

**CITY OF CASTROVILLE CITY COUNCIL
SPECIAL CALLED COUNCIL MEETING
1209 Fiorella
City Council Chambers
February 14, 2023
Tuesday
3:00 P.M.
MINUTES**

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Darrin Schroeder called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m.

II. ROLL CALL

Present:

Mayor Darrin Schroeder

Scott Dixon, City Administrator

Mayor Pro Tem Phil King

Debra Howe, City Secretary

Councilmember Sheena Martinez

Leroy Vidales, Finance Director

Councilmember Paul Carey

John Gomez, Public Works Director

Councilmember Harold Stein

Devin Fredrickson, Parks/Streets Director

Councilmember Herb Dyer

David Kirkpatrick, Airport Manager

III. CITIZEN COMMENTS

The City Council will hear comments from any citizen or visitor. Speakers must address their comments to the presiding officer rather than individual council members or staff; stand at the podium, speak clearly into the microphone, and state your name and residential address before speaking. Speakers will be allowed a maximum of 3 minutes for testimony. Speakers making personal, impertinent, profane, or slanderous remarks will be given one warning before losing the privilege to speak or may be removed from the room. In accordance with the State Open Meetings Act, the City Council is restricted from discussing or taking action on items not listed on the agenda. Action can only be taken at a future meeting.

Helen Delavan, 1105 Lisbon, spoke on behalf of the Friends of Regional Park and the Parks Master Plan with Appendix A. Ms. Delavan said the group had worked hard on providing a plan that was more realistic and flexible. Ms. Delavan said this plan was not perfect but was good and the plan should be useable for at least next seven years. Ms. Delavan thanked Mayor Schroeder, City Administrator Scott Dixon, and Microsoft for the grant they had received to complete the plan. She also thanked the Parks Director Devin Fredrickson and the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board. The City Council received a bound copy of the finished product with the Appendix A.

Brian Gaousis, Manager of Sky Dives, Commercial Hangar #2, spoke to the city council on the need for the fencing project at the airport. Mr. Gaousis said tenants were concerned with the open areas and wildlife issues. Mr. Gaousis said the municipal airport was held in high regards and wanted to let the city council know how appreciative he was of what the council was doing.

Kyle McVay, 307 Madrid, wanted to thank the city council for considering funding for an animal shelter but didn't want the project to be pushed out too far in the list of projects.

IV. Review of proposed FY23-33 CIP Projects

City Administrator Scott Dixon briefed the city council on the adopted CIP Projects. Mr. Dixon provided work sheets on the funded projects and the department heads were in attendance to present and answer any questions. Councilmember Martinez asked if there would be a town hall meeting in May on the projects. Mr. Dixon said he was looking at having one and would get back with them. Mr. Dixon wanted to look at the infrastructure assessments/repairs and to update the report. Councilmember Martinez asked before or after tree trimming was complete. Public Works Director John Gomez said there was more trimming to do and was being paid out of the utility funds. Mr. Dixon said they may look at a bond in the future but they had allotted \$80,000 this year and wanted to go as far as possible with the funds. Ms. Martinez suggested putting a notice to the citizens that they could contract to clear the trees from the lines if they did not want city contractors to trim by electrical standards. Mayor Schroeder thought that was a good suggestion and should look at preparing standards in a tree trimming policy. Mayor Schroeder wanted more information on the scope of work shown for Engineering at a budgeted amount of \$80,000. Mr. Dixon spoke on the Gas System and options for the 60-year-old system. Options staff was looking at doing a capacity analysis and modeling for an estimate of \$310,000. Mr. Dixon said they were working with CPS and looking at CPS managing or someone else, bringing back in-house, or selling. Mr. Dixon said the current maintenance contract with CPS was up in August/September 2023. Mr. Dixon said he was looking at DIMP Program and needing to have steel/PVC pipes removed by 2027. He felt the Railroad Commission would have some funding available. The whole system would have to be upgraded. The TCEQ Ponds Project was still being worked on with TCEQ. Mr. Dixon was talking with TCEQ and Corp of Engineers to work with the city on the ponds. Councilmember Dyer was concerned with the lack of funding and wanted to assign priorities and do those first. Mr. Dixon said staff had been funding projects by priorities – River Bluff electric upgrades, and smart meters were being done. The elevated water tower was not shown funded and the city would be responsible for 40%/60% private. Mr. Gomez said the Bed and Banks permit had been submitted about a year and a half ago and he said the city was tentatively approved with some funds shown in the budget for unforeseen costs. The lift stations would be discussed at the next meeting with RESPEC on costs for pumps and infrastructure, funding approximately \$1,134,285 with a bond and repayment with impact fees. Mr. Gomez said they had added headworks project to the list to clean and learn the process at \$66,000 at the sewer plant. Public Works Superintendent David Kirkpatrick spoke on the needs to upgrade the security system at the sewer plant. Mr. Kirkpatrick said they had made improvements after having theft of fuel several times. The upgraded camera system was approximately \$15,000 shown in 2025. Councilmember Martinez felt this was a necessity now and to move the project up. Also not funded was an Equalization Basin (\$2 million) for the sewer plant. Several projects were touched on – Eastside sewer main, new road at wastewater treatment plant, overhaul old clarifier and replace the old catwalk (\$1.9 million) were projects unfunded. Mr. Dixon said the legacy Scada System was being phased out and the Medina Valley Well had the upgrade and all other wells needed to have the updates. Phase II Water Plan engineering was funded but construction (\$6 million) was not. Mr. Dixon wanted to look at cleaning and identify the issues at the Constantinople crossing at the river. Councilmember Dyer said the water tower on the east side would need to be moved due to zoning restrictions at the airport. Mr. Dixon said RESPEC had three options and would be brought to council at a later date. It was suggested he Creekside Subdivision water issues should be added to the CIP Projects. A place holder was added for the Airport Well and System upgrades. Mr. Dixon said if the city wanted to serve future homes on Cross Hill there would be a need for a booster pump. Mr. Dixon said he would like the city to look at acquiring the vacant lots.

