

LOUIS RIGBY
Mayor
JOHN ZEMANEK
Councilmember At Large A
STEVE GILLETT
Councilmember At Large B
DANNY EARP
Councilmember District 1
CHUCK ENGELKEN
Councilmember District 2



BILL BENTLEY
Councilmember District 3
KRISTIN MARTIN
Councilmember District 4
JAY MARTIN
Councilmember District 5
NANCY OJEDA
Councilmember District 6
Mayor Pro-Tem

MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF LA PORTE MARCH 23, 2019

The City Council of the City of La Porte met in a special meeting on Saturday, March 23, 2019, at the City Hall Council Chambers, 604 West Fairmont Parkway, La Porte, Texas, at 8:00 a.m., with the following in attendance:

Councilmembers present: Louis Rigby, John Zemanek, Steve Gillett, Danny Earp, Chuck Engelken, Bill Bentley, Kristin Martin, Jay Martin, Nancy Ojeda

Councilmembers absent: None

Council-appointed officers present: Corby Alexander, City Manager; Lee Woodward, City Secretary

CALL TO ORDER – Mayor Rigby called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m.

2. **PRESENTATION, DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION** The purpose of this meeting is to discuss and formulate City Council and staff plans, operations, policies, and/or future projects, including the following:

- (a) **Financial Overview. [Michael Dolby, Finance Director]**
- (b) **Medical & Health Insurance Update. [Matt Hartleib, Human Resources Manager]**
- (c) **City Facility Maintenance Program (Councilmember Engelken) [Roz Epting, Parks and Recreation Director]**

Councilmember Engelken asked that Parks bring back a plan to address concerns while keeping budgetary constraints in mind. Councilmember Gillett suggested looking at creating a Building Maintenance Division, as an internal service fund similar to Motor Pool.

- (d) **Library Flooring & Repainting. [Roz Epting, Parks and Recreation Director]**

Mayor Rigby confirmed there was no Council objection to adding the \$120,000 request as presented to the budget process.

- (e) **Fitness Center (Councilmembers J. Martin and Zemanek) [Corby Alexander, City Manager and Roz Epting, Parks and Recreation Director]**

Director Epting noted the final estimate of \$14,871,262.75 (not including land acquisition) had only arrived yesterday from PGAL Architects, but City Manager Alexander cautioned that these were estimates only, that the Council would decide an all-in number and value-engineer back to possible improvements. Councilmember Gillett expressed concerns on the architectural and flow layout and advocated for professional design review. Councilmember Earp moved retaining a consultant to entertain cost analysis options for up to four options for a facility (on another location, using additional EDC funding for a fitness center on the bay, remodeling of the SPORT/Senior facilities). The motion was adopted, 8-1, Councilmember Gillett voting against. (Councilmember Bentley stepped away from the meeting from 10:13-10:18. The Council took a brief recess from 10:20-10:36 a.m. Councilmember Ojeda returned at 10:37 a.m.)

- (f) **7th Street Widening-Concrete Paving & Sidewalks (Councilmember K. Martin) [Don Pennell, Public Works Director]**

Mayor Rigby confirmed there was no Council objection to adding the project request as presented to the budget process.

- (g) **EMS Headquarter Expansion. [Ray Nolen, EMS Chief]**

(Councilmember Engelken stepped away from the meeting from 10:52-10:59 a.m.) Mayor Rigby confirmed there was no Council objection to moving forward with the item as presented for the budget.

- (h) **Additional EMS Captain. [Ray Nolen, EMS Chief]**

Mayor Rigby confirmed there was no Council objection to moving forward with the item as presented.

- (i) **Fire Field Propane Project. [Donald Ladd, Assistant Fire Chief]**

Mayor Rigby confirmed there was no Council objection to moving forward with the item as presented.

- (j) **Bay Forest Golf Course Capital Improvement Projects. [Alex Osmond, Golf Course Manager]**

Mayor Rigby confirmed there was no Council objection to moving forward with the item as presented but with an eye to accomplishing all over three years with an annual review. (The Council recessed for lunch from 11:56 a.m.-12:37 p.m. Councilmember Kristin Martin returned at 12:38 p.m.)

- (k) **IT Private Fiber Network. [Grady Park, IT Manager]**

Mayor Rigby confirmed there was no objection to consultation with LP ISD to discuss their plans for fiber installation as long as looking into other vendor contract options, especially if a multi-year process was considered.

- (l) **Convert Northwest Park & Little Cedar