

CITY OF ALAMO HEIGHTS
CITY COUNCIL
January 13, 2025

A regular meeting of the City Council of the City of Alamo Heights, Texas was held at the Council Chamber, located at 6116 Broadway, San Antonio, Texas, at 5:30 p.m. on Monday, January 13, 2025. A teleconference was held via Zoom; staff and meeting attendees were welcomed in the Council Chamber.

Composing a quorum were:

Mayor Bobby Rosenthal
Mayor Pro Tem Lynda Billa Burke
Councilmember Lawson Jessee
Councilmember Karl P. Baker
Councilmember Trey Jacobson

Also attending were:

City Manager Buddy Kuhn
Assistant City Manager Phillip Laney
City Attorney Frank J. Garza
Assistant to City Manager Jennifer Reyna
City Secretary Elsa T. Robles
Director of Finance Robert Galindo
Police Chief Rick Pruitt
Fire Chief Michael Gdovin
Public Works Director Frank Orta
Community Development Services Director Lety Hernandez
Deputy Police Chief Cindy Pruitt

Not attending:

Councilmember Blake M. Bonner

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Mayor Bobby Rosenthal opened the meeting at 5:31 p.m.

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Item # 1 Approval of Minutes

Mayor Rosenthal asked the City Council for a motion on the December 09, 2024 City Council Meeting minutes. Councilmember Trey Jacobson moved to approve the minutes as presented. The motion was seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Lynda Billa Burke and passed by unanimous vote.

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Item # 2 Announcements

Mayor Rosenthal read the following caption.

- a. Recognition of Fire Chief Michael Gdovin on his retirement after of 31 years of dedicated service to the City of Alamo Heights Fire Department**

City Manager Buddy Kuhn stated he was honored to recognize Fire Chief Michael Gdovin for his dedication to the city's fire department for almost 32 years. Mr. Kuhn added Fire Chief Gdovin is the longest tenured employee with the city who served various levels as Firefighter / Paramedic, Lieutenant, Captain, Deputy Fire Chief and finally promoted to Fire Chief in 2019.

Fire Chief Gdovin was instrumental in helping guide the city through the COVID-19 pandemic. He was the first fire department in Bexar County to achieve the Texas Fire Chief's Best Practices, achieved ISO Class1, implemented the Critical Incident Stress Management team (CISM) internally and externally with deployments statewide, and successfully recruited and maintained top quality staff. As a token of appreciation, staff ordered a custom engraved stone for Fire Chief Gdovin to display at his home.

Mayor Rosenthal presented Fire Chief Gdovin with a proclamation and thanked him for his years of dedicated service to the citizens of Alamo Heights. Fire Chief Gdovin in turn thanked City Council and staff for their support throughout the years and said he was proud of each member of the fire department.

b. 2024 AHFD Toys for Tots Drive Recap

AHFD Fire Captain Jeremy Powers announced the Alamo Heights Fire Department registered as a toy donation drop site. Donations ran from October 02, 2024 through December 15, 2024. He stated he organized the donations and delivered them to the drop-off location. He took the opportunity to thank everyone who donated to make someone else's holiday special.

c. Candidate Filing Period

City Secretary Elsa T. Robles announced the candidate filing period for the May 3, 2025 General Election is starting Wednesday, January 15, 2025 – February 14, 2025. Interested candidates can apply to serve a two-year term for Mayor and for Councilmember Place 1 & Councilmember Place 2. Due to a vacancy in August 2024 and per City Charter, Councilmember Place 5 will also be on the ballot. Candidates can apply to serve the remaining unexpired term of one year for this position. She stated applications, along with a \$100.00 filing fee, should be turned in by 5:00 p.m. on February 14, 2025. Additional information is available on the City's website and kiosk. Candidate packets are available at City Hall and on the website.

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Item # 2 Citizens to be Heard

No comments made.

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Items for Individual Consideration

Item # 4 Mayor Rosenthal read the following caption.

Architectural Review Board Case No. 959F, a request of Alejandra Acuna of The Thorn Group, applicant, representing Neera Bhatia, owner, for the final design review of the proposed multiple-family use structure located at 1009 Townsend Ave in order to construct four (4) townhomes.

Community Development Services Department Director Lety Hernandez stated the Multi-Family (MF-D) property is located at 1009 Townsend Ave. at Cambridge Oval. The applicant requests approval of the final design review for a proposed multiple-family use structure, constructing four townhomes. She noted the item was tabled at the December 9, 2024 Council meeting to allow an opportunity for the applicant to participate in discussion.

