

**MINUTES FROM THE HUNTSVILLE CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING HELD ON THE 2<sup>nd</sup> DAY OF FEBRUARY 2021, IN THE CITY HALL, LOCATED AT 1212 AVENUE M, IN THE CITY OF HUNTSVILLE, COUNTY OF WALKER, TEXAS, AT 6:00 P.M.**

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**The Council met in a regular session with the following:**

**COUNCILMEMBERS PRESENT:** Daiquiri Beebe, Blake Irving, Russell Humphrey, Dee Howard Mullins, Bert Lyle, Joe P. Rodriguez, Andy Brauning, Pat Graham

**COUNCILMEMBERS ABSENT:** Vicki McKenzie

**OFFICERS PRESENT:** Aron Kulhavy, City Manager; Brenda Poe, City Secretary; Leonard Schneider, City Attorney

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**WORKSHOP [5 P.M.]** City Council discussed the Comprehensive Plan with Planning commission members.

**MAIN SESSION [6 P.M.]**

**CALL TO ORDER** – Mayor Brauning called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

**INVOCATION AND PLEDGES**

*U.S. Flag and Texas Flag: Honor the Texas Flag. I pledge allegiance to thee, Texas, one state, under God, one, and indivisible.*

Councilmember Graham gave the invocation and Mayor Brauning led the pledges.

**PRESENTATION** – Life-saving award presented by Police Chief Kevin Lunsford

**PROCLAMATION** – Black History Month was read by Mayor Brauning and accepted by Parks Advisory Board member George Perry.

The Mayor read the following statement: I believe it is appropriate on occasion to remind each all of us to always be respectful to each other and demonstrate a cordial behavior as we debate and discuss issues affecting our city, our employees, and our citizens. Let me say for the most part, I believe we are careful to respect each councilperson and staff as we discuss agenda items. I believe I should always let each elected official respectfully express their views on an issue and I will continue to do that. However, as the chair of the Council, I will not hesitate in the future to maintain the proper order in our meetings. I would like to review some points in our Rules of Procedure, that I think from time to time we all need to be reminded of. Section 4.01 of our Rules of Procedure says ‘It is important that Council Members demonstrate civility to one another as individuals, for the validity of different opinions, for the democratic process, and for the community and citizens being served. Elected officials should exhibit appropriate behavior. All members of the City Council have equal votes and all Councilmembers speak only for themselves,’ Section 6.02 Preservation of Order says ‘The chair shall preserve order and decorum, call upon the Director of Public Safety as necessary to enforce compliance with the rules, and confine members in debate to the question under discussion. It is the responsibility of the Chair to keep the comments of Councilmembers on topic during public meetings.’ In addition, I think it is appropriate to remind us all, myself included, that the fundamental principles of parliamentary law say ‘The Mayor, Councilmembers, City Manager, City Attorney, City Secretary, Municipal Court Judge and City staff members appearing before the various sessions of the Huntsville City Council should become familiar with following rules and customs’ and I am not going to read them all, but number 7 says ‘Members may not make a motion or speak in debate until they have been recognized by the chair and thus have obtained the floor. No member may speak a second time on the same question if anyone who has not spoken on that question wishes to do so.’ I’ll try to do better at that. I think I have not done a real good job at that. ‘Members must not attack or question the motives of other members. Customarily, all remarks are addressed to the presiding officer.’ If you will make those remarks to the chair it prevents talking across the dais and getting in confrontations with one another. ‘All meetings,’ number 12, ‘will be characterized by fairness and good faith.’ I just think from time to time we need to be reminded of that as a Council and we need to be careful. And I make these comments to not only this council but myself

as well.”

Mayor Pro Tem Rodriguez apologized for remarks made to Councilmember Dee Howard Mullins, as well as the Mayor, Council, city staff and the public.

