

CITY OF ALAMO HEIGHTS
CITY COUNCIL
April 16, 2014

A regular meeting of the City Council of the City of Alamo Heights, Texas was held in the temporary facilities, located at 1248 Austin Highway Suite 220, San Antonio, Texas, at 5:30 p.m. on Wednesday, April 16, 2014.

Present and composing a quorum were:

Mayor Louis Cooper
Mayor Pro-Tempore John Savage
Councilmember Bobby Hasslocher
Councilmember Fred Prassel
Councilmember Elliot Weser

Also attending were:

City Manager J. Mark Browne
City Attorney Mike Brenan
Finance Director Cynthia Barr
Information Services Manager Marian Vargas
Human Resource Manager Lori Harris
City Secretary Jennifer Reyna
Chief Police Rick Pruitt
Public Works Director Pat Sullivan

Absent were:

Councilmember Bobby Rosenthal
Fire Chief Buddy Kuhn

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Mayor Louis Cooper opened the meeting at 5:30 p.m.

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Item # 1 Approval of Minutes

Mayor Cooper asked City Council for any revisions to the minutes of the March 24, 2014, Council Meeting. A motion was made by Councilmember Elliot Weser to approve the minutes of March 24, 2014. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Bobby Hasslocher and passed by unanimous vote.

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Item # 2 Announcements

Mayor Cooper read the following captions.

a. Wells Fargo Judson Trails Cleanup, April 19, 2014

Public Works Director Pat Sullivan announced that Wells Fargo Bank will host a Judson Trails Cleanup on Saturday, April 19, 2014 along Judson Trails. The cleanup will begin at 2:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

b. National Telecommunicators Week, April 13 – April 19, 2014

Police Chief Rick Pruitt announced the week of April 13th through April 19th is National Telecommunicators Week dedicated to Public Safety Dispatchers. He briefly highlighted their duties and history noting they are the backbone of emergency operations. Police Chief Pruitt expressed his sincere appreciation and stated the City's dispatch operators are the best.

Mayor Cooper read and presented the proclamation to Police Chief Pruitt.

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Consent Items

Mayor Cooper read the following captions.

Item # 3

ORDINANCE NO. 1990

AN ORDINANCE DESIGNATING THE ALAMO HEIGHTS WEEKLY FORMERLY NORTH CENTRAL NEWS AS THE OFFICIAL NEWSPAPER FOR THE CITY OF ALAMO HEIGHTS

Item # 4

Request for permission to refund a duplicate and/or overpayment of property taxes to

a. Matthew & Elizabeth Koehler, 303 Normandy	\$1,522.02
b. Kevin & Erica Hill, 225 Rosemary	<u>\$1,610.22</u>
Total	\$3,132.24

A motion for approval of was made by Councilmember Elliot Weser. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Fred Prassel and passed by unanimous vote.

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Item for Individual Consideration

Item # 5

Mayor Cooper read the following caption.

Discussion and possible action on conservation and acquisition of water rights

Public Works Director Pat Sullivan made a PowerPoint presentation that included background information.

Mr. Sullivan reminded Council that the Edwards Aquifer is the City's source of water. He stated the City began this year drawing water at a lower level than what was experienced last year at this same time. He reviewed the amount of permitted water rights, water consumption, and stage restrictions during 2012 and 2013. A chart was presented that contained historical water use broken down by years and months.

Mr. Sullivan asked Council consideration of lease and/or purchase additional water in preparation for water usage. He encouraged water conservation efforts through effective communication to include a streamlined ordinance reflecting San Antonio Water Systems (SAWS) conservation efforts. Mr. Sullivan summarized that the purchase of additional water rights could be over \$6,000 an acre foot. Lease rates were presented for five-year, six-year, and ten-year leases.

Mayor Cooper noted there is an opportunity for conservation efforts with SAWS. He noted there is confusion among the community regarding the time period to water within different water stages. He stated other entities such as Olmos Park, and Terrell Hills follow SAWS' regulations. He shared City Attorney Mike Brenan's other city purchased water and the opportunity is there. He asked the City to look for a water broker to assist in the purchase of water.

Councilmember Bobby Hasslocher clarified that the City is not running out of water and stated the City is fortunate to own and operate the water system. He stated conservation efforts need to be practiced and other items need to be explored as the availability of future water can be questionable. Councilmember Hasslocher commented that perhaps additional water rights may need to be purchased and the Council is serious to address this concern.

Councilmember Weser stated a proactive planning commitment is required to acquire additional water for a sufficient supply of water. He commented the City is still in a healthy state; however, the City needs to be proactive educating residents and prepared. He stated there is a need to modify resident's behavior in conserving water and repetitive explanation on SAWS and the current stage declared in Alamo Heights.

The following citizen spoke on this matter:

Sarah Reveley, resident, stated she attended a San Antonio River Authority (SARA) meeting and they are conducting a competition for engineers to design a project that results the water contained rather as storm water runoff. She suggested the City to consider the same concept.

A motion was made by Councilmember Fred Prassel to purchase 25 acre feet at approximately \$6,000. The motion was seconded by Mayor Pro Tem John Savage and there was further discussion.

