council.

Jose A. Valdez, Jr., City Secretary, clarified that the directive to meet with the other women's organizations was to develop the ordinance that will eventually have the written criteria for the Commission to follow in future Hall of Fame applications.

Mrs. Taylor continued that of the 14 applicants, some were withdrawn or duplicated nominations, and some withdrew their nominations. Cm. Torres added that he withdrew his two nominations because of the date change.

Dr. Marte asked if it is normal practice to accept all applications that are received. Mrs. Taylor explained that the acceptance varies each year. Francis Wawroski, Commission Member, noted that while the Commission reviews the applications in a discerning manner, they usually do not exclude any applications.

Cm. Vielma noted that women in Laredo have historically not received much recognition and so when this Hall of Fame event began to take place, the few women who met the criteria have been accepted.

Cm. Torres stated that there is no conflict with a Council Member nominating his or her own constituents for the Hall of Fame event. Mrs. Hale confirmed that this is

done in other committees, as well. Mrs. Taylor noted that a Council Member who nominates someone and then ultimately has the final say in whether that nomination is accepted or rejected may give the appearance of a conflict of interest. Cm. Torres countered that a conflict of interest, by definition, is a question if there is something to be gained by the Council Member for his or her involvement. He iterated that he has nothing to gain by nominating well-deserving women to the Hall of Fame event.

Mrs. Taylor displayed a copy of the 2019 Hall of Fame nomination form. Cm. Altgelt, after reviewing the list of the proposed nominees, voiced his opinion that the Commission does not have an actual process in place for deciding on Hall of Fame honorees. He added that this year's nominees have a close proximity to the individuals nominating him, which he noted may be self-serving.

Mayor Saenz commented on the increased level of scrutiny on the Commission recently. Cm. Altgelt stated that his scrutiny comes after calls complaining of how arbitrary the Commission's processes are and how the nominations are selected.

Mrs. Taylor invited Council to come to the Commission meetings, noting that the Members are united in their selections of the nominees. Cm. Altgelt disagreed, noting that his appointees to the committee have commented on how the Commission is being cajoled and manipulated to bend to the will of the few.

Mr. Valdez noted that the concerns from Council are valid, which is why the ordinance will be created for the Commission moving forward. He explained that Mrs. Taylor created a subcommittee to develop the grading criteria for how to treat each application consistently and objectively. However, the time to approve or reject the nominations is upon the City, and he asked Council to take action. Cm. Altgelt initiated a motion to table this item pending the drafting of the aforementioned ordinance.

Mrs. Taylor asked Council not to table this item, as many people took the time to respond to the Commission's call for applications. Tabling at this time would drag the issue on unnecessarily.

Motion to table pending the drafting of the aforementioned ordinance.

Moved: Cm. Altgelt

Second: Cm. Torres

For: 5

Against: 3

Abstain: 0

Cm. Gonzalez

Cm. Rodriguez

Cm. Mercurio Martinez

Cm. Vielma

Cm. Torres

Cm. Balli

Dr. Marte Martinez

Cm. Altgelt

Mrs. Taylor voiced her disappointment in Council's decision, noting that Council is listening to the comments of a few rather than the majority.

## **VIII. APPOINTMENTS TO COMMISSIONS, BOARDS AND COMMITTEES**

1. Appointment by Council Member Rudy Gonzalez, Jr. of Sylvia Bruni to the Laredo

Commission for Women.

Motion to approve the nomination of Sylvia Bruni to the Laredo Commission for Women.

Moved: Cm. Torres

Second: Cm. Altgelt

For: 8

Against: 0

Abstain: 0

2. Appointment by Council Member George J. Altgelt of Joaquin Rodriguez to the Max Mandel Municipal Golf Course Advisory Committee.

No action taken.

3. Appointment by Council Member Vidal Rodriguez of Guadalupe Ramirez to the Laredo Commission for Women.

Motion to approve the nomination of Guadalupe Ramirez to the Laredo Commission for Women.

Moved: Cm. Torres

Second: Cm. Altgelt

For: 8

Against: 0

Abstain: 0

4. Appointment by Council Member Vidal Rodriguez of Jesus "Chuy" Ruiz to the Technical Review Board Ad-Hoc Committee.

Motion to approve the nomination of Jesus "Chuy" Ruiz to the Technical Review Board Ad-Hoc Committee.

Moved: Cm. Torres

Second: Cm. Altgelt

For: 8

Against: 0

Abstain: 0

5. Appointment by Council Member Alberto Torres, Jr. of Manuel R. Flores to the Charter Review Commission.

Motion to approve the nomination of Manuel R. Flores to the Charter Revision Commission.

Moved: Cm. Torres

Second: Cm. Altgelt

For: 8

Against: 0

Abstain: 0

6. Appointment by Council Member Vidal Rodriguez of Ricardo "Rick" Garza to the Max Mandel Municipal Golf Course Advisory Committee.

Motion to approve the nomination of Ricardo "Rick" Garza to the Max Mandel Municipal Golf Course Advisory Committee.

Moved: Cm. Torres

Second: Cm. Altgelt

For: 8                      Against: 0                      Abstain: 0

7. Appointment by Council Member Mercurio Martinez of Louis Pellegrin to the Max A. Mandel Municipal Golf Course Advisory Committee.

Motion to approve the nomination of Louis Pellegrin to the Max Mandel Municipal Golf Course Advisory Committee.

Moved: Cm. Torres

Second: Cm. Altgelt

For: 8                      Against: 0                      Abstain: 0

8. Appointment by Mayor Pro-Tempore Roberto Balli of Joaquin Rodriguez to the Max A. Mandel Municipal Golf Course Advisory Committee.

Motion to approve the nomination of Joaquin Rodriguez to the Max Mandel Municipal Golf Course Advisory Committee.

Moved: Cm. Torres

Second: Cm. Altgelt

For: 8                      Against: 0                      Abstain: 0

## **IX. PUBLIC HEARINGS**

1. Motion to open public hearing #1.

Moved: Cm. Altgelt

Second: Cm. Balli

For: 8                      Against: 0                      Abstain: 0

Public Hearing and Introductory Ordinance authorizing the Co-Interim City Managers to accept and enter into a continuation contract from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) and amending the FY 2018-2019 budget by appropriating additional revenues and expenditures in the amount of \$300,000.00 for the City of Laredo Health Department (CLHD) Ryan White Part C HIV outpatient early intervention, diagnosis, treatment and prevention of HIV in the STDC Region for the term from May 1, 2019 through April 30, 2020.

There was no public input.

Motion to close public hearing and introduce.

Moved: Cm. Torres

Second: Cm. Altgelt

For: 8                      Against: 0                      Abstain: 0

2. Motion to open public hearing #2.

Moved: Dr. Marte Martinez

Second: Cm. Balli

For: 7                      Against: 0                      Abstain: 0

Cm. Altgelt was not present.

Public Hearing and Introductory Ordinance amending the Zoning Ordinance (Map) of the City of Laredo by rezoning all that part of Block 2019, Eastern Division, located at 3203 Chacon St., from B-3 (Community Business District) to M-1 (Light Manufacturing District); providing for publication and effective date.

Planning & Zoning Commission recommended **approval** of the zone change, and **staff supports** this application. ZC-28-2019 District III

There was no public input.

Motion to close public hearing and introduce.

Moved: Cm. Mercurio Martinez

Second: Cm. Gonzalez

For: 8

Against: 0

Abstain: 0

3. Motion to open public hearing #3.

Moved: Dr. Marte Martinez

Second: Cm. Balli

For: 8

Against: 0

Abstain: 0

Public Hearing and Introductory Ordinance amending the Zoning Ordinance (Map) of the City of Laredo by rezoning approximate 2.959 acres, as further described by Metes and Bounds on Exhibit A, located at, North of International Blvd., and West of Springfield Ave., from AG (Agricultural District) to B-3 (Community Business District); providing for publication and effective date.

Planning & Zoning Commission recommended **approval** of the zone change, and **staff supports** the application. ZC-29-2019 District VI

Juan Salinas, applicant, spoke in favor of the zone change. He noted that the right-of-way has already been dedicated and money invested for future construction. He added that the zone change complies with the Comprehensive Plan.

Motion to close public hearing and introduce.

Moved: Dr. Marte Martinez

Second: Cm. Balli

For: 8

Against: 0

Abstain: 0

4. Motion to open public hearing #4.

Moved: Dr. Marte Martinez

Second: Cm. Balli

For: 8

Against: 0

Abstain: 0

Public Hearing and Introductory Ordinance amending the Zoning Ordinance



(Map) of the City of Laredo by rezoning approximate 2.067 acres, as further described by Metes and Bounds on Exhibit A, located, North of International Blvd., and West of Springfield Ave., from AG (Agricultural District) to B-3 (Community Business District); providing for publication and effective date.

Planning & Zoning Commission recommended **approval** of the zone change, and **staff supports** the application. ZC-30-2019 District VI

There was no public input.

Motion to close public hearing and introduce.

Moved: Dr. Marte Martinez

Second: Cm. Balli

For: 8                      Against: 0                      Abstain: 0

5. Motion to open public hearing #5.

Moved: Cm. Altgelt

Second: Cm. Gonzalez

For: 8                      Against: 0                      Abstain: 0

Public Hearing and Introductory Ordinance amending the Zoning Ordinance (Map) of the City of Laredo by rezoning Lot 1, Khan Subdivision, located at 8002 San Gabriel Dr. from M-1 (Light Manufacturing District) to B-4 (Highway Commercial District); providing for publication and effective date.