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A place holder for a new Well, replacing Well #1 was in the projects. The River Bluff looping project was unfunded, Medina River utility crossing, and a generator, if the grant was not received was looked at. Mr. Dixon said the water/wastewater master plan RESPEC worked on was complete and he would bring in February or March. Security fencing at the Airport and a future public works building was also discussed. Parks and Recreation/Streets Director Devin Fredrickson briefed the city council on current projects at the parks. Mr. Fredrickson spoke on restroom improvements at Regional Park, playground updates, new parking at approximately \$45,000. At Lion's Park field improvements and an irrigation system. Mayor Schroeder wanted to look at more parking options at Lion's Park.

Mayor Schroeder left the meeting at 4:29 p.m. and Mayor Pro Tem King took over the meeting.

Mr. Fredrickson said Lion's Park was also getting new restrooms, a splash pad with a May opening planned. Mr. Fredrickson said he was looking at grants for lighting and he would be bringing a playground plan at a later date. The playground plan was not funded. Mr. Fredrickson said there were some improvements for September Square including working on the monuments and leveling the pavers. Priscilla Garrett was helping to reach out to the local organizations on the memorials. Councilmember Martinez recommended contacting the American Legion. Mayor Pro Tem King asked about the cleaning of the monuments. Mr. King said they were discussed a few years back and cleaning was to have been completed. Mr. Fredrickson said that needed to be done. Councilmember Martinez suggested contract Tondre Funeral Home as they had a crew that dealt with marble. Mr. Fredrickson said the community center process had been started with the USDA Grant. Mr. Dixon said the city needed to do an Environmental Study as part of the grant because the current one was not adequate. Included in the presentation were a list of streets for repair. They were making sure those identified did not need water or sewer line repairs. They were planning on two projects being completed this budget year. Also included in the projects discussed was televising more lines this year. Ms. Martinez asked about the materials shown for the street projects being chip seal. Mr. Fredrickson said it would be overlay with reworked base. Ms. Martinez asked about the drainage issues on Geneva and was it in the budget for improvement. This was not a funded item. Mr. Dixon said with the recent updates on the drainage plan the city did not have the funds to do the improvements. Mr. Dixon said there was 3.2 million in General Fund in 2022-2023 and 2.7 in 2024 for partial funding with earmarked funds for roads. The city council had discussed adding drainage improvements to the scope of work when bidding out road repairs. Mr. Dixon said he would look at the most cost-effective options for the city. Councilmember Dyer asked about Athens Street drainage issues saying with any amount of rain the homes would flood again. He asked as a less costly fix could two 20-inch pipes be ran under the street to move the water to the river. Mayor Pro Tem King said it worked well 50 years previously with the bar ditches in play. Downtown Planning was shown, the UDO update at \$225,000 and a request from Councilmember Martinez to make a placeholder for a new Library structure to accommodate the new growth.

Mayor Schroeder returned to the meeting at 4:59 p.m.

Councilmember Martinez suggested speaking to new developers on a possible new Library when they came into the city. Councilmember Dyer wanted to include his suggestion of placing two subterranean crosswalks

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under Hwy 90 in the future CIP projects. Mr. Dixon said they would talk to TxDOT and look at submitting for a planning grant then funding in 2026-2028. Mayor Schroeder asked approximately how many projects were listed. Mr. Dixon said around 100. Mayor Schroeder asked for more details on the projects when discussed. Mr. Dixon said the funded/unfunded projects were separated. He had calculated cash on hand in the General Fund at \$5 million and Utility Fund almost the same. Mr. Dixon said he was recommending a 120-day reserve as discussed. Mr. Dixon said after factoring in street maintenance taken from reserves the city council would have about \$2 million to spend on projects. Mr. Dixon said they could use on Lion's Park for upgrades. Mr. Dixon also discussed repairs to city hall and options prepared including utilizing the upstairs. He showed rough draft of remodeling first and second floor. Councilmember Dyer wanted to preserve the city hall and utilize the space. Also shown in the projects was an Animal Shelter at \$400,000.

XXI. ADJOURN

Mayor Schroeder adjourned the meeting at 5:24 p.m.

Darrin Schroeder
Mayor

ATTEST:

Debra Howe
City Secretary

*Signatures on file