## 1. CONSENT AGENDA

**Public Comments will be called for by the presiding officer before action is taken on these items. (Approval of Consent Agenda authorizes the City Manager to implement each item in accordance with staff recommendations. An item may be removed from the Consent Agenda and added to the Statutory Agenda for full discussion by request of a member of Council.)**

- a. **Approve the minutes of the City Council meetings held January 11, 12, and 19, 2021. [Brenda Poe, City Secretary]**
- b. **Consider authorizing the City Manager to apply for the FY 2020 Assistance to Firefighters Grant (AFG) Program for \$180,481.25, including matching funds of \$18,048.13, and adopting Resolution 2021-04. [Greg Mathis, Fire Chief]**
- c. **Consider authorizing the City Manager to apply for the 2021 Houston-Galveston Area Council (H-GAC) State Homeland Security Program Grant for \$82,022.75 and adopting Resolution 2021-05 in support of same. [Jim Barnes, HPD, Ken Foulch, HPD, and Kristie R. Hadnot, Grants Manager]**
- d. **Consider authorizing the City Manager to apply for the FY 2022 Houston-Galveston Area Council (H-GAC) Criminal Justice Grant Program for \$30,000 and adopting Resolution 2021-06 in support of same. [Jim Barnes, HPD, Ken Foulch, HPD, and Kristie R. Hadnot, Grants Manager]**

Councilmember Beebe made a motion to approve the consent agenda of the draft minutes; the motion was seconded by Councilmember Lyle. The motion was adopted, 8-0.

## 2. STATUTORY AGENDA

- a. **Consider adoption of Ordinance 2021-10 to amend the budget for FY 20-21 and/or CIP Project budgets. [Steve Ritter, Finance Director]**

Councilmember Beebe made a motion to adopt Ordinance 2021-10 to amend the budget for FY 20-21 and/or CIP Project budgets; the motion was seconded by Councilmember Humphrey. The motion was adopted, 8-0.

## 3. CITY COUNCIL/CITY MANAGER/CITY ATTORNEY

- a. **Consider adopting the City Council’s 2021 Strategic Plan. [Aron Kulhavy, City Manager]**

Councilmember Beebe made a motion to adopt the City Council’s 2021 Strategic Plan; the motion was seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Rodriguez. The motion was adopted, 8-0.

- b. **Consider a letter of support for legislation to create Huntsville Municipal Utility District No. 1. [Aron Kulhavy, City Manager]**

Councilmember Beebe made a motion to authorize the Mayor to provide a letter of support for legislation to create Huntsville Municipal Utility District No. 1; the motion was seconded by Councilmember Lyle. The motion was adopted, 8-0.

- c. **Consider placement of Masonic Cornerstone at Huntsville Police Department. [Dee Howard Mullins, Councilmember At-large Pos. 2, and Blake Irving, Councilmember Ward 3]**

Councilmember Howard Mullins made a motion to not authorize the City Manager to permit the Forrest Masonic Lodge #19 to place a cornerstone at the construction site of the new Huntsville Police Department; the motion was seconded by Councilmember Lyle. Chief Lunsford spoke about the history

of the intention to install the cornerstone and noted he is a member of the Masonic Lodge. Robert Patteson, 1804 Pleasant Street, spoke in favor of the cornerstone. Brad Alford, 332 Beto Street, spoke in favor of the cornerstone. Steve Rich, 244 Hickory, spoke in favor of the cornerstone. The motion failed, 3-5, with Mayor Brauninger and Councilmembers Daiquiri Beebe, Russell Humphrey, Joe P. Rodriguez, and Pat Graham voting against.

**d. Consider the sale of property located at 1515 10th Street to the Roxie Douglas Institute. [Blake Irving, Councilmember Ward 3]**

Councilmember Irving made a motion to consider the sale of the property at 1515 10th Street to the Roxie Douglas Institute; the motion was seconded by Councilmember Howard Mullins. Carmen Irving spoke on her request since 1997 asking to name the area in honor of her mother. Her requests have changed to donate the property in recent years. Councilmember Irving amended the motion authorize the City Manager to negotiation to sell the property at 1515 10<sup>th</sup> Street to the Roxie Douglas Institute for Educational Purposes; the motion was seconded by Councilmember Howard Mullins. The amendment was approved, 8-0. The amended motion was adopted, 8-0.

**e. Consider the location of the proposed skate park. [Daiquiri Beebe, Ward 1 Councilmember]**

Councilmember Beebe made a motion to construct the skate park in Emancipation Park; the motion was seconded by Councilmember Humphrey. Parks and Leisure Director Penny Joiner reported the Parks Recreation Advisory Board voted to place the skate park at the Eastham Thomason Park. George Perry and Derrick Birdsall, both members of the Parks Recreation Advisory Board, spoke against placing the skate park at Emancipation Park. The Mayor allowed Pastor Douglas Wright to speak against placing the skate park at Emancipation Park. The motion was adopted, 2-6, with Mayor Brauninger and Councilmembers Joe P. Rodriguez, Bert Lyle, Blake Irving, Dee Howard Mullins, and Pat Graham voting against.