Ms. Hernandez reviewed existing conditions of the current structures. She stated the applicant desires to construct two separate structures, consisting of four units, three stories high. and noted the driveway will be exiting on Cambridge Oval, not Townsend Ave.

Ms. Hernandez reviewed the proposed renderings provided by the applicant and stated technical and administrative reviews of the proposed elevations and landscaping plans will be required to ensure compliance with current building and zoning code regulations.

The Architectural Review Board (ARB) considered the request at the November 19, 2024 meeting and voted unanimously to recommend approval as presented.

Ms. Hernandez stated public notifications were mailed to property owners within a 200-foot radius. Notices were posted on the City's website and on the property. Staff received one response in support and three in opposition. She noted the applicant was present for questions.

Councilmember Jacobson stated that residents had raised concerns at the last Council meeting regarding impacts of the demolition/construction activities to enhance the safety around Cambridge Elementary.

Mr. Lyndsay Thorn, applicant, apologized for not being present at the meeting in December and stated the Thorn Group had designed the proposed plans and would be building the structure too. He stated they had thought carefully about the impact this would have on neighboring residents and school. Since it may take three to four months to build, they plan to start construction right before school starts or wait until after all the school/pedestrian traffic has died down. Mr. Thorn added the construction team is "in house" and are aware the of environments and neighbors around the construction site. A 5' 9" chain link fence and webbing will surround the property during construction with a single gate access off of Cambridge Oval.

Mayor Rosenthal asked to hear comments from the audience.

Ms. Sally Ann Smith, resident, stated this was the fourth time she has spoken on this item and noted that more than three people have objected to this proposal. Residents feel strongly that the design does not go with the conservative neighborhood. Ms. Smith stated residents desire to maintain a park like community.

Ms. Lynden Kosub, resident, stated she lives on the northern side, just adjacent to the proposed project. She hopes the new proposed structure will address current drainage issues. She was concerned with the height of the building towering over her home, invading her privacy. Ms.

Kosub agreed with the previous resident that the new construction is incompatible with the rest of the neighborhood. She asked Council to protect residents against big developers.

Council discussed the need for a storm drainage plan review. Ms. Hernandez explained, if needed, this would be identified during the plan review process.

Mayor Rosenthal reminded the residents that the State has removed most of the city's authority to govern anything having to do with construction and continue to do so in each legislative session. He asked if there was anyone else who wished to speak on this item.

Mr. Al Honigblum, resident and Planning & Zoning Commissioner, addressed the Council and stated he requested the current sidewalk stay in place to help with pedestrian traffic until the new one was put in. Additionally, he requested the property have a drainage review. He agreed with Council that they do not have the authority to approve or deny an applicant because of building materials or aesthetics.

Councilmember Jacobson moved the question and motioned to approve ARB Case No. 959F. He commented City Council recognized the concerns regarding drainage and looming issues and stated he appreciated any efforts the construction team can take with the demolition of the building. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Lawson Jessee and passed by unanimous vote.

Item # 5 Mayor Rosenthal read the following caption.

Architectural Review Board Case No. 964F, a request of Peter Dewitt, owner, for the significance review of the existing main structure and compatibility review of the proposed design located at 330 Alta Ave in order to demolish 100% of the existing main structure and construct a new single-family residence with detached garage.

Ms. Hernandez stated the Single-Family (SF-B) property is located at 330 Alta Ave. on the south side between Imlay St. and Arbutus St. The applicant requests approval of the significance review and compatibility review of the proposed design.

Ms. Hernandez reviewed the existing conditions and site plans. She presented the proposed site/roof plans, elevations, and floor/roof plans with detached accessory structure. The current floor to area ratio is 18%, the applicant proposes 46.1% of the allowable 47% due to a bonus for the one-story structure detached garage. She stated the current lot coverage is slightly over 18% and the applicant proposes 37% of the maximum allowed of 40% in a SF-B zone. Ms. Hernandez noted the applicant is currently completing the plan review process. Staff will ensure to review the proposed numbers. She continued to review the existing and proposed streetscape.

The project is required to complete the plan review process. On December 17, 2024, the ARB conducted a significance and compatibility review. They voted unanimously to declare the existing main structure as not significant and recommended approval of the proposed design as compatible.

Ms. Hernandez stated public notifications were mailed to property owners within a 200-foot radius. Notices were posted on the City's website and on the property. Staff received five responses in support and none in opposition. The applicant was present for any questions.

Councilmember Jessee moved to approve ARB Case No. 964F. The motion was seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Lynda Billa Burke and passed by unanimous vote.

Item # 6 Mayor Rosenthal read the following caption.

