

**MINUTES
CITY COUNCIL MEETING
CITY OF GREY FOREST, TEXAS
GREY FOREST COMMUNITY CENTER
18249 SHERWOOD TRAIL
HELOTES, TX 78023
FEBRUARY 25, 2021 – 6:30 PM**

City Council Present: Mayor Charles M. Thornton, Mayor Pro Tem Susan Darst, Council Member Jennifer Nottingham, Council Member Geri Poss, Council Member Sean Skaggs, and Council Member Kimberly Verity.

Staff Present: Chief Rene Rodriguez, Sgt Scott Ristow, Facilities Manager Don Reddout, and Linda S Zartler

Registered/Recognized Citizens/Guests: Mandie Waldrop, Susan Beavin, Miguel Cantu, Karen Mian, Patricia Warr, Seth Gravels, Jeff English, Kathleen McCloskey, Madeline McCloskey, and Aurelia Scharnhorst.

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Thornton called the City Council to order at 6:30 PM.

I. ROLL CALL

Mayor Thornton declared a quorum present with all members present.

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE AND INVOCATION

The meeting commenced with the Pledge of Allegiance.

III. PRESENTATIONS BY CITIZENS AND VISITORS

Mayor Thornton opened the floor for presentations by citizens and visitors. Ms. Mandi Waldrop requested to hold her comments until further in the agenda, when the topic of the recent winter events is discussed. No other comments were received.

II. ANNOUNCEMENTS / REPORTS / MAYOR AND CITY EMPLOYEES

- a) **Mayor Announcements** – None
- b) **Council/Staff Announcements** - None
- c) **Committee Announcements/Reports** - None
- d) **Grey Forest Community Board Update** – None

e) **Senator Frank L. Madla Natural Area Update** – Mayor Thornton called upon Council Member Nottingham for an update on the Madla Natural Area. Council Member Nottingham commented that the Madla Natural Area faired well during the recent winter storm, there will be however a need to purchase more propane. Markers have been received for the

trails and should be installed soon. A prescribed burn is scheduled for the upcoming weekend, weather permitting.

f) Board of Adjustment Update - None

g) Police Department Monthly Report - Mayor Thornton called upon Chief Rene Rodriguez. Chief Rodriguez reviewed the monthly Police Report for January, 2021. A brief discussion ensued regarding the four violations issued by Code Enforcement.

Ms. Patricia Warr thanked the Police Department, Mayor Thornton, and Council members who were going door to door during the winter event.

h) Public Works Monthly Report – None

i) Fire Department Monthly Report – Mayor Thornton called on Fire Department Facilities Manager, Don Reddout. Mr. Reddout reviewed the Fire Department Monthly Report for January, 2021.

j) Grey Forest Utilities Update – Mayor Thornton requested that the update be presented during the Council's discussion of the recent winter events.

III. EXECUTIVE SESSION

a) Deliberation regarding the mayor's appointment of a candidate to the position of City Secretary pursuant to the Texas Local Government Code Section 551.074 - Personnel Matters.

Mayor Thornton called the City Council into Executive Session at 6:44 PM. Mayor Thornton directed those individuals to participate in the Executive Session to remain. He excused all other attendees from the room.

Mayor Thornton reconvened the City Council into Open Session at 7:00 PM.

THE FOLLOWING ITEMS MAY BE CONSIDERED AT ANY TIME DURING THE REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING:

IV. CONSENT AGENDA

a) Approval of Minutes: January 26, 2021

Council Member Nottingham requested the Minutes be removed from the Consent Agenda for discussion. Council Member Nottingham requested that the Minutes of January 26, 2021 be corrected to identify Don Reddout as Facilities Manager, and not Fire Chief as listed in Staff Present and under the Fire Department Monthly Report.

MOTION WAS MADE BY COUNCIL MEMBER NOTTINGHAM TO APPROVE THE MINUTES AS AMENDED. COUNCIL MEMBER VERITY SECONDED THE MOTION. COUNCIL VOTED 4-0. COUNCIL MEMBER POSS ABSTAINED DUE TO HER ABSENCE ON JANUARY 26, 2021.

V. NEW BUSINESS**a) City Council will discuss and act to confirm or decline the mayor's appointment of a candidate to the position of City Secretary.**

Mayor Thornton directed the City Council to review the prepared Resolution No. 2021-03(R) confirming the appointment of Miguel Cantu to City Secretary.