Planning & Zoning Commission recommended **approval** of the zone change and **staff supports** this application. ZC-27-2019 District VII

Richard Cann, applicant, spoke in favor of the zone change. The intended use is commercial for both buildings.

Motion to close public hearing and introduce.

Moved: Cm. Altgelt

Second: Dr. Marte Martinez

For: 8                      Against: 0                      Abstain: 0

6. Motion to open public hearing #6.

Moved: Dr. Marte Martinez

Second: Cm. Mercurio Martinez

For: 8                      Against: 0                      Abstain: 0

Public Hearing and Introductory Ordinance amending Chapter 31, Article III, Division 3, Section 31-138 by increasing the water rates as follows: Residential base minimum charge and volume water rates adjustment from two (2) percent to five (5) percent effective each year from October 1, 2019 through October 1, 2022; and Commercial base minimum charge adjustment from two (2) percent to five (5) percent and the volume water rates adjustment from two (2) percent to twenty (20) percent for one (1) year effective October 1, 2019, and then both the

Commercial base minimum charge and volume water rates adjustment from two (2) percent to five (5) percent each year from October 1, 2020 through October 1, 2022, and then to an annual adjustment from two (2) percent to three (3) percent for all customer classes each October 1st thereafter as shown in Tables 1 and 2; and also amending section 31-141(b)(2) by deleting approval by the City Manager; providing for publication and an effective date.

Armando Cisneros noted that when this matter was first brought up at the special-called Council meeting, no citizens spoke on behalf of Laredo's residents. He voiced his opinion that there was not enough notice given. He noted that Dan Jackson had stated that the state average of utility bills is \$90; however, a more representative sample would be the averages of towns along Texas' border with Mexico, which is only \$65, only accounting for water and sewer. While Mr. Jackson claimed that he would be glad to pay Laredo's utility rates as a resident of Frisco, Mr. Cisneros reported that the annual median income of Frisco, TX, is \$117,000; the annual median income of Laredo is \$39,000. Given the wage disparity between the two communities, Mr. Cisneros voiced his opinion that Mr. Jackson's comments were insensitive. The claim was also made at the last Council meeting that San Antonio residents pay over \$100 for the same volume of water that Laredo residents pay. However, the City of San Antonio has a utility rate calculator on its website, and Mr. Cisneros found that 10,000 gallons of water only costs \$72.70; Laredo pays \$63 for that same volume, so the rates are much closer in proximity than reported. He voiced his understanding that the presentation given on this issue was inaccurate and misleading. The City should not be making decisions based on Mr. Jackson's questionable information. Mr. Cisneros asked that staff meet with citizens and get more reliable information.

Lauren San Miguel opposed the rate increase; in 2006, Pico River started construction and three pumps have failed from then to 2017. The community will take until 2037 to pay off the \$96 million debt. She noted her loss of trust in the way that this matter is being handled and voiced her disappointment in the fact that she learned about this matter through social media; the community was not properly notified of this matter. Citizens of Laredo live paycheck-to-paycheck. She reminded Council that citizens oppose this rate increase but cannot be here to address Council because they are working and survive on tips. Laredo is blessed with clean water on-demand from the tap. If Council continues to increase charges for essential services, members of the community are going to leave and Laredo will not be the same. Ms. San Miguel asked Council to oppose this rate increase.

Dr. Marte Martinez noted that he is also disappointed at the state of Laredo's utilities management. He explained that after years of bad planning, the City is stuck with a difficult decision to invest in its infrastructure to keep the growth of the community going or settle for the current situation. This rate increase is the payment of the sins of Council's predecessors, but it will also provide much-needed repair and correction of the City's infrastructure.

Cm. Mercurio Martinez noted that the developers, engineers, and architects present at the special-called meeting represented the demands of the people. School districts have been informing the City that the schools are overcrowded and more schools are needed. This can only be achieved by growing and developing. Because the community is growing, the utilities infrastructure needs

to meet the new needs. Council is well aware of the number of residents that are below the poverty level.

Dr. Martinez reiterated that Council is doing everything they can to cut wasteful spending. Mayor Saenz noted that the predecessors on Council, including himself, must take responsibility for their part in the planning of the City's utility infrastructure. However, there were multiple factors at play in this situation, and those members of Council were still in discovery mode when they had to make a decision. Depending on the legislature, the City may have a tax cap, which will result in an additional savings for the taxpayers. The matter is not as simple as some residents may think. He voiced his appreciation for the public's patience and encouraged them to embrace the rate increase as it will benefit the community in the long term.

Cm. Altgelt reminded the public that Council very reluctantly took action at the prior Council meeting to raise the utility rates, as they took this matter very seriously. He also noted that, by and large, it is commercial users who are going to be shouldering most of the burden from this rate increase, not residential customers. Based on the City's calculations, the average residence will only see a small increase.

Riazula Mia, Utilities Director, confirmed that residential customers using 5,000 gallons per month will only see a \$2 increase on their bill. If a user uses 10,000 gallons, they will see about \$3.50 extra per month. Almost 75% of residential customers use about 8,000.

Cm. Altgelt continued that by 2050, the population of Laredo is expected to double. Also, rate increases tend to encourage users to be more conservative with their water use, which will save them money, as well. A xeriscape ordinance and an irrigation ordinance will also help users conserve more water. He agreed that the El Pico water treatment plant was a debacle of extreme proportions, and Council is now stuck with the difficult decision to do the heavy lifting of correcting the problem. The City takes no pleasure in increasing the water rates as increasing taxes and rates are the least desirable duties of an elected official.

Robert Eads, Interim Co-City Manager, explained that there is an administrative fee that is charged for the services provided by the City as an accounting function. If there were some earmarking of those administrative fees going forward at a certain percentage to bond or use them for future construction. Rosario Cabello, Interim Co-City Manager, reported that if the City meets its projected revenues and are within budget, the first year will yield over \$300,000 in excess from the current rate to the new increased rate. Staff would propose to put it in reserve and save it initially. The second year, the City would generate an additional \$700,000 and an additional \$800,000 the third year. The fourth year would generate an additional \$1 million for a total of \$300 million that the City can use for a secondary water source or related Utilities projects.

Cm. Altgelt asked staff to add an item to the next Council agenda regarding dedication of the extra revenues from the proposed rate increase for Utilities projects and/or a secondary water source. Mrs. Cabello reminded Council that this will be doable provided that the City remains within budget.

Cm. Vielma recalled increasing the water rate previously for securing a secondary water source and asked for confirmation. Mr. Mia clarified that in 2007, the rate increased and there was talk about a secondary water source. However, Council at that time decided to build a new water treatment plant rather than direct the monies to a water source.

Dr. Martinez added that the model used by staff to determine the extra revenue only takes into account the current user accounts; it does not take into account the new accounts that will open as a result of continued development, which will add to the expected revenues and hopefully stimulate continued development and investment in the community. He voiced his hope that Council current decision will result in Council actively planning the City's infrastructure rather than being reactionary like in the past.

Mr. Mia reminded Council that the rate increase under consideration is based on the Capital Improvement Program. This rate model does not include the robust growth expected in the next 30 years. The City's Master Plan calls for nearly \$500 million of improvements. The \$180 million borrowing will buy the City at least 10 years of growth. The CIP is a fluid process.

Mr. Eads assured Council that staff are not likely to come back in the next two years asking for more money for Utilities unless there is a catastrophic event or something that comes online completely out of the normal range of expectations. The City's forecasting is for normal growth. That same growth is funneling and feeding into the City because those are new customers onboard.

James K. Snideman, newly-appointed Planning Director, voiced his agreement with the conclusion drawn by management. He stated that a common budgeting tool for water use and sewage treatment among other cities is water impact fees, although they are not very popular among customers. Most cities that are experiencing growth use them. Developers and builders don't like impact fees because they put the onus on them to fund growth, which they claim affects the affordability of new home prices. He stated that he has conducted and calculated over 50 impact fee studies in his career and would be willing to help with a study.

Cm. Vielma noted the importance of comparing "apples to apples," as proven by Mr. Cisneros. Mr. Mia noted that when staff hired the consultant, they asked him to consider impact fees. However, the City still needs to build the infrastructure, and the money must come from somewhere; once that is built, the City can consider impact fees. First, the infrastructure must be funded. Cm. Vielma initiated a motion to direct staff to study the potential of water impact fees.

Cm. Balli voiced the observation that the City keeps annexing property and growing outward, overextending its resources and adding lines, which is very costly. It de-incentivizes urban housing, which is a priority for the City. He emphasized the need to redevelop the inner city.

Alec Martinez, Bicycle/Pedestrian Coordinator, reminded Council that suburbia is the least sustainable form of developmental element. Backyards and front yards alone are responsible for 60% of the City's water use. He encouraged Council to meaningfully incentivize urban redevelopment and infield development.

Cm. Rodriguez reminded Council that development creates and sustains jobs, battling Laredo's unemployment rates.