Mayor Cooper asked staff to continue looking to lease water and during the budget process explore to budget additional monies so this item is addressed. He complimented Mr. Sullivan for managing this effort. He asked Council's ideas on next steps. He suggested the Neighborhood Character and Commercial Revitalization (NCCR) consider measures.

Sarah Reveley, resident, recalled she received feedback that a sprinkler system will produce parts that are rusted which then fall apart. She suggested different watering times for people that have installed sprinklers.

Mr. Sullivan responded the City had made gradual improvements and explained there is a strong outburst when there are cast iron mains that had not been replaced and the City has a soft start up system. He stated the Edwards Authority will not credit permitted water until the beginning of next year. Mr. Sullivan explained the fines can be severe.

Mayor Cooper asked for a vote. The motion was made by Councilmember Fred Prassel to purchase 25 acre feet at approximately \$6,000. The motion was seconded by Mayor Pro Tem John Savage and passed by unanimous vote.

Councilmember Prassel asked the City consider amending watering times to be similar to SAWS. There was further discussion among Council regarding designated watering times. Councilmember Hasslocher stated there is merit to amend times but there are other additional items that need to be considered for residents.

Mr. Sullivan noted it had not been explored; however, commented he didn't think it was cost effective to pursue obtaining water with SAWS and the City would be best served if self-managed. He commented amended watering times can be explored and noted it would be beneficial.

A motion was made by Councilmember Prassel that the watering times for the City of Alamo Heights be the same required by SAWS.

Council briefly discussed the consideration of amended hours including a trial period consisting of 30 days and the challenge of confusion among the community. Councilmember Weser stated the target should be considered and then gauge the success of measure against the target.

Councilmember Hasslocher noted the City of Alamo Heights' water rate is cheap and Council is trying to maintain a low water rate.

Councilmember Prassel shared that resident Bill Kiel explained to him why the City of San Antonio's water rate is twice as much as Alamo Heights because Alamo Heights has the infrastructure with no development and San Antonio has development such as in North San Antonio in which there is an extra tax.

Mayor Pro Tem Savage asked if there is any water available from other sources other than Edwards Aquifer Authority.

Councilmember Hasslocher stated no and explained that leasing or securing water rights will need to be with the Edwards Aquifer Authority because it is within the boundaries of the region and allocation.

A motion for approval was made by Councilmember Prassel to amend the watering times for the residents of Alamo Heights be the same required by SAWS. The motion was seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Savage and passed by unanimous vote.

Mayor Cooper thanked Council for the discussion.

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Staff Report

Item # 6 Mayor Cooper read the following caption.

Discussion and analysis of collection of City property taxes

Finance Director Cynthia Barr made a PowerPoint presentation that included background information.

Ms. Barr informed Council that in January 2010, the Texas Department of Licensing Regulation (TDLR) took over the licensing of persons who perform assessment and collection of property taxes. She shared the TDLR certification requirement for an individual and to pass the state exam within five years. Ms. Barr presented the cost of a license and maintaining a license. In addition, there is labor in maintaining/updating tax accounts, values, corrections, refunds, payments, installment agreements and delinquent issues. The average cost over a five year period was presented. Ms. Barr compared the costs of certified personnel conducting in-house labor to the cost of outsourcing to Bexar County Tax Assessor. The advantages with Bexar County were presented to realize an amount of savings.

Councilmember Weser asked what are the disadvantages.

Ms. Barr responded residents do not like to go to Bexar County, downtown, to address their concerns. She stated she answers the taxpayer's questions and addresses the concerns.

Councilmember Hasslocher suggested Council to consider a cap on the contract as he expressed concern on the rate.

Ms. Barr asked Mr. Brennan if he had any experience with other entities regarding Bexar County's standard agreement.

Councilmember Prassel requested this item be returned at the next meeting. This would allow Mr. Brennan to review prospective contract. Council agreed.

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Citizens To Be Heard Concerning Non-Agenda Items

Item # 7 Citizens to be heard concerning items not on the agenda

Bruce Siebert, resident, thanked Council with the assumption that a Community Development Services Manager gets filled to conduct respective duties especially related to the City's Codes of Ordinances.

Sarah Reveley, resident, shared that Richard Peacock has filed a permit to demolish properties on Ellwood. She suggested Council conduct a special meeting to move forward and stated there are volunteers happy to assist with the demolition.

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Closed Session

At 6:47 p.m., Mayor Cooper adjourned the regular City Council meeting to conduct a closed meeting as authorized by Section 551.074 of the Texas Government Code to discuss the employment, evaluation and duties of the City Manager and the Community Development Services Manager position.

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Mayor Cooper reconvened the regular meeting at 7:42 p.m. There was no action taken during the closed session.

Item # 9 Mayor Cooper read the following caption and announced this item would not be considered.

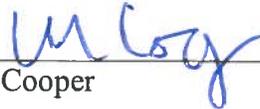
Discussion and possible action regarding the employment and contract renewal of the City Manager

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There being no further business, a motion was made by Councilmember Prassel to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Weser and passed by unanimous vote. Mayor Cooper adjourned the meeting at 7:43 p.m.



Jennifer Reyna
City Secretary



Louis Cooper
Mayor