MOTION WAS MADE BY COUNCIL MEMBER VERITY TO APPROVE RESOLUTION NO. 2021-03(R), A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF GREY FOREST, TEXAS CONFIRMING THE MAYOR'S APPOINTMENT OF A CANDIDATE TO THE POSITION OF CITY SECRETARY, WITH THE APPROVAL OF A BACKGROUND CHECK. MOTION WAS SECONDED BY COUNCIL MEMBER POSS. COUNCIL VOTED 5-0.

b) City Council will discuss the challenges encountered by the City of Grey Forest as a result of last week's winter storm and severe weather and will further discuss ways in which the city can prepare for future extreme weather, natural disasters, and other emergencies. City Council may take possible action on matters discussed.

Mayor Thornton called on Mr. Jeff English of the Grey Forest Utilities to brief the City Council on the challenges presented to the Utilities during the recent winter storm event.

Mr. English first commented on the Madla Park boulders that are to be installed at Madla Park. The Utility has promised to install the boulders for delineation of the parking area.

Mr. English continued with an update of the Utility's challenges during the winter event. These challenges included the loss of pressure for the gas system, loss of power through CPS, as well as the loss of water. Mr. English stated that CPS Electric did not sufficiently prepare to have enough power to go around to all its customers. With the power loss and the generator at the pump house quitting, the well was not operable. There were many minor breaks in the water lines and some major leaks, which were draining the water tank, causing the water to be turned off and the boil water notice to be distributed to the citizens of Grey Forest. The Utility was able to communicate with CPS to get power to the site that allowed them to fill the tank again, but with as many breaks in the water line, the water needed to be tested for consumption. GFU is a small utility provider, but there were many issues with communication, between the utility and CPS, as well as to the citizens.

Ms. Mandi Waldrop expressed her appreciation for the GFU employees for their service during the emergency.

Mr. English explained the roles of the PUC and ERCOT regarding the cost of gas. Mr. English apologized to the citizens for the issues during the recent weather event, and he will continue to improve on the challenges discovered during this event, and to negotiate for a lower cost of gas used during this event.

Mayor Thornton continued with a discussion of the issues that he found during the event and offered suggestions for improving on those issues. He presented a brochure from Regroup Mass Notification as a method to provide information to the citizens. Additionally, a flyer on Wellaware that would provide notification on any issues regarding the well. He

will continue to discuss these remedies with GFU. He noted that there was a lack of local protocols for a local emergency. He suggested that the City hold a special meeting or a table-top exercise on an emergency situation. and discuss what needs to be done, who handles it and any capital improvements that might be needed, to facilitate future emergencies.

A discussion continued on future emergency preparedness and efforts by Council Members, employees, and citizens. It was the consensus on the City Council to review protocols for a local emergency as soon as practicable.

VI. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

a) Discuss and take possible action on an Ordinance amending the budget of the City of Grey Forest, Texas, by dissolving the Green Space Account and transferring the funds to the Senator Frank Madla, Jr. Park line item.

Mayor Thornton reminded the City Council of the previous discussion on January 26, 2021 regarding the Green Space Account.

MOTION WAS MADE BY COUNCIL MEMBER POSS TO APPROVE ORD. NO. 2021-004, AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE CITY OF GREY FOREST TEXAS FISCAL YEAR 2020-2021 BUDGET BY TRANSFERRING FUNDS FROM THE CITY GREEN SPACE BUDGET LINE ITEM TO THE SENATOR FRANK L. MADLA PARK BUDGET LINE ITEM. MOTION WAS SECONDED BY COUNCIL MEMBER SKAGGS. COUNCIL VOTED 5-0.

VII. GENERAL ANNOUNCEMENTS & FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS REQUESTED

Council Member Nottingham requested the City Council discuss establishing a protocol for City Council agenda items and supplement items that are presented during the Council meeting.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT


The City Council adjourned at 8:50 PM.

These minutes were approved/amended on 23rd day of March, 2021.

APPROVED:


Charles Mitchell Thornton

ATTEST:


Miguel Cantu, TRMC



City Secretary

Prepared by Linda S. Zartler, TRMC, Interim City Secretary