



STATE OF TEXAS
COUNTY OF FORT BEND
CITY OF RICHMOND

The City Commission for the City of Richmond, Texas met in Special/Workshop Session on August 16, 2021, at 9:00 a.m.

Mayor Becky Haas proceeded to call the meeting to order at 9:02 a.m. The meeting was broadcast via video conference call. All members of the public may participate in the meeting and via video conference call.

A quorum was present, with the following members in attendance:

Becky Haas, Mayor
Terry Gaul, Commissioner P1
Barry Beard, Commissioner P2
Carl Drozd, Commissioner P3
Alex BeMent, Commissioner P4 (Zoom)
Terri Vela, City Manager
Howard Christian, Assistant City Manager "ACM"
Gary Smith, City Attorney
Laura Scarlato, City Secretary

Agenda item A1. Call to order, Quorum Determined and Meeting Declared Open.

Mayor Becky Haas proceeded to open the Consent Agenda item A7 and request items to be pulled for conversation.

Agenda item A7. CONSENT AGENDA

Commissioner Gaul - Nothing
Commissioner Beard A9. (3) (5) (10)
Commissioner Drozd – Nothing
Commissioner BeMent – Nothing
Mayor Haas – Nothing

- ❖ (3). Police Department Report. Commissioner Beard requested clarification of the map that was included with the Police Department Report. Police Chief Jeff Craig stated the blue areas represent "hot spots" reflecting where the most activity is occurring in the City in turn alerting the officers. Chief Craig stated the map would become more user friendly over the next few months and over time it can be determined which areas are consistently noted. Commissioner Beard stated the map was fabulous and expressed appreciation. Mayor Haas stated how much she enjoys the Beat Reports from the officers.

- ❖ (5). Financial Report. Commissioner Beard inquired if the policy for the General Fund and the Utility Fund balances are the same which the response was yes.
- ❖ (10). Code Enforcement Report. Commissioner Beard stated there is a dangerous pool on Tangle Lane and has been for some time. Scott Fajkus, Code Compliance Supervisor stated the location has not had water service for at least six months. The property is currently not occupied. Information has been provided to the Building Department which will be relayed to the Water Department and the water service should be reinstated. This will bring the pool into compliance. There were additional questions regarding an abandoned car on Austin Street and the playground on Fields Street. Supervisor Fajkus stated that one resident would like to make a pocket park and the abandoned car has been referred to Municipal Court.
- ❖ (15). Mayor Haas clarified there would be a Special/Workshop meeting on September 20, 2021, at 9:00 a.m. per usual. It was confirmed there would be a morning meeting.

REGULAR AGENDA

Agenda item A10. Review and consider taking action authorizing the City Manager to negotiate a contract for a delinquent court collections firm. Commissioner Gaul requested how the value of the contract is determined. Finance Director Justin Alderete stated that is was a methodology based on a set collection fee and confirmed the value is based on the “net” collection amount.

Agenda item A11. Review and consider taking action on Ordinance No. 2021-16, approving Conditional Use Permit (CUP) to allow the operation of a counselling and training center at the subject site located at 1117 Powell Street; and to revoke the existing Conditional Use Permit allowing a resale store; and to the extent the Conditional Use Permit deviates from the Future Land Use Plan of the Comprehensive Master Plan, to provide for an amendment thereto. There was a lengthy discussion regarding the different zoning for commercial, residential and mixed use and what the UDC requires. City Planner Jose Abraham provided feedback to the questions. The property in question is zoned residential but is considered a commercial building by design. If the business would change in nature, would need to return to the Commissioner for another CUP. Commissioner Beard stated a process should be in place to ensure conformity therefore not showing preference to any one property. The process was explained as to if the property would change types of business and a permit is not obtained, how that would be determined. Code Enforcement receives notices from the Police Department, Building Department, Fire Department or possibly by citizen complaints. The departments share the information.

Agenda item A12. Review and consider taking action on authorizing the City Manager to negotiate a contract with PGAL for the design of the interior build-out of a portion of the building at 1116 Myrtle Street. Assistant City Manager Howard Christian provided the background of the Myrtle Street project stating that a portion of the building will be renovated to accommodate additional staff freeing up space at City Hall and the Annex. The design includes six offices, conference room, restrooms and a break room. The contract is for professional services to provide for the design, bid phase, and construction phase in the amount of \$64,195. It was stated that some of the design will be for the entire building such as electrical and plumbing. There was

a lengthy discussion with comments and questions answered by ACM Christian and City Manager Vela. It was noted that professional services do not go through the bid process but rather a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) was made. City Manager noted that PGAL was last utilized in 2017 according to the accounts payable records. Once completed, the remaining portion of the project will be available to market by the Economic Development Director.

Agenda item A13. Review and consider taking action on the development agreement with Meritage Homes for Wall Street Project. Commissioner Beard inquired if the lessons learned from Veranda and Mandola were being implemented in the contract with Meritage Homes which it was stated they had been incorporated. There was a discussion regarding a bond election, which City Manager Vela stated will be performance based and will be triggered by certain milestones. Commissioner Gaul inquired if the project was consistent with the Unified Development Code (UDC) which it was stated that there had been no variance requests and all consistent with the UDC. With no more discussion, the agenda item was closed.

Agenda item A14. Review and consider taking action on or related County suit against Governor Abbott and County Judge Emergency Orders. The Mayor proceeded to read a statement representing her opinion on the freedom of choice for the citizens and merchants of the City of Richmond. *For a complete copy of the statement that was read, please see the attached.* Commissioner BeMent stated he concurred with the statement and that he feels government should not be allowed to dictate what the people do in response to their personal health. City Manager Vela stated the City has received numerous phone calls regarding masks being required at local businesses and City facilities. Commissioner Beard stated the City adopted an ordinance that would link the City to the State. City Attorney Gary Smith stated the order from the County Judge only pertains to County facilities and does not include the courts, schools, or private businesses. The Texas Supreme Court has voided the orders in the counties of Bexar and Dallas. Commissioner Drozd stated he was totally against the orders of the County Judge and did not support the City of Richmond putting similar guidance into effect within the City. City Manager Vela stated there needs to be a communication piece to provide clarification to the citizens and merchants. Mayor Haas reiterated the need for a statement to address freedom and prefers to talk publicly about this issue. Commissioner Gaul stated that the mandates of the County Judge and Governor did not appear to prevent Richmond from continuing to allow individuals and business owners from acting in the manner they felt prudent, so he saw no reason to "take sides" at this point in time. It was stated that guidance would be provided to the City Attorney and staff as to how to move forward. Commissioner BeMent agreed that the City Attorney would provide the details of the Texas Supreme Court opinions at the Regular Commission Meeting. Mayor Haas stated, "she is not afraid to put the statement out there and this was a great discussion".

With no further business to discuss, Mayor Haas declared the meeting adjourned at 10:47 a.m.

APPROVED:

Rebecca K. Haas

Becky K. Haas, Mayor

ATTEST:

Laura Scarlato, City Secretary