Dolores Medrano voiced her opinion that there is no plan for resolve this issue. She asked why the public is only just now finding out from the newly-appointed Planning Director that there is another option in water impact fees. She noted that one member of Council is a developer and another is a realtor, so there is a vested interest in this issue. She asked why the City is charging residents without a plan. Council Members are only working part-time, but citizens are in a full-time crisis that needs to be addressed. She noted that it is misleading for staff to say that customers will only see their bill increase \$1-2, because there is also an increased sewer fee, and the increases accumulate and compound over time. She encouraged Council to develop and implement a well-organized plan before affecting customers' rates.

Victor Gomez spoke in opposition to the rate increase as most of the city is poor and cannot afford even a small rate increase. He encouraged Council to find alternative solutions to make sure that residents have the proper infrastructure. He asked what the \$180 million is going to pay for. Mr. Eads reported that the monies would pay for line and tank improvements or replacements, line break contingencies, a booster station, and related improvements and rehabilitation projects across the City's plants and stations.

Mr. Gomez voiced his opinion puts the burden of payment on the poorest group of people that will struggle the most with the increased fee rather than putting the burden on the developers. He noted that most people do not speak at Council meetings because they are fearful of retaliation, but he is not. He reported that a customer at his business told him that she stopped taking showers because she cannot afford water anymore. He added that the electronic meters do not work properly because he was charged for 68,000 gallons last summer; he could not possibly use that much water in a month. He had called the City to correct the error and was told that he must have had a water leak at his house, but he had not.

Mayor Saenz encouraged the public not to be fearful of addressing Council. He conceded that there may have been some retaliation efforts made by previous Council Members, but he emphasized his confidence in the new panel on Council to welcome public comments. Mrs. Cabello agreed, noting that she and Mr. Eads have an open door policy.

Richard Cann stated that Council has an uphill battle to fight. He voiced his support of the rate increase to fix the "mess" of the utility infrastructure. However, he noted his observation that there is a "glitch" when it comes to the fee structure; it appears that multi-family residents are grouped as "commercial" accounts. A lot of older and low-income apartment complexes have master meters, and the rate compounds based on the volume. These people are being charged a compounded rate, which is much higher than if they were a standalone household. He encouraged Council not to mix multi-family residences with commercial treatment.

Mr. Mia confirmed that a structure with a master meter is categorized as commercial. Cm. Balli stated that this is not acceptable and asked staff to look

into that matter.

Cm. Vielma noted that districts that are developing on their own have very expensive land, which is not being considered as a factor in terms of economic incentives. While a developer may be able to afford the impact fee, they are still paying for infrastructure and should get a break back.

Juan Avila asked if the water rate increase revenues be used to add a second trash pickup to the City's schedule. He also noted that he does not understand why Mr. Gomez claimed that people are scared to address Council; he has come before Council many times and had conflicting opinions from many Council Members, but there is no reason to be scared of anyone. He noted that Downtown looks like a ghost town with many closed stores and encouraged Council to find a way to incentivize inner city development.

Mayor Saenz asked if Council could take more time to gather more public input. Mrs. Hale confirmed that they could.

Andy Gonzalez of the Laredo Builders Association spoke in favor of the rate increase and reminded Council that the builders of Laredo would be limited in their ability to develop if the utilities capacity is not increased. He offered to host City staff and members of the public to facilitate a consensus among all parties.

Eduardo Garza noted that professional engineers work to protect the safety, health, and welfare of the public, and having proper infrastructure helps to accomplish that. Engineers serve every member of the community regardless of their income levels. He noted that the City's water rates have been one of the lowest in the state for over 20 years, which means that the City has been good stewards of the taxpayers' money. If the proposed rate increase would help protect the safety of the public, he voiced his support. He commended the Utilities Department for complying with TCEQ and having protected the City of Laredo from any penalties or fines because of their close attention to environmental impact.

Jesus Ruiz noted that of the improvements listed by Mr. Eads, about 80-90% of those are retrofitting the current system. The best way to cover these costs is to spread them. He reported that he has spoken with City employees who have said that they cannot afford the costs of homeownership, and City jobs are some of the best-paying jobs in Laredo. If the City continues to impact the new homeowner and new business owner, development and growth is going to slow to a crawl. He discouraged Council from "frontloading" costs because Laredo is becoming unaffordable and children who leave for school are not coming back.

Mr. Mia informed Council that the Local Government Code mandates that for impact fees to be implemented, Council must establish a committee. Staff can bring a list of recommendations for appointees to this committee. While he has not had discussions with the development community about impact fees, he has had such discussions with the consultant.

Cm. Altgelt voiced his concern over financing something for 20 years that will only get the City 10 years down the road, calling it a fool's errand. Mr. Mia

countered that these improvements will last at least 30 years.

Motion to close public hearing and introduce.

Moved: Cm. Altgelt

Second: Dr. Marte Martinez

For: 5                      Against: 4                      Abstain: 0

Mayor Saenz                      Cm. Gonzalez

Cm. Rodriguez                      Cm. Torres

Cm. Mercurio Martinez                      Cm. Vielma

Dr. Marte Martinez                      Cm. Balli

Cm. Altgelt

7. Motion to open public hearing #7.

Moved: Cm. Torres

Second: Cm. Altgelt

For: 8                      Against: 0                      Abstain: 0

Public Hearing and Introductory Ordinance amending Chapter 31, Division 1, Article II, Section 31-92 of the City of Laredo Code of Ordinances, by increasing the sewer rates as follows: Residential base charge and volume rates adjustment from two (2) percent to six (6) percent effective each year from October 1, 2019 through October 1, 2022; and Commercial base minimum charge from two (2) percent to six (6) percent and the volume rates from two (2) percent to fifteen (15) percent for one (1) year effective October 1, 2019, and then both the Commercial base charge and the volume rates adjustment from two (2) percent to six (6) percent each year from October 1, 2020 through October 1, 2022, and then to an annual adjustment from two (2) percent to three (3) percent for all customer classes each October 1st thereafter as shown in the Residential and Commercial/Multifamily tables provided within this ordinance; providing for publication and an effective date.

There was no public input.

Motion to close public hearing and introduce.

Moved: Dr. Marte Martinez

Second: Cm. Rodriguez

For: 6                      Against: 3                      Abstain: 0

Mayor Saenz                      Cm. Torres

Cm. Gonzalez                      Cm. Vielma

Cm. Rodriguez                      Cm. Balli

Cm. Mercurio Martinez

Dr. Marte Martinez

Cm. Altgelt

**X. INTRODUCTORY ORDINANCES**

8. An Ordinance of the City of Laredo, Texas, amending Chapter 25 "Plumbing" of the Code of Ordinances by providing that no drip system or vegetation shall be allowed within forty-eight (48) inches from the back of the curb of a public street;

providing standards for irrigation components located within twenty feet of a public street; providing for a cumulative clause; providing a severability clause; providing for publication and establishing an effective date.

Ordinance Introduction: City Council

## **XI. FINAL READING OF ORDINANCES**

Motion to waive the final reading of Ordinances 2019-O-059, 2019-O-060, 2019-O-061, 2019-O-062, 2019-O-063, 2019-O-064, and 2019-O-065.

Moved: Cm. Torres

Second: Cm. Balli

For: 5

Against: 0

Abstain: 0

Cm. Mercurio Martinez, Cm. Vielma, and Cm. Altgelt were not present.

9. 2019-O-059 Amending the Zoning Ordinance (Map) of the City of Laredo by rezoning Lot 1, Block 1, Fiesta Subdivision, located at 101 Alta Mar Dr., from B-3 (Community Business District) to B-4 (Highway Commercial District); providing for publication and effective date. ZC-14-2019 District II

Motion to adopt Ordinances 2019-O-060.

Moved: Cm. Torres

Second: Cm. Balli

For: 5

Against: 0

Abstain: 0

Cm. Mercurio Martinez, Cm. Vielma, and Cm. Altgelt were not present.

10. 2019-O-060 Amending the Zoning Ordinance (Map) of the City of Laredo by repealing Ordinance 2015-O-136 and authorizing the issuance of a Special Use Permit for a restaurant serving alcohol on Lot 1, Block 5, Del Mar Village Subdivision, located at 120 West Village Blvd., Suites 101-102 (one unit); providing for publication and effective date. ZC-26-2019 District V

Motion to adopt Ordinances 2019-O-060.

Moved: Cm. Torres

Second: Cm. Balli

For: 5

Against: 0

Abstain: 0

Cm. Mercurio Martinez, Cm. Vielma, and Cm. Altgelt were not present.

11. 2019-O-061 Authorizing Co-Interim City Managers to amend the Fiscal Year 2018-2019 Laredo Public Facility Corporation budget by increasing revenues and expenditures in the amount of \$24,367.00 in order to appropriate the Laredo Public Facility Corporation (LPFC) funds



available from cash flow from La Terraza Apartments.

Motion to adopt Ordinances 2019-O-061.

Moved: Cm. Torres

Second: Cm. Balli

For: 5

Against: 0

Abstain: 0

Cm. Mercurio Martinez, Cm. Vielma, and Cm. Altgelt were not present.

12. 2019-O-062 An Ordinance of the City of Laredo, Texas, amending sections 8.03, 8.05, and 9.02 of the Laredo Ethics Code, requiring the ethics compliance officer to oversee or provide training to city officials and employees on their responsibilities under the Laredo Ethics Code at least once a year; requiring current city officials and employees to complete yearly ethics training; providing for a cumulative clause; providing a severability clause; and establishing an effective date.

Motion to adopt Ordinances 2019-O-062.

Moved: Cm. Torres

Second: Cm. Balli

For: 5

Against: 0

Abstain: 0

Cm. Mercurio Martinez, Cm. Vielma, and Cm. Altgelt were not present.

13. 2019-O-063 An Ordinance amending Chapter 19, Article VIII, Section 19-355, of the Laredo Code of Ordinances by adding subsection (b)(1), to establish an amnesty program for fines, fees and penalties on parking violations under certain terms and conditions; providing for a cumulative clause; providing a repealing clause; providing for severability; and declaring an effective date.

Motion to adopt Ordinances 2019-O-063.

Moved: Cm. Torres

Second: Cm. Balli

For: 5

Against: 0

Abstain: 0

Cm. Mercurio Martinez, Cm. Vielma, and Cm. Altgelt were not present.

14. 2019-O-064 Authorizing the Co-Interim City Managers to execute a revocable license agreement for non-federal use of real property (GS-07B-99283) between the City of Laredo and the United States General Services Administration (GSA) for the purpose of allowing the City of Laredo Bridge Department to install, maintain, and operate a High-Speed Weigh-in-Motion (HS-WIM) scale/sensor system to facilitate the issuance of permits by the City for oversize and overweight commercial vehicles departing the Port at World Trade

Bridge, prior to exiting and gaining access to state and local roadways. The term of the license agreement is for five (5) years beginning on May 1, 2019 to April 30, 2024. Renewal may be requested by the City of Laredo at or near the end of the five (5) year period.

Motion to adopt Ordinances 2019-O-064.

Moved: Cm. Torres

Second: Cm. Balli

For: 5

Against: 0

Abstain: 0

Cm. Mercurio Martinez, Cm. Vielma, and Cm. Altgelt were not present.

15. 2019-O-065 An Ordinance repealing Ordinance 2019-O-004, which authorized the acceptance of a donation from Riverhills Investment LLC, of a 18.785 acre tract of land, more or less, situated in Porcion 35, Abstract 546, Jose M. Diaz, Original Grantee and Survey 2149, Abstract 594, R.H. Raines, Original Grantee, within the City Limits of the Laredo and Webb County, Texas, out and part of the New Santa Fe, LTD. (71.986 Acre) Tract I, recorded in Volume 4394, Pages 566-572 of the Webb County deed records in exchange for a Two Hundred Thousand Dollar (\$200,000.00) credit toward future development fees applicable exclusively to the balance of the 71.989 acre tract referred to in plat records as the Riverhill South Subdivision, the City's agreement to take water runoff from the balance of the 71.989 acre tract, and an agreement that the value of the 18.785 acres in excess of Two Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$200,000.00) shall be considered a donation to the City; and declaring an effective date. Based on new appraisal information, Riverhills Investment LLC has decided to rescind the donation agreement.

Dr. Marte Martinez recused himself from this item.

Motion to adopt Ordinances 2019-O-065.

Moved: Cm. Torres

Second: Cm. Balli

For: 5

Against: 0

Abstain: 0

Cm. Mercurio Martinez, Cm. Vielma, and Cm. Altgelt were not present; Dr. Marte Martinez recused himself.

## **XII. CONSENT AGENDA**

### **XII (a) RESOLUTIONS**

16. 2019-R-37 Authorizing and approving a fee waiver and a Tax Abatement Agreement between the City of Laredo and Arron A. Bundoc for a proposed project located at 511 Farragut St, lot 8; block 98; western

division that consists of new construction, in accordance with authorized guidelines and criteria established for the Neighborhood Empowerment Zone (NEZ). This agreement will be for a five (5) year period and will abate taxes on new improvements for the purpose of economic development. The project has an estimated capital investment total of \$65,600.00, estimated annual tax abatement total of \$415.91 and estimated total fee waivers of \$1,637.00. Guidelines and criteria for the agreement are set forth in the attached agreement and supporting information.

Motion to adopt Resolution 2019-R-037.

Moved: Cm. Torres

Second: Cm. Balli

For: 5

Against: 0

Abstain: 0

Cm. Mercurio Martinez, Cm. Vielma, and Cm. Altgelt were not present.

17. 2019-R-44 Ratifying the execution of a contract amendment with the Department of State Health Services (DSHS) in the amount of \$165,000.00 for surveillance, epidemiology and disease control activities for all notifiable, infectious conditions especially for highly infectious diseases, new and emerging diseases for the term from September 1, 2019 through August 31, 2021.

Motion to adopt Resolution 2019-R-044.

Moved: Cm. Torres

Second: Cm. Balli

For: 5

Against: 0

Abstain: 0

Cm. Mercurio Martinez, Cm. Vielma, and Cm. Altgelt were not present.

18. 2019-R-45 Authorizing the Co-Interim City Managers to execute a contract with the Women's Health and Family Planning Association of Texas (WHFPT) in the amount of \$108,153.00 for the continuation of the City of Laredo Health Department Title X Family Planning Women's Preventive Health services for the term period from April 1, 2019 through March 31, 2020.

Motion to adopt Resolution 2019-R-045.

Moved: Cm. Torres

Second: Cm. Balli

For: 5

Against: 0

Abstain: 0

Cm. Mercurio Martinez, Cm. Vielma, and Cm. Altgelt were not present.

19. 2019-R-46 Ratifying the acceptance of additional funding from the Texas

Health and Human Services Commission under the Texas Healthcare Transformation and Quality Improvement 1115 Waiver for the City of Laredo Health Department in the amount of \$363,087.49 received on January 31, 2019 for the continuation of preventive patient care clinic services, increase care for uninsured patients, for early detection and improve health outcomes of chronic diseases and for public health support services.

Motion to adopt Resolution 2019-R-046.

Moved: Cm. Torres

Second: Cm. Balli

For: 5

Against: 0

Abstain: 0

Cm. Mercurio Martinez, Cm. Vielma, and Cm. Altgelt were not present.

20. 2019-R-47 Authorizing and approving a fee waiver and a Tax Abatement Agreement between the City of Laredo and Jorge Villarreal for a proposed project located at 2016 Garfield St, lot 7; block 66; eastern division that consists of an addition, in accordance with authorized guidelines and criteria established for the Neighborhood Empowerment Zone (NEZ). This agreement will be for a five (5) year period and will abate taxes on new improvements for the purpose of economic development. The project has an estimated capital investment total of \$32,210.00, estimated annual tax abatement total of \$209.22 and estimated total fee waivers of \$839.00. Guidelines and criteria for the agreement are set forth in the attached agreement and supporting information.

Motion to adopt Resolution 2019-R-047.

Moved: Cm. Torres

Second: Cm. Balli

For: 5

Against: 0

Abstain: 0

Cm. Mercurio Martinez, Cm. Vielma, and Cm. Altgelt were not present.

21. 2019-R-48 Authorizing and approving a fee waiver and a Tax Abatement Agreement between the City of Laredo and Joeman Properties, L.L.C. for a proposed project located at 920 E. San Carlos, lot 5-C; block 527; eastern division that consists of new construction, in accordance with authorized guidelines and criteria established for the Neighborhood Empowerment Zone (NEZ). This agreement will be for a ten (10) year period and will abate taxes on new improvements for the purpose of economic development. The project has an estimated capital investment total of \$623,305.00, estimated annual tax abatement total of \$3,951.75 and estimated total fee waivers of \$4,676.00. Guidelines and criteria for the agreement are set forth in the attached agreement and supporting information.

Motion to adopt Resolution 2019-R-048.

Moved: Cm. Torres

Second: Cm. Balli

For: 5

Against: 0

Abstain: 0

Cm. Mercurio Martinez, Cm. Vielma, and Cm. Altgelt were not present.

22. 2019-R-49 Reappointment of Nicandro Villarreal, III to the Fire Fighters' & Police Officers' Civil Service Commission of the City of Laredo to serve a second term for one (1) year from April 15, 2019 to April 15, 2020.

Motion to adopt Resolution 2019-R-049.

Moved: Cm. Torres

Second: Cm. Balli

For: 5

Against: 0

Abstain: 0

Cm. Mercurio Martinez, Cm. Vielma, and Cm. Altgelt were not present.

23. 2019-R-50 Reappointment of Alfonso H. Ornelas, Jr. to the Fire Fighters' & Police Officers' Civil Service Commission of the City of Laredo to serve a second term for two (2) years from April 15, 2019 to April 15, 2021.

Motion to adopt Resolution 2019-R-050.

Moved: Cm. Torres

Second: Cm. Balli

For: 5

Against: 0

Abstain: 0

Cm. Mercurio Martinez, Cm. Vielma, and Cm. Altgelt were not present.

24. 2019-R-51 Appointment of Raul P. Garcia, Jr. to the Fire Fighters' & Police Officers' Civil Service Commission of the City of Laredo to serve a three (3) year term from April 15, 2019 to April 15, 2022.

Motion to adopt Resolution 2019-R-051.

Moved: Cm. Torres

Second: Cm. Balli

For: 5

Against: 0

Abstain: 0

Cm. Mercurio Martinez, Cm. Vielma, and Cm. Altgelt were not present.

## XII (b) MOTIONS

25. Authorizing the Co-Interim City Managers to enter into and execute a Memorandum of Understanding between the City of Laredo and Webb County to participate in the Webb County Sheriff's Office Alternative Incarceration Program. The agreement will allow non-violent offenders who are serving jail sentences at the Webb County Jail to provide various forms of community service for the City of Laredo. Services will include, but will not be limited to, graffiti cleanup, trash pick-up and minor lawn maintenance. The agreement will not require any form of compensation.

Motion to approve.

Moved: Cm. Torres

Second: Cm. Balli

For: 5

Against: 0

Abstain: 0

Cm. Mercurio Martinez, Cm. Vielma, and Cm. Altgelt were not present.

26. Consideration to confirm the nomination by the Co-Interim City Managers of the appointment of Nathan H. Chu as Associate Municipal Court Judge for the City of Laredo in accordance with section 5.02 of the Charter of the City of Laredo and section 20-21 of the Code of Ordinances.

Jesus Dominguez, Municipal Court Judge, voiced his support of the Interim Co-City Managers' nomination.

Cm. Torres noted that Mr. Chu and Judge Dominguez share a vision for the City of Laredo and will make a great team.

Motion to approve.

Moved: Cm. Altgelt

Second: Cm. Gonzalez

For: 6

Against: 0

Abstain: 1

Cm. Gonzalez

Cm. Rodriguez

Cm. Mercurio Martinez

Cm. Torres

Dr. Marte Martinez

Cm. Altgelt

Cm. Balli

Cm. Vielma was not present.

27. Consideration to confirm the nomination by the Municipal Court Judge, Jesus M. "Chuy" Dominguez, of the appointment of Eduardo Davila, Jr. as Associate Municipal Court Judge for the City of Laredo in accordance with section 5.02 of the Charter of the City of Laredo and section 20-21 of the Code of Ordinances.

Motion to approve.

Moved: Cm. Altgelt

Second: Cm. Balli

For: 8

Against: 0

Abstain: 0

28. Authorizing the Co-Interim City Managers to sign a contract in an amount not to exceed \$29,591.26 with the Owner/Developer, QRS Ventures LLC., of Laredo, Texas, to upsize the 8-inch water main to a 12-inch water main at The Loop Subdivision Phase IV. This project is work that the City of Laredo Utilities department would have needed to do in the future due to the impending TXDOT right of way. The City will save money by having QRS Ventures perform the water main upsize now, rather than having the City do the work in the future. Funding is available in the 2013 Water Revenue Bond.

Motion to approve.

Moved: Cm. Torres

Second: Cm. Balli

For: 5

Against: 0

Abstain: 0

Cm. Mercurio Martinez, Cm. Vielma, and Cm. Altgelt were not present.

29. Consideration for approval of the selection of consultant Slay Architecture, Laredo, Texas, for the Barbara Fasken Community Center for a public special purpose outdoor swimming pool to provide recreational and instructional activities, a kid's tree house, a natural water feature, vehicle parking, lighting, cameras, and other amenities located at 15201 Cerralvo Drive; and authorization to negotiate a professional services contract. One (1) firm responded to the request for qualifications on Friday, March 22, 2019. No financial impact at this time.

Motion to approve.

Moved: Cm. Torres

Second: Cm. Balli

For: 5

Against: 0

Abstain: 0

Cm. Mercurio Martinez, Cm. Vielma, and Cm. Altgelt were not present.

30. Consideration to award contract FY19-054 for the purchase and installation of a LED display system to the lowest responsive-responsible bidder, Laredo Rapid Signs & Neon, LLC., Laredo, Texas in the total amount \$195,056.00. This is a full turn-key contract option including LED display system installation at the Uni-Trade Stadium located at 6320 Sinatra Parkway, Laredo, Texas. Estimated time for completion of this project is thirty (30) working days, upon execution of contract. Funding is available in the Sports & Community Venue Uni-Trade Operations Fund.

Motion to approve.

Moved: Cm. Torres

Second: Cm. Balli

For: 5

Against: 0

Abstain: 0

Cm. Mercurio Martinez, Cm. Vielma, and Cm. Altgelt were not present.

31. Authorize the drafting of Annexation Agreements and Service Plans for the following voluntary annexation requests and refer to Planning and Zoning Commission and further authorizing the City Manager to enter into Water Supply, Sanitary Sewer Service and Controlled Development Contracts with the owners of of the eligible proposed annexation tracts:

Tract 1: Raul Valdez Tract #1 – 478.22 acres, more or less, located north of Wormser Rd. and east of Loop 20/Cuatro Vientos Rd.

Tract 2: Raul Valdez Tract #2 – 328.98 acres, more or less, south of Lomas del Sur Blvd. and east of Loop 20/Cuatro Vientos Rd.

Tract 3: El Retiro Tract – 6.26 acres, more or less, located north of FM 1472 and west of Copper Mine Rd.

Tract 4: Holzman & Vasquez Tract – 76.22 acres, more or less, located north of FM 1472 and west of FM 3338/Las Tiendas Rd.

Tract 5: Mandel Tract – 24.43 acres, more or less, east of Max A. Mandel Municipal Golf Course and west of FM 1472.

Tract 6: Lot 20, Block 2, Pinto Valle Ind. Park, Phase 1 Tract – 1.5 acres, more or less, located north of FM 1472 and east of Lampazos Lp.

Tract 7: COT Properties Tract – 8.87 acres, more or less, north of Anahuac Dr. and east of Pinto Valle Dr.

Motion to approve.

Moved: Cm. Torres

Second: Cm. Balli

For: 5

Against: 0

Abstain: 0

Cm. Mercurio Martinez, Cm. Vielma, and Cm. Altgelt were not present.

32. Consideration to renew the existing annual service contract FY14-052 to Delta House Electric & Motor, Freer, Texas in an amount up to \$350,000.00 to provide electric motor repair services for the Utilities Department. Repairs are for motors with horsepower ratings from 1/8 HP to 400 HP that are used in water and wastewater operations. There was no price increase during the last extension period. The term of this contract shall be for a period of one (1) year beginning as of the date of its execution. This is the last extension period for this contract. All services will be purchased on an as needed basis. Funding is available in the Water and Sewer Operating Funds.

Motion to approve.

Moved: Cm. Torres

Second: Cm. Balli

For: 5

Against: 0

Abstain: 0

Cm. Mercurio Martinez, Cm. Vielma, and Cm. Altgelt were not present.



33. Refund of property tax in the amount of \$1,517.75 payable to Corelogic Tax Services, Ltd. due to an erroneous payment. Tax account # 106-00290-080.

Motion to approve.

Moved: Cm. Torres

Second: Cm. Balli

For: 5

Against: 0

Abstain: 0

Cm. Mercurio Martinez, Cm. Vielma, and Cm. Altgelt were not present.

34. Approving monthly adjustments to the tax roll. The amounts adjusted for the month of March 2019 represent a decrease of \$317.02 These adjustments are determined by the Webb County Appraisal District and by court orders.

Motion to approve.

Moved: Cm. Torres

Second: Cm. Balli

For: 5

Against: 0

Abstain: 0

Cm. Mercurio Martinez, Cm. Vielma, and Cm. Altgelt were not present.

35. Consideration to award a purchase contract to Kimball Office (Division of Kimball International) through authorized dealer G & S Office Supply, Inc., Laredo, TX for the purchase, delivery, setup and installation of office furniture for the new Utilities Department Administration Building Expansion Project in the amount of \$136,023.66. This purchase shall be made utilizing the National I.P.A. COOP Buying Agreement Contract No. P15-150-DT. Funding is available in the Waterworks System Administration Fund.

Motion to approve.

Moved: Cm. Torres

Second: Cm. Balli

For: 5

Against: 0

Abstain: 0

Cm. Mercurio Martinez, Cm. Vielma, and Cm. Altgelt were not present.

36. Authorizing the approval of Change Order #1 for a net increase of \$171,775.00 from the original contract amount of \$1,578,335.00. The new contract is \$1,750,110.00 to Insituform Technologies, LLC., of Chesterfield, Missouri. There is an additional 6,365-feet of cleaning and CCTV of sewer line for the rehabilitation of the 30" sewer collector located in the east side median of IH35 from Mines Road to Calle del Norte and adding 30 calendar days for a total of 150 calendar days. Funding is available in the 2015 Sewer Revenue Bond.

Motion to approve.

Moved: Cm. Torres

Second: Cm. Balli

For: 5

Against: 0

Abstain: 0

Cm. Mercurio Martinez, Cm. Vielma, and Cm. Altgelt were not present.

### END OF CONSENT AGENDA

### XIII. STAFF REPORTS

37. Discussion with possible action on ongoing audits and/or irregularities identified by the Internal Auditor including the potential assignment of other and/or additional auditing duties; and any other matters incident thereto.

Motion to approve the Internal Auditor's report.

Moved: Cm. Torres

Second: Cm. Balli

For: 5

Against: 0

Abstain: 0

Cm. Mercurio Martinez, Cm. Vielma, and Cm. Altgelt were not present.

38. Appointment by the Co-Interim City Managers of James Kirby Snideman as the Planning Director of the Planning and Zoning Department in accordance with the Laredo City Charter, Article IX, Section 9.01, with possible action.

Rosario Cabello, Interim Co-City Manager, reported that staff selected a candidate for the Planning Director position, James Kirby Snideman, who is a very experienced and qualified individual with a wide range of experience. He has a Master's degree in Arts & Planning and is a certified Planner.

James Kirby Snideman stated that he grew up in Humble, Texas, as the ninth of 10 children. He learned early to work hard for anything that he hoped to achieve, and all walks of life, whether they look different or have different cultures, value family and community. His work ethic is to maximize property owners' rights and their allowance while achieving the City's objectives and ensuring successful growth and development of the community. He emphasized his intentions to fully implement the Viva Laredo Comprehensive Plan; he commended Laredo's plan as it is robust. He also noted his intention to make the processes for developers and planners as simple and helpful as possible to encourage growth in the City. He added that he is not new to Laredo as he assisted the City with its Downtown TIRZ plan. Cm. Altgelt initiated a motion to accept Mr. Snideman's nomination as Planning Director.

Cm. Gonzalez voiced his approval of Mr. Snideman's priorities and welcomed him to the City of Laredo family. Cm. Rodriguez encouraged Mr. Snideman to hit the ground running regarding maximizing lots in development.

Motion to confirm the appointment of James Kirby Snideman as the City Planning Director.

Moved: Cm. Altgelt

Second: Mercurio Martinez

For: 8

Against: 0

Abstain: 0

39. Discussion with possible action on the funding source for Texas A&M International University's 50th Anniversary Celebration funding request, as previously presented to City Council by TAMIU; and any other matters incident thereto.

Aileen Ramos, Convention & Visitors Bureau Director, reported that on the March 18, 2019, Council meeting, staff was directed to review whether TAMIU events for the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration qualified for hotel occupancy tax. TAMIU provided a list of 12 events, and staff found that only five of those events are exclusive to the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration, equivalent to 107 room nights or \$2000. Based on this information, they would qualify for a minimum amount of sponsorship by the City through the hotel occupancy tax. She recommended that staff guide them through the Third Party Funding process.

Rosario Cabello, Interim Co-City Manager, explained that the City can assist TAMIU with \$25,000 aside from this event; she recommended doing so rather than providing \$2,000. The only other way to give them more funding would be from the General Fund, which she said staff does not support. Kristina L. Hale, City Attorney added that TAMIU would likely not qualify for General Funding anyway.

Mrs. Ramos clarified that the \$25,000 would come from CVB's hotel/motel occupancy tax based on grandfathered processes that preceded the formula that is currently being used. She reported that TAMIU initially requested \$100,000. Only the events that were exclusive to the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary were identified as sponsorship-qualifying. She noted that she had wanted to present the breakdown to Council before notifying TAMIU.

Cm. Torres asked where the funding for the Rhapsody sponsorships came from in years past. Mrs. Ramos voiced her understanding that it was from hotel/motel; it was a special project and not analyzed through the CVB formula in place today. Mrs. Cabello added that the CVB formula was developed after the Rhapsody.

Mrs. Ramos noted that the purpose of CVB's formula and matrix is to make funding decisions fair to all organizations asking for assistance.

Cm. Torres suggested waiting to see what Webb County is doing in terms of sponsoring this event and match those funds so that both entities are contributing the same amount.

Cm. Balli reminded Council that higher education is the greatest form of economic development, without a doubt. Without the university, many citizens in Laredo would not have degrees and there would be a shortage of teachers, nurses, and other professions. Being supportive of the higher education institutes in town is the most important thing, in his opinion. He asked Council to find a way to make this sponsorship work.

Cm. Rodriguez agreed that it is important to support TAMIU, but he reminded Council that the City's funds should be used to serve an inclusive public purpose. He voiced his opinion that \$25,000 is adequate since the City

subsidizes the university. By no means is the City hindering them; he asked Council to consider \$25,000 and only match Webb County if the County is closely within that \$25,000.

Motion to table.

Moved: Cm. Vielma

Second: Cm. Torres

For: 7

Against: 0

Abstain: 0

Cm. Altgelt was not present.

40. Status report regarding the Economic Development Director recruitment process; and any other matters incident thereto.

Rosario Cabello, Interim Co-City Manager, reported that the Economic Development Director recruitment process began October 2017; out of 138 applicants, 100 were not qualified. Previous management interviewed various candidates, including two finalists in a meet-and-greet in December 2018. The process continues, and there have only been six additional candidates added for consideration. The City is recruiting through TML, SGRecruiter, Indeed.com, Work In Texas, LinkedIn, Texas Economic Development Council, and the International Economic Development Council.

Cm. Torres voiced his opinion that the Interim Co-City Managers have been very open regarding this position. He recalled them stating their wishes to task the Economic Development Advisory Committee to screen the 44 applications under consideration. Mrs. Cabello clarified that the 44 applicants have already been screened.

Cm. Torres clarified that the sitting Economic Development Advisory Committee has not been involved in the process to-date. Mrs. Cabello noted that some of the 44 applicants would no longer like to continue with the recruitment process because they have found other employment.

Carol Thurkettle of Human Resources reported that staff forwarded 38 applications and reached out to all candidates. Of those 38, 27 applicants said that they were still interested in the position. Mrs. Cabello voiced her opinion that tasking the EDAC to vet these 27 candidates would be a good choice. Cm. Torres initiated a motion to that extent.

Cm. Vielma noted that the Laredo Economic Development Corporation has more experience with economic development packets and involvement with investors. She suggested a combination of both boards rather than just the City's committee for this hiring process. While the appointees to the Economic Development Advisory Committee are business owners, they might not be familiar with bringing in investors or the technical compiling of incentive packets.

Cm. Torres did not accept Cm. Vielma's suggestion, noting that the bigger this group becomes, the more difficult the process will be.

Dr. Marte Martinez agreed that the City needs community input from the public.

However, the City has in-house committees for a reason. Cm. Rodriguez agreed that the appointees to the Committee are adequate, especially his appointee who is the Economic Development Coordinator for Laredo College. He noted that he has not seen a quarterly report from the Laredo Economic Development Corporation and does not know what they have been doing lately.

Cm. Vielma encouraged Council to make sure that this decision is unbiased and unpolitical. All qualifications should be reviewed thoroughly.

Motion to authorize the Interim Co-City Managers to task the Economic Development Advisory Committee to review the 27 aforementioned applications and to work with the City Manager's Office during the hiring process.

Moved: Cm. Torres  
Second: Dr. Marte Martinez  
For: 7                                  Against: 1                                  Abstain: 0  
    Cm. Gonzalez                                  Cm. Vielma  
    Cm. Rodriguez  
    Cm. Mercurio Martinez  
    Cm. Torres  
    Dr. Marte Martinez  
    Cm. Altgelt  
    Cm. Balli

**XIV. EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Kristina L. Hale, City Attorney, explained that the executive session item was brought forth by her office because the City's outside counsel has not given a progress report in about a year. Therefore, she put this item on the agenda to get a progress report from counsel; however, the attorney was not able to attend today's meeting.

Motion to go into executive session to consult with City Attorney and outside counsel relating to ongoing litigation in Cause no. 2018CVF001299-D2 and to return to open session for possible action.

Moved: Cm. Torres  
Second: Cm. Rodriguez  
For: 6                                  Against: 0                                  Abstain: 0

Cm. Gonzalez and Dr. Marte Martinez were not present.

- 41. Request for Executive Session pursuant to Texas Government Code Section 551.071(1)(A) to consult with City Attorney and outside counsel relating to ongoing litigation in the City of Laredo, Texas, v. Western Summit Constructors, Inc., McAllen Construction, Inc., Western Summit Constructors, Inc., McAllen Construction, Inc., A Joint Venture, Dannenbaum Engineering Company-McAllen, LLC, Dannenbaum Engineering Company-Laredo, LLC, Patterson Pump Company, Cause no. 2018CVF001299-D2, pending in the 111th District Court, Webb County, Texas, relating to the construction and design of facilities located at the El Pico Water Treatment Plant, and to return to open session for possible action.

Following executive session, Mayor Saenz reported that no action was taken.

No further discussion or action taken.

**XV. RECESS AS THE LAREDO CITY COUNCIL AND CONVENE AS THE LAREDO MASS TRANSIT BOARD**

Motion to recess as the Laredo City Council and convene as the Laredo Mass Transit Board.

Moved: Cm. Torres  
Second: Cm. Altgelt

For: 8                      Against: 0                      Abstain: 0

42. 2019-RT-02      Authorizing the Co-Interim City Managers to accept a resolution approving the Laredo Transit Management Inc. (LTMI) Title VI Program and authorizing the Co-Interim City Managers and staff to submit the plan to the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Region Office. FTA requires that transit systems receiving Federal financial assistance must update their Title VI Program every three (3) years.

Motion to adopt Resolution 2019-RT-02.

Moved: Cm. Torres  
Second: Cm. Altgelt

For: 7                      Against: 0                      Abstain: 0

Cm. Gonzalez was not present.

43. 2019-RT-03      Authorizing the Co-Interim City Managers to submit a grant application in the amount of \$3,466,384.00 to the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) for Fiscal Year 2019 Section 5307 Urbanized Area authorized under the new Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act. Funding will be for Operating Assistance and Preventative Maintenance to the El Metro Bus Operations. The required local match for this grant will be funded with the Transit's Local Sales Tax.

Motion to adopt Resolution 2019-RT-03.

Moved: Cm. Torres  
Second: Cm. Altgelt

For: 7                      Against: 0                      Abstain: 0

Cm. Gonzalez was not present.

44. 2019-RT-04      Authorizing the Co-Interim City Managers to submit a grant application in the amount of \$401,862.00 to the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) for Fiscal Year 2019 Section 5339 Bus and Bus Facilities Program authorized under the new Fixing America's

Surface Transportation (FAST) Act. Funding will be used for the purchase of one (1) 35 foot heavy-duty bus for the El Metro fixed-route bus operations. The twenty (20) percent local match for this grant is funded with the Transit's Sales Tax.

Motion to adopt Resolution 2019-RT-04.

Moved: Cm. Torres

Second: Cm. Altgelt

For: 7

Against: 0

Abstain: 0

Cm. Gonzalez was not present.

## **XVI. ADJOURN AS THE LAREDO MASS TRANSIT BOARD AND RECONVENE AS THE LAREDO CITY COUNCIL**

Motion to adjourn as the Laredo Mass Transit Board and reconvene as the Laredo City Council.

Moved: Dr. Marte Martinez

Second: Cm. Altgelt

For: 8

Against: 0

Abstain: 0

## **45. GENERAL COUNCIL DISCUSSIONS AND PRESENTATIONS**

### **A. Request by Council Member Alberto Torres, Jr.**

1. Discussion with possible action to instruct Co-Interim City Managers to authorize staff to install (1) speed hump on E. San Jose St., between Lexington Ave and Maryland Ave., under the Special Provision of the Speed Hump Installation Policy, and to authorize the use of asphalt type speed humps, instead of a speed cushion, which is currently required under the policy, and any other matters incident thereto. City Council District IV Priority Funds will be used for this project. Total cost is \$2,500.00.

Motion to approve, using District IV Priority Funds.

Moved: Cm. Torres

Second: Dr. Marte Martinez

For: 8

Against: 0

Abstain: 0

2. Discussion with possible action to explore the possibility of integrating free WiFi for public use at the Sames Auto Arena; and any other matters incident thereto. (Co-Sponsored by Council Member Vidal Rodriguez)

Cm. Torres noted that Council discussed this issue with previous management but never put it on the Council agenda. He voiced his opinion that it is important essential to add WiFi given the use of social media and tagging locations and friends. Visitors can provide free promotion and advertisements for concerts and events at the arena. The internet connectivity in the building does not allow the public to have access to reliable internet on their phones, so WiFi would give them better use of their

phones for free publicity for the arena and its events.

Juan Mendiola of SMG Entertainment voiced his opinion that the arena would benefit from free public WiFi given the overwhelming presence of social media in society. The arena will need to install some hardwiring in order to gain WiFi, which can be done in the next two or three weeks.

Homero Vazquez, IST Director, reported that staff would have to confirm that the City meets the requirements to go out for RFPs in the procurement process. The estimated costs would require RFPs because they exceed \$50,000.

Mr. Mendiola reported that the costs could range from \$65,000-\$70,000 in investment, hardwiring, access points, and a different modem for the server. The recurring costs include \$2,000 for fiber.

Dr. Marte Martinez noted that many municipalities offer free WiFi because it causes an increase in free advertising immediately. It pays for itself in the increase in revenues.

Motion to instruct management to go out for RFPs for the purpose of integrating free WiFi for public use at the Sames Auto Arena.

Moved: Cm. Torres

Second: Cm. Rodriguez

For: 7

Against: 0

Abstain: 0

Cm. Gonzalez was not present.

3. Discussion with possible action to adopt a resolution in support of the Texas Legislature restoring and sustaining funding for the UT Health San Antonio Regional Campus in Laredo, Texas; and any other matters incident thereto.

Cm. Torres cited a copy of the resolution in question and reported that it has been forwarded to the City Attorney's Office and the City Manager's Office. He noted that Webb County has already passed a supporting resolution.

Cm. Mercurio Martine recused himself from this discussion and vote.

Mercurio Martinez, Jr., noted that as a result of the economic downturn, the State of Texas cut the funding for specific health programs that were being taught at the University of Texas San Antonio Laredo campus. He requested that this funding be brought back so that the Laredo campus can continue this program, especially given the high prevalence of adult diabetes, childhood obesity, and other health problems in Laredo. Keeping the funding local will help students stay close to home while they finish their degrees.

Motion to approve.

Moved: Cm. Balli

Second: Dr. Marte Martinez

For: 6

Against: 0

Abstain: 1



Cm. Gonzalez  
Cm. Rodriguez  
Cm. Torres  
Dr. Marte Martinez  
Cm. Altgelt  
Cm. Balli

Cm. Mercurio Martinez

Cm. Vielma was not present.

**B. Request by Council Member Nelly Vielma**

1. Discussion with possible action to authorize Co-Interim City Managers to partially fund from District V Priority Funds the Bibliotech improvements, as budgeted for the Ana Maria Lozano project with the condition that it will be available for public use and to continue the MOU with the City Library system; and any other matters incident thereto.

Alma Mata, Laredo Housing Authority Executive Director, reported that this initiative is a digital library with no print materials in order to bridge the gap between the digital world and the citizens of Laredo. This facility will benefit citizens with college preparation, a workshop to perform robotics, and access that users would not otherwise have. The first pilot location is at the Casa Verde apartments with hopes to expand to the rest of the community in different areas, including the Ana Lozano housing project on Gale and Springfield.

Rick Solis of Able City stated that the Laredo Housing Authority approached Able City with the Bibliotech concept. He noted the importance of keeping the branding the same as that in San Antonio since they are the same initiative. Centers in disuse will be repurposed as a digital library with a kids' café, classrooms, and computer labs. The design concept of these areas is futuristic and technology-based. The total cost of the digital library is itemized as follows:

Soft Costs	\$28,000
Construction Costs	\$200,000
Technology/Equipment	\$44,722
Furniture	\$50,414
Software	\$13,532
Operations	\$62,480
Total:	\$399,148

Cm. Vielma initiated a motion to approve \$170,000 from District V Priority Funds for the construction of this project.

Rosario Cabello, Interim Co-City Manager, clarified that this is using public funds for a private building. Since the City's bonds are tax-exempt, the City would need an MOU to ensure that the funds are not used for any taxes; she asked for time for staff to figure out the details. Mrs. Cabello asked

Motion to approve \$170,000 from District V Priority Funds for the construction of this project and ask staff to research contributing \$1,600 for

the linkage to the library and bring back an MOU, as amended.

Moved: Cm. Vielma

Second: Cm. Mercurio Martinez

For: 7

Against: 0

Abstain: 0

Cm. Altgelt was not present.

2. Discussion with possible action for the construction of a pump track at Blas Castañeda and Father McNaboe parks and any matters incident thereto. (Co-Sponsored by Council Member George Altgelt)

Graciela Briones, Assistant Parks & Leisure Services Director, reported that staff has been working with BMX and the City Attorney's Office and Public Works for the construction of the track. She has not yet received the MOU.

Kristina L. Hale, City Attorney, confirmed that she would check with the First Assistant City Attorney, Lisa Paul, on the status of the MOU.

Motion to approve with funding from District VII Priority Funds and donations.

Moved: Cm. Altgelt

Second: Cm. Vielma

For: 7

Against: 0

Abstain: 0

Cm. Gonzalez was not present.

3. Discussion with possible action to revisit the funding and position of the Chief Innovations Officer to streamline processes and efficiencies utilizing digital applications; and any matters incident thereto. (Co-Sponsored by Council Member Mercurio Martinez, III)

Rosario Cabello, Interim Co-City Manager, reported that staff is holding line items for many positions because of the mass exit of retiring employees. Staff decided to freeze some positions because of the significant payout impacts resulting from those retirements. The Chief Innovations Officer position is currently frozen, and staff will revisit it for the budget cycle and maybe consolidate it with something in the IST Department.

Cm. Torres voiced his opinion that the Chief Innovations Officer position is a waste of money, even though he has confidence in Mrs. Cabello's ability to perform those functions. It takes the right person: someone who has municipal experience and knows the City of Laredo's operations. Mrs. Cabello was the best person for the job when she was appointed. The only other person he thought who could do a sufficient job is Heberto L. Ramirez, Jr., currently the Animal Care Services Director. He voiced his hesitation to fill this position and noted that he considered eliminating it for the next fiscal year because of the savings that the City needs to find. He agreed that Council can discuss this at the next budget cycle.

Cm. Altgelt voiced his opinion that Mrs. Cabello did a great job as Chief

Innovations Officer despite not having the full support of management at the time. He agreed with Mrs. Cabello that the City does not need to rush to fill all 53 vacancies right except for key positions. He asked for a report as to the financial impact of House Bill 2.

Mrs. Cabello reported that regarding House Bill 2, Senate approved a 3.5% cap, and the House is still deliberating and will meet next week. Since the City's rollback is between 4.5-4.75%, that can likely result in a shortfall of a couple million dollars. In addition to other revenues not coming in as expected, like maquinas, staff may have some challenges balancing the budget. Cm. Altgelt conceded that Council expected maquinas revenues to drop as a result of higher permit fees, so that causes no surprise.

Motion to bring this item back during the budget cycle and include financial analysis regarding House Bill 2 and the tax cap to the next Council meeting.

Moved: Cm. Torres

Second: Dr. Marte Martinez

For: 7

Against: 0

Abstain: 0

Cm. Gonzalez was not present.

### **C. Request by Council Member Dr. Marte A. Martinez**

1. Discussion with possible action to authorize Co-Interim City Managers to instruct Transit staff to develop and to implement an Urban Circulator Pilot Program, that meets the needs of the Transit Development Plan, and to purchase a transit van through District VII Priority Funds; and any other matters incident thereto. (Co-Sponsored by Council Member George Altgelt)

Claudia San Miguel, Transit Director, reminded Council that her proposed routes are the same three that were presented at the last Council meeting: one in South Laredo, one in the Mines Road area, and one in North Laredo. If the funding is approved, staff will hold open meetings to receive public input on those three areas.

Motion to approve.

Moved: Dr. Marte Martinez

Second: Cm. Rodriguez

For: 7

Against: 0

Abstain: 0

Cm. Gonzalez was not present.

2. Discussion with possible action updating council on the Detoxification and Triage Center development; and any other matters incident thereto.

Dr. Hector Gonzalez, Health Director, reported that staff added Webb County to the coalition and are waiting on the blueprint of the Juarez center itself. There are some vested individuals on the Drug and Alcohol Commission with some experience who are assisting with an initial conceptual design. He reported that he met with the County Attorney to

develop an interlocal agreement to divide the resources and work. One of the hospitals has begun discussions; the other one has requested that Mayor Saenz join the discussion. Once a conceptual design is drafted and the hospitals buy into the coalition, the City can go out for RFQs. There are some federal standards that must be met, but Dr. Gonzalez noted that the coalition is already moving toward compliance.

No action taken.

3. Discussion with possible action to amend the Policies and Procedures Manual and change the agenda format where it is organized by department in order to provide better clarity and transparency to the public; and any other matters incident thereto.

Motion to bring this item back at the next Council meeting.

Moved: Dr. Marte Martinez

Second: Cm. Altgelt

For: 7

Against: 0

Abstain: 0

Cm. Gonzalez was not present.

#### **D. Request by Council Member George Altgelt**

1. Discussion and possible action to direct staff to explore the feasibility of having the Boys and Girls Club of Laredo take over the Aranda Recreation Center as a pilot program in an effort to realize cost savings to the city; and any matters incident thereto.

Cm. Torres noted that his wife is an employee of the Boys and Girls Club of Laredo and would therefore abstain from the vote. Kristina L. Hale, City Attorney, stated that Dr. Marte Martinez being a former Board member is also not grounds for a recusal as it has no bearing on this matter.

Hector Noyola of the Boys and Girls Club of Laredo reported that the organization has been in Laredo since 1946, over 73 years. He thanked Council for the City's support during that time.

Cm. Altgelt noted that the Aranda Recreation Center is next door to the BGC and recalled Council discussing ways to make better use of the City's recreation centers. There is a need to have the children of the community in this area off the street and engaged in a program. He asked Mr. Noyola if the Club would be interested in taking on the maintenance and operation of a recreation center.

Mr. Noyola stated that the Club would be blessed to have use of the Aranda Rec Center. The Club focuses on the arts, education, and athletics. Using a recreation center like Aranda would help further achieve those objectives.

Anita Stanley, Assistant Parks & Leisure Services Director, reported that the current cost to run Aranda Rec Center is about \$252,000 per year, depending on the repairs needed in a particular year. This year, the City

spent \$17,800 on repairs. That facility brings in about \$30,000 per year in revenues.

Mr. Noyola noted that the Club provides programs for children aged 6-12; however, they could also provide senior members programs for two or three hours after closing the club. Mrs. Stanley reported that the Aranda Rec Center has a weight room, aerobics classes, tae kwon do classes, and volleyball clinics. She noted that the volleyball and tae kwon do are the most popular classes in this facility, and they are attended by residents 15-20 years old. The Lily Perez facility contracts with Webb County in a lease agreement; Lily Perez is a senior facility that provides activities, arts and crafts, and a feeding program.

Cm. Balli voiced his concern that there is not enough room to house the City's functions and BGC functions in the same facility. He noted that he did not want any residents to lose their facility or services. Joe Arciniega, BGC Board President, reminded Council of the population that is not being serviced in the community. Cm. Balli countered that taking a service away from somebody in order to give a different service to somebody else is a difficult pill to swallow.

Robert Eads, Interim Co-City Manager, suggested that staff can meet with the BGC Board to see if there is a more compatible joint-use to pursue. If not, then mutually-exclusive agreements can also be utilized if the parties find common ground.

Cm. Altgelt agreed with Cm. Balli's comments about displacing seniors or adults who have the expectation of use of this rec center. He asked what programs or activities can be kept in this rec center during the pilot program, what cost savings are available for the City, and what activities could be operated by the Boys and Girls Club to maximize the taxpayers' return on investment.

Andrew Carranco, BGC Board Member, noted that some of the rec center's activities are already in the wheelhouse of the Club. The Boys and Girls Club manages the largest basketball team in the United States in Laredo. He emphasized the importance of the Club and the City formulating an agreement because in many ways, the Club subsidizes the City's services and vice versa.

Cm. Torres noted his hope that the Northwest Boys and Girls Club could use the gymnasium given the demand for gyms. Whatever money was going to go towards beautification could go towards creating a modern gym.

Cm. Vielma stated that in a city with many single-parent, working households, making an investment like this will be beneficial. She asked if the City could apply for after-school care grants and comingle those monies with the Boys and Girls Club to offer services to those families in Laredo.

Mr. Arciniega confirmed that the Club is planning more music programs and activities to launch this year.

Cm. Balli stated that he would be likely to support this item if the City were to hold a neighborhood meeting at the Aranda so that the public be part of the conversation. Rosario Cabello, Interim Co-City Manager, suggested distributing a survey to the attendees of that meeting.

Cm. Altgelt noted that the survey should include uses of the surrounding facilities in case any Aranda users are displaced.

Mr. Eads cautioned Council that staff will have to work out the mechanics of working with a Third Party funded organization like BGC. The City rehabilitates the Aranda with CDBG funds, so staff must be sensitive to income levels when determining their charges.

Arturo Garcia, Community Development Director, confirmed that certain elements of the Aranda Recreation Center were built with CDBG dollars; there are some contractual requirements that would therefore need to be incorporated into any agreement with the Boys and Girls Club to meet federal regulations. He voiced his concerns about anything related to fees; fees must be nominal and cannot go above any fees that the City would charge to the public for the same or similar program or activity.

Cm. Balli reiterated his concern that west of I-35, the only gym is a small rec center in the Downtown area and Aranda. The one Downtown only serves the users that walk there, as there is no parking. If the gym at Aranda is removed, those people will have no gym nearby. Mr. Garcia reported that the City is approaching its CDBG planning process for next year's budget. He confirmed that staff can consider any improvements as suggested by Council and BGC.

Motion to direct staff to explore the feasibility of having the Boys and Girls Club of Laredo take over the Aranda Recreation Center as a pilot program to save costs to the City and achieving shared-use of the facility so as not to displace any seniors or adults already making use of the center and to coordinate with Webb County and to hold a community meeting with a survey distributed to attendees, as amended.

Moved: Cm. Altgelt

Second: Cm. Gonzalez

For: 6

Against: 1

Abstain: 1

Cm. Gonzalez

Cm. Balli

Cm. Torres

Cm. Rodriguez

Cm. Mercurio Martinez

Cm. Vielma

Dr. Marte Martinez

Cm. Altgelt

2. Discussion and possible action to direct City staff to initiate a zone change on all the M-1 (Light Industrial) zone tracts located on Muller Memorial Drive; and any matters incident thereto.

Cm. Altgelt reported that he held a town hall meeting at Muller Elementary School where residents complained that the entire area was zone as M-1 in

the 1990s. Then an elementary school and residential neighborhood were built in the middle of this; a warehouse nearby has had multiple problems with chemical spills.

Motion to instruct staff to initiate the zone changes for the M-1 zoning in the Muller Memorial Drive area as identified by Cm. Altgelt to a B-3 zone.

Moved: Cm. Altgelt

Second: Dr. Marte Martinez

For: 6

Against: 0

Abstain: 0

Cm. Gonzalez and Cm. Mercurio Martinez were not present.

3. Discussion with possible action to host the first ever "Laredo from Above" drone video/short film contest with the first place winner to receive a DJI Mavic Pro 2, Second Place Winner to receive a mountain bike, and third place winner to receive a kayak; and any matters incident thereto. (Co-Sponsored by Council Member Vidal Rodriguez and Council Member Nelly Vielma)

Motion to direct staff to organize a "Laredo from Above" drone video/short film contest as presented with funding from District VII promotional funds.

Moved: Cm. Altgelt

Second: Dr. Marte Martinez

For: 7

Against: 0

Abstain: 0

Cm. Gonzalez was not present.

## **XVII. ADJOURN**

Motion to adjourn.

Moved: Cm. Torres

Second: Cm. Balli

For: 7

Against: 0

Abstain: 0

Cm. Gonzalez was not present.