

MINUTES OF COUNCIL MEETING

The City Council of the City of Brazos Country, Austin County, Texas, convened in regular session Thursday, April 21st, 2022, 7:00 PM, at 329 Pecan Grove Rd, Sealy, TX.

1-2. Call to Order - Pledge of Allegiance and Invocation - Mayor Albert Sykes called the meeting to order at 7:01 PM and led us in the Pledge of Allegiance to the United States flag. Mary Lou Craig offered the invocation.

3. Roll Call and Certification of a Quorum Council members present were:

Albert Sykes, Mayor
Bob Ray, Mayor Pro Tem
Sharon Smith, Alderwoman
Neil Howard, Alderman
Richard Cheek, Alderman

Mayor Sykes certified there was a quorum.

Joe McSloy was absent.

Also in attendance were Charles and Sandra Boulet, Dana Winland, Jeff Van Pelt and the City Secretary. Thirty residents observed the meeting via Zoom.

4. Public Comments - Jeff Van Pelt introduced himself and offered an apology to the mayor and council for his comments on social media concerning the internet tower.

5. Old Business

a. Roads - Update; consideration and action as appropriate - Mayor Sykes reported that bids for the road repairs had not yet been acquired. He also advised council that perhaps before the roads are repaired consideration should be given to first repairing the water access across most of the roads needing repair. Sleeves for the new piping were suggested as a way to prevent costly repairs of leaks in the future. No action.

b. Culverts & drainage - Update; consideration and action as appropriate Bob Ray reported that any further work on the culverts was being delayed waiting for Austin county to help with ditch clean-outs.

c. Water department - Update - consideration and action as appropriate - Richard Cheek updated council that aside from the leak at the old tank, the water plant was currently in good working order.

d. Radio tower - update Mayor Sykes summarized for council and public in attendance the investigation and actions taken by council to assist residents of the city who cannot currently get dependable, good quality internet. He reminded everyone of the public council meetings held to hear the proposal from Jon Parrella of Encompass, as well as the public hearing held April 2nd to hear concerns of residents about the tower to be erected at the water plant. He advised council due to the concerns expressed by residents that all internet access investigation and activity be halted. Bob Ray made a motion to halt the contract with Encompass and move on without any city-initiated solution to the internet problem. Motion was seconded by Sharon Smith and it carried.

Mayor Sykes commented on the Petition that was presented to Council at the Special Council Meeting, April 2nd. He addressed each item presented in the Petition:

(1) The residents of Brazos Country are petitioning against the building of the Encompass Tower - Mayor Sykes acknowledged this as a legitimate concern of the residents.

(2) The lack of communication to the residents was unprofessional and unethical. Homeowners in the area should have been made aware of a matter of this magnitude. - Mayor Sykes took great offense to this statement and it was totally untrue.

The residents who volunteer their time to serve as Alderman at Large, City Secretary and Mayor are insulted and hurt to be called "unprofessional and unethical." It was nice to hear residents in Public session offering apologies.

(3) The health risks to our families pose a major concern, as well as causing an eyesore for most of the residents - The radio frequencies that would be produced by the proposed tower are currently being transmitted by the current wifi provider, Zochnet, so that argument is moot. The argument of an eyesore to "most residents" doesn't mathematically compute. But for those homes around the Lake, they would be affected just as they are the residents who can see the City Water Plant.

(4) While we understand the need for improved internet services, the common good of the neighbors should be a priority. - Mayor Sykes agreed that the "Common Good" of our residents is our priority and getting dependable Internet to our City was our goal. Our current services are not dependable and having good internet is essential to everything we do in our daily lives.

6. **New Business**

a. i. Water Department – TCEQ Richard Cheek reported that he and Buckshot Wied had met with the TCEQ inspector, Kathleen Campbell, April 12th and the city received no violations. He described three reports required concerning the water plant and told council of the progress in submitting these reports. Buckshot has been asked to provide documentation of weekly chemical usage (NaOCL) and documentation of monthly flushing. The city has been asked to provide a copy of an up-to-date distribution map. Richard is helping with all three of these.

ii. Meter reading equipment – update – City Secretary Mary Lou Craig reported that the equipment currently being used to read the water meters was outdated and causing multiple problems in the field by the team assigned to read the meters. She noted that phone calls and research is in progress to solve this problem. Richard Cheek made a motion to approve an amount not to exceed \$3,000 to purchase any new hardware and software deemed appropriate. Bob Ray seconded and motion carried.

iii. Contract with Diamond W – consideration and action as appropriate – Council commented that there were several questions about the new contract submitted by Buckshot Wied and those needed clarification before approval. Richard Cheek made a motion to table the contract until next meeting. Sharon Smith seconded and motion carried.

b. Resolution 2022-02 – Authorize GCCC to deny rate increase by CenterPoint Energy – Sharon Smith made a motion to adopt Resolution 2022-02. Bob Ray seconded and motion carried.

7. **Consent Agenda – consideration and action as appropriate** – Neil Howard made a motion that the consent agenda, including March regular meeting, March 25th special meeting and April 2nd public hearing minutes, General Fund and Water Fund financials be approved. Richard Cheek seconded and motion carried.

8. **Comments – Mayor/Council/City Secretary**– Several questions concerning the current construction on I-10 and the progress were raised and some were answered.

9. **Adjourn** – Bob Ray made a motion to adjourn. It was seconded by Richard Cheek. Motion carried and meeting was adjourned at 8:23 pm.

Mary Lou Craig
Mary Lou Craig, City Secretary

5-18-22
Date