Architectural Review Board Case No. 958F, a request of Stephanie Calderon, owner, for the significance review of the existing main structure and compatibility review of the proposed design located at 411 Abiso Ave. in order to demolish 73% of the existing main structure's roof and 40% of the street-facing elevation in order to renovate and add to the existing single-family residence.

Ms. Hernandez stated the Single-Family (SF-B) property is located at 411 Abiso Ave. on the north side between Imlay and Greely St. The applicant requests approval of the significance review and compatibility review of the proposed design of a second story addition. The applicant requests to demolish an existing ramp & garage and propose to build a new tandem style garage. Additionally, they propose to remove some trees on the property.

Ms. Hernandez reviewed the proposed elevation and roof demolition plans. She presented the proposed site/roof plans, elevations, and floor/roof plans. The proposed main structure elevation is 28ft with cement board (1st story), vertical board & batten (2nd story) with a shingle roof. She noted the current floor area ratio is at 32%. The applicant proposes 35% of the maximum allowed of 50% due to the preservation of the main structure, and the one story detached garage. She continued to review the existing and proposed streetscape.

The project is required to complete the plan review process. On December 17, 2024, the ARB conducted a significance and compatibility review. They voted unanimously to declare the existing main structure as not significant and recommended approval of the proposed design as compatible.

Ms. Hernandez stated public notifications were mailed to property owners within a 200-foot radius. Notices were posted on the City's website and on the property. Staff received three responses in support and none in opposition. She added staff had not completed a review of the proposed design; however, based on the illustrations, it looked to be compliant with the looming standards, staff will confirm during the application review.

Councilmember Jessee moved to approve ARB Case No. 958F. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Jacobson and passed by unanimous vote.

Item # 7 Mayor Rosenthal read the following caption.

Architectural Review Board Case No. 956F, a request of Jason Moran, applicant, representing Justin Boatsman and Emily Fridlington, owners, for the significance and compatibility review of

the proposed design located at 141 W Edgewood Pl. in order to demolish 42% of the street-facing façade to construct a single-story addition to the existing single-family residence.

Ms. Hernandez stated the Single-Family (SF-A) property is located at 141 W Edgewood Pl. on the north side between Nacogdoches Rd and Broadway St. The applicant requests approval of the significance review and compatibility review of the proposed addition to the front of the main structure.

Ms. Hernandez reviewed the proposed site/roof plans and elevations. She stated the project is required to complete the plan review process. On December 17, 2024, the ARB conducted a significance and compatibility review. They voted unanimously to declare the existing main structure as not significant and recommended approval of the proposed design as compatible. Additionally, the ARB commended them on their design and in keeping it within the current look and surroundings.

Ms. Hernandez stated public notifications were mailed to property owners within a 200-foot radius. Notices were posted on the City's website and on the property. Staff received six responses in support and none in opposition.

Councilmember Jessee moved to approve ARB Case No. 956F. The motion was seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Billa Burke and passed by unanimous vote.

Item # 8 Mayor Rosenthal read the following caption.

RESOLUTION NO. 2025R-201

A RESOLUTION BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF ALAMO HEIGHTS, TEXAS, AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER TO EXECUTE SERVICES CONTRACT WITH PUP PUP & AWAY, LLC FOR CANINE SHELTERING SERVICES; AND SETTING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

Police Chief Rick Pruitt stated staff was seeking approval of a Resolution authorizing a one-year extension to the current canine sheltering agreement with Pup Pup & Away LLC (PP&A) and authorizing the City Manager to execute the agreement. He noted the agreement is similar to last year's with an amendment to allow the City Manager to execute one-year extensions in the future without having to bring it back to City Council as long as funds are budgeted for this service.

Police Chief Pruitt explained the City first entered into an agreement with Pup Pup & Away (PP&A) on April 13, 2020. PP&A agreed to another one-year extension for the boarding of COAH K-9 rescues. He noted the agreement extension will expire December 31, 2025 and includes an early termination clause for both parties.

There are a lot of benefits to the COAH rescue effort. PP&A provide excellent care and socializing efforts for the canines. The canines have frequent/extended open space recreation and are well mannered, adaptable, and adoptable. The PP&A staff are well trained to manage and care for canines arriving in different conditions.

Police Chief Pruitt stated the proposed action is consistent with the City's efforts to safely hold stray or abandoned canines in a safe and humane environment. He noted the City Attorney and City Manager reviewed the proposed sheltering agreement and the City Attorney prepared the resolution.

Fiscally, the City will pay \$30.00 per night/per canine sheltering fee. Expenditures for FY24 were \$11,956 in boarding.

Mayor Pro Tem Billa Burke moved to approve a Resolution extending the existing agreement for one-year between the City and Pup Pup & Away LLC for canine sheltering and authorizing the City Manager to execute the agreement. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Baker and passed by unanimous vote.

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Staff Reports

Item # 9 Mayor Rosenthal read the following caption.

Staff report on Water Meter Replacement project

Assistant City Manager Phillip Laney stated this item is to provide Council a status update and to assure Council is on board to proceed with a water meter replacement project in the city. He stated noted Council and staff have been reviewing, considering, and discussing transitioning to an Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI) water system that would provide some on demand information and would replace the out-of-date analog meters that are currently in place today.

Mr. Laney stated Council has taken action since FY20233 to factor in costs associated with this project. If Council proceeds with these expenses, two Request For Proposals (RFP) will be required. One for project management, and a second for the actual equipment and installation and integration with our existing systems, to include the training component. The project would help the city comply with federal lead and copper regulations that all water systems are subject to.

Mr. Laney provided some background information on the project.

- 2015 – CPS Energy installs smart meters for electricity & gas services
- October 2018 – Water & sewer rate study (Willdan) completed & 3-year rate increases adopted
- March 2021 – Final rate increase from 2018 study
- February 2023 – Commissioned updated water rate study & meter replacement analysis (Willdan)
- September 2023 – 5-year water & sewer rates adopted & meter replacement analysis presented
 - Adjustments on October 1st of each year 2023-2027
 - Water & sewer rates assumed costs associated with water meter replacement (WMR) project

- February 2024 – Drought Surcharge Fee in effect
- November 2023 to December 2024 – Staff conducts WMR project due diligence

Mr. Laney continued and stated if Council agreed to move forward, the water meter replacement project goal would be to implement an AMI system to provide on-demand data for account holders and the city operators. All the services would be automated, and remote functions would be provided for meter reading/usage and provide notifications for leaks and outages.

Staff will focus on key factors with this project such as ensuring the new AMI system will work with systems already in place for billing and that it is compatible with the CPS infrastructure. They will focus on working with existing meter boxes and the ability to facilitate compliance with revised lead and copper rule revisions.

The US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) guidelines aimed at reducing lead exposure to drinking water. All public water systems are required to conduct inventories of lead service lines (city/system-owned & customer-owned lines) and develop plans to replace city-owned lines. Cities are also required to implement stricter monitoring procedures. Staff desires to incorporate compliance with these regulations into the Water Meter Replacement project.

Some AMI transition benefits would be efficiency with remote, on-demand information, consumption awareness/monitoring, collaboration with CPS & SAWS, and the ability to eliminate manual reading. It would replace current out-of-date technology & service, which is often inaccurate.

Mr. Laney provided a proposed timeline for the project.

- January 22, 2025 – RFP date of issuance
- February 21, 2025 – RFP due date
- March/April 2025 – Anticipated City Council consideration
- Summer 2025 – Meter & installation RFP consideration

Mr. Laney commented Willdan had provided a cost estimate of \$3M - \$6M in 2023, but that amount may have changed. The project would be funded by debt.

Mr. Kuhn stated staff has been doing an excellent job on project planning. The goal is to incorporate available technology as much as possible with this project. He reiterated this would be funded by issuing debt. He stated talks would soon start with the city's Bond Council should Council move forward.

City Council agreed this project was necessary and asked staff to move forward with the timeline. Councilmember Jessee suggested staff explore creative solutions to fund this project.

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Closed Session

Item # 10 Mayor Rosenthal read the following caption.

Executive Session as authorized by the Texas Government Code Section 551.074 (personnel matters) to discuss the employment, evaluation, contract and duties of the City Manager.

The City Council of the City of Alamo Heights convened into Closed Executive Session at 7:11 p.m. and reconvened in Open Session at 7:29 p.m. in accordance with the Texas Open Meetings Act, Texas Government Code, *Section §551.074 (Personnel Matters)*.

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Open Session

Item # 11 Mayor Rosenthal read the following caption.

Discussion and possible action resulting from Executive Session.

No action taken.

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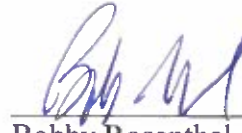
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With no further business to consider, Councilmember Jessee moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:30 p.m. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Jacobson and passed by unanimous vote.

PASSED AND APPROVED THIS 10th DAY OF FEBRUARY, 2025.


Elsa T. Robles, TRMC
City Secretary


Bobby Rosenthal
Mayor

