



STATE OF TEXAS  
COUNTY OF FORT BEND  
CITY OF RICHMOND

The City Commission for the City of Richmond, Texas met in Regular Scheduled City Commission Workshop on September 18, 2023, at 9:00 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- excused at 10:05 a.m.  
Carl Drozd, Commissioner P3  
Alex BeMent, Commissioner P4-arrived at 9:07 a.m.  
Terri Vela, City Manager  
Howard Christian, Assistant City Manager "ACM"  
Gary Smith, City Attorney  
Lasha Gillespie, City Secretary

- A1.** Call to Order, Quorum Determined and Meeting Declared Open.
- Mayor Haas called the meeting to order at 9:01 am.

*Mayor Haas proceeded to agenda item A6.*

- A6.** Review and discuss 10th Street Project with Fort Bend County.
- A county representative will be present at tonight's meeting to offer an overview of the attached report and provide updates on the status of 10th Street right-of-way acquisitions and discussions regarding an overpass. The conversation revolved around assessing the potential traffic impact and its potential adverse effects on local businesses.
- A7.** Public Hearing to receive comments for or against vacating and abandoning a 35 foot by 210-foot portion of First (Front) Street right of way south of Highway 90A.
- *This item was mistakenly included in the agenda packet.*
- A8.** Update on the city's water needs, both ground and surface water, with a focus on existing customers' security and the capacity to accommodate potential future expansion.
- There were questions and comments regarding the maximum allowable Equivalent Service Connections without affecting surface water requirements and any available information concerning the water table's impact. ACM Christian stated that he will provide a presentation during this evening's meeting addressing these questions and other questions posed by City Commission members.
- A9.** Update on the Del-Webb Reuse Agreement and sidewalk.
- This afternoon, City Attorney Gary Smith will discuss the ongoing correspondence between the Del Webb Attorney and address matters related to the reuse and sidewalk agreement.

Commissioner BeMent noted that it will soon mark a year of dealing with this issue and suggested that it might be time to either reach an agreement or take a more assertive approach. CM Vela explained that the original Del Webb agreement stipulated zero costs for reuse, like the Veranda agreement, and emphasized the need for a discussion on the priority of reuse recipients.

- A10.** Update on railroad blockages and an additional report that includes cameras discussion.
- Police Chief Craig gave an overview and mentioned that there are currently no state laws in Texas addressing railroad blockages. In contrast, 40 other states have enacted laws that set limits on the duration of time railroad crossings can be obstructed, and these states have the authority to issue citations to the companies responsible for such blockages. Further discussion emphasized that documenting these blockages can strengthen the case for an overpass. However, without clear and enforceable criteria, addressing the issue becomes challenging. Further discussion pointed out that having cameras to monitor blockages would require significant manpower to review the footage. It was also pointed out that penalties often manifest through negative public opinion. Nevertheless, such documentation becomes valuable when access to roadways is compromised.

*Mayor Haas proceeded to the Consent agenda.*

**A12. Consent agenda**

Commissioner Beard selected Municipal Court, Public Works, and Code Enforcement for discussion.

- Muni- Public noted that outstanding warrants are reduced.
- Public Works- Concerns regarding Strategic Plan
- Commissioner BeMent selected the Municipal Court for discussion.
- Muni- Questions on when the new Municipal started and did we have a full month of billing from her.

Mayor Haas selected Police, Planning, and Building

- Police- Find out what's going on Rochelle St. according to police beat report and provide an update to the City Commission.
- Planning- Questions on 1500 Jackson and 2216 Thompson. Planning Director Garcia and Economic Director Jones will provide information.
- Building- Both Mayor Haas and Commissioner Beard had comments on some of the information in the monthly report and asked Building Official Fajkus to provide information on the IBC Bank building.

**REGULAR AGENDA**

- A13.** Review and consider taking action on Ordinance No. 2023-23, Adopting Proposed FY 2023-24 Budget for the City of Richmond.
- Commissioner Drozd expressed a tentative willingness to support the 0.65 but raised some remaining concerns. Commissioner Gaul felt that there was room for more aggressiveness in reducing the tax rate but was prepared to support the proposal.

- A14.** Review and consider taking action on Ordinance No. 2023-24, levying a property tax rate for the year 2023.
- Members of the City Commissioner expressed concerns about the language the tax code requires by law in the motion.
- A15.** Review and consider taking action on Ordinance No. 2023-25, ratifying the tax rate reflected in the 2023-24 fiscal year budget.
- No questions
- A16.** Review and consider taking action on Resolution No. 452-2023, interlocal agreement with Texas Department of Transportation for multiple use agreement for the placement of cameras in state right of way.
- Discussion on the systems' functionality, how other municipalities use it, and our specific plans for its use.
- A17.** Review and consider taking action on a Preliminary Plat – Veranda Commercial – 1.300 acres of land – 1 Block – 0 Lots – 1 Reserve. The subject site is a section within Veranda Master Planned Community.
- Discussion on annexation, what businesses will be there and clarification on who the developer is (Johnson Development).
- A18.** Review and Discussion on Sign Regulations within the Unified Development Code.
- Planning Director Garcia informed the City Commission that Richmond is aiming to update sign requirements and regulations as part of the strategic plan. He mentioned that the Planning and Zoning Commission had already discussed the proposed UDC text amendment during their September 5, 2023, meeting.
- A19.** Review and consider taking action on Resolution No. 453-2023, interlocal agreement for improvements to the Traffic Signal Boxes.
- Assistant Public Works Director Jim Whitehead addressed the City Commission, explaining that this is a Text DOT program allowing government entities to decorate traffic control boxes, enhancing the city's aesthetics. The discussion included considerations of durability and exploring themes unique to Richmond.

**C2.** Adjournment.  
Meeting adjourned at 10:37 a.m.

**APPROVED:**



Becky K. Haas, Mayor

**ATTEST:**



Lasha Gillespie, City Secretary