

**STATE OF TEXAS
COUNTY OF WALLER
CITY OF HEMPSTEAD**

BE IT REMEMBERED that on the 20th day of May 2024, A.D., 2024 at 6:00 P.M. the City Council met in a Regular Meeting at the Hempstead City Hall, 1125 Austin Street, Hempstead, Texas, there being present, to-wit:

Katherine Ragston Ward, Mayor
Lonnie Garfield, Mayor Pro-Tem
Cindy Pearce, Councilmember
Mildred Jefferson, Councilmember
Nora Hodges, Councilmember
Karon E. Neal, Councilmember

Charles Williams, City Attorney
Sabrina Alvarez, City Secretary

1. Call to order and invocation.

Mayor Katherine Ragston Ward called the meeting to order at 6:00 P.M. and Mayor Pro-Tem Lonnie Garfield gave the invocation.

2. Pledge of Allegiance.

The Pledge of Allegiance was given.

3. Public Comments.

None.

4. Consideration and action on minutes of April 15, 2024, April 24, 2024, May 6, 2024, and May 14, 2024, meetings.

Mayor Pro-Tem Lonnie Garfield made a motion to approve the minutes. Councilmember Mildred Jefferson seconded the motion and carried unanimously.

5. Consideration and action on the bundled services agreement from HDL companies regarding Sales Tax Administration and Services.

EDC Director Ramiro Bautista stated to council that this proposal provides analytics, gap analysis, trends, the top ten taxpayers, and the top thirty taxpayers. The proposal was from February and the company allowed the board to use it for free for two months. EDC will pay for the services. Mayor Pro-Tem Lonnie Garfield asked if EDC Director felt good about the proposal? EDC Ramiro Bautista stated yes and that it helps with budget. Councilmember Nora Hodges asked if all the reports created by the company come from the State Comptroller's office

and can be generated by the city, but does using the company make it easier for EDC to do their work? EDC Director Ramiro Bautista stated yes. Councilmember Cindy Pearce asked if the company serviced any surrounding cities. EDC Director Ramiro Bautista stated yes. Councilmember Nora Hodges asked about the 30% recovery fee. EDC Director Ramiro Bautista stated that the company will go after any taxpayer that does not pay to the state. Councilmember Nora Hodges questioned the reimbursement for any expenses, including travel incurred which shall be invoiced and due on receipt. EDC Director Ramiro Bautista stated there is no anticipation of any additional expenses. Councilmember Nora Hodges asked, "is this in budget?" EDC Director Ramiro Bautista stated that yes under consulting fees. Councilmember Cindy Pearce stated it is interesting to see the top ten business taxpayers.

Mayor Pro-Tem made a motion to approve the proposal. Councilmember Mildred Jefferson seconded the motion. AYES-Mayor Pro-Tem Lonnie Garfield, Councilmember Karon Neal, Councilmember Mildred Jefferson, Councilmember Cindy Pearce. NO's-Councilmember Nora Hodges. Motion carried.

6. Consideration and action on an Ordinance of the City Council of the City of Hempstead amending the 2023-2024 City Budget of the City of Hempstead, Texas related to the Travel and Training Budget as to the expenditure of such funds; making findings and other provisions related to the subject.

Attorney Charles Williams stated that the Ordinance will be in place to only travel within the State of Texas, not out of state travel. Councilmember Nora Hodges made a motion to approve the Ordinance. Mayor Pro-Tem Lonnie Garfield seconded the motion and carried unanimously.

7. Consideration and action amending the provisions of the City of Hempstead, Texas Employee Guide to provide that the city does not employ any person by written contract; providing that all employees serve at will.

Attorney Charles Williams stated the Ordinance states all employees are considered and employed at will and no employment agreements or contracts will be allowed. Councilmember Nora Hodges made a motion to approve the Ordinance. Mayor Pro-Tem Lonnie Garfield seconded the motion and carried unanimously.

8. Discussion, consideration, and action on HEDC Director's Employment Agreement.

No action taken.

9. Consideration and action on a Parade Permit from St. Katherine Drexel Catholic Church to be held on June 2, 2024.

Mayor Katherine Ragston Ward mentioned from this point forward anyone that will have a parade permit to please turn all required paperwork in within the 60-day period. Mayor Pro-Tem Lonnie Garfield made a motion to approve the permit. Councilmember Mildred Jefferson seconded the motion and carried unanimously.

10. Consideration and action on payment of current bills.

Councilmember Cindy Pearce asked about a Tahoe that was sent to get fixed. Chief David Hartley stated it was two Tahoe's that were involved in a pursuit crash and TML has reimbursed the city for the claims. Councilmember Cindy Pearce also asked if \$20,000.00 was used for out-of-state travel and what came out of it? Any new businesses? City Secretary Sabrina Alvarez stated no. Councilmember Nora Hodges made a motion to approve payment of bills. Mayor Pro-Tem Lonnie Garfield seconded the motion and carried unanimously.

11. Presentations.

A. Mayor Reports-

1. Sales Tax- is up from last month.

B. Councilmembers Reports-

Mildred Jefferson-May Ann Thibodeaux presence will be deeply missed, but her legacy will continue to inspire all; the City of Hempstead extends its heartfelt condolences to the family and loved ones of Mary Ann Thibodeaux and honors her memory for the positive impact she made on our community. May her soul rest in eternal peace. We are sending our deepest condolences to Jennifer Thomas's family for their loss and continue prayers for all.

Nora Hodges-I will be attending a symposium on Building Tomorrow Together: Achieving Quality Planned Development, taking place on June 21, 2024, at the Houston Community College West Houston Institute. Discussions will include public -private partnerships, water resources, and infrastructure funding.

CLOSED SESSION

12. Specifically, City Council will meet in executive session pursuant to Texas Government Code Section 551.071 Consultation with Attorney

Executive Session opened at 6:19 P.M.

Executive Session ended at 6:33 P.M.

No action in Executive Session

14. Adjourn City Council Meeting.

Mayor Pro-Tem Lonnie Garfield made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:34 P.M. Councilmember Mildred Jefferson seconded the motion and carried unanimously.

PASSED AND APPROVED this the 17th day of June, A.D., 2024.

APPROVED:

/s/: Katherine Ragston Ward, Mayor

ATTEST:

/s/: Sabrina Alvarez, City Secretary