**f. Consider approval of Resolution 2021-03 regarding maintenance of personnel files. [Leonard Schneider, City Attorney, and Julie O'Connell, Human Resources Director]**

Councilmember Beebe made a motion approve Resolution 2021-03 regarding maintenance of personnel files; the motion was seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Joe Rodriguez. Councilmember Beebe made a motion to go into Executive Session; the motion was seconded by Councilmember Graham. Councilmember Beebe made a second motion to table the item for Executive Session; the motion was seconded by Councilmember Lyle. The motion was adopted, 8-0.

**4. REQUESTS FOR CITIZEN PARTICIPATION**

**An opportunity for citizens to be heard on any topic and for the City Council to participate in the discussion. No action will be taken.**

**a. Zachary Hall would like to talk to the Council about establishing a community fridge in Huntsville through the use of his organization's resources.**

Hall gave a presentation on creating a community fridge in Huntsville and requested input from Council on the location and donations from the community to launch the program.

**b. Jason January would like to discuss the City of Huntsville employees getting insurance when they retire.**

January did not attend.

**5. MEDIA INQUIRIES RELATED TO MATTERS ON THE AGENDA**

None

## 6. ITEMS OF COMMUNITY INTEREST

**(Hear announcements concerning items of community interest from the Mayor, Councilmembers, and City staff, for which no action will be discussed or taken.)**

Mayor Brauning spoke about joining the Greater Robinson Memorial Church of God in Christ on Saturday to celebrate their long-awaited groundbreaking for the church's new sanctuary at... The church has been planning the new building for five years.

Councilmember Irving reminded citizens that blowing leaves from your yard into the street, City drainage system, or your neighbors' yard is a problem for everyone. Leaves blown into the street pose a significant safety risk to motorized and cyclist traffic caused from the loss of traction. Leaves blown into the gutters and drain boxes decrease the effectiveness of the City's storm water removal system as well and can clog drainage systems completely. The added workload also slows the progress of the City Street Sweepers. So please, do your part in keeping our City Streets and neighborhoods as clean as possible. Please mulch your leaves in place or bag for Solid Waste pick up on Yard Waste day.

Councilmember Humphrey talked about February being American Heart Month. Heart disease is the #1 killer of Texans and heart attacks at younger ages are rising with a 2 percent increase each year over the last 10 years among those 40 and younger. One way to get heart healthy is the Dance Fitness program help by the City of Huntsville Parks and Leisure Department. The classes are held at 5:30 pm Mondays and Wednesdays at the Martin Luther King Jr Neighborhood Recreation Center, located at 300 MLK Blvd.

Councilmember Beebe spoke about Walker County OEM reports to County Commissioners Monday that a Hub Vaccination plan had been submitted to the State for approval, but is not likely to be approved for a few weeks, as state officials are waiting for federal officials to make decisions on vaccine distribution. If and when the plan is approved, a website will be available for registration for 1,000 vaccines to be administered. Until the plan is approved, please continue to use information posted at [HuntsvilleTX.gov/COVID](http://HuntsvilleTX.gov/COVID).

City Secretary Poe advised the Chamber was providing free COVID tests for businesses.

## 7. EXECUTIVE SESSION

- a. **City Council will convene in closed session as authorized by Texas Government Code, Chapter 551, Section 551.074 – personnel matters regarding the appointment, employment, evaluation, reassignment, duties, discipline, or dismissal of a public officer or employee, concerning City Manager Aron Kulhavy.**

And from Item 3.

- f. **Consider approval of Resolution 2021-03 regarding maintenance of personnel files. [Leonard Schneider, City Attorney, and Julie O'Connell, Human Resources Director]**

The Council convened into Executive Session at 8:11 p.m.

## 8. RECONVENE

The Council reconvened at 9:40 p.m.

## ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Brauning adjourned the meeting without objection at 9:41 p.m.

Brenda Poe, City Secretary

ATTEST:

CITY OF HUNTSVILLE

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Brenda Poe, City Secretary

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Andy Brauning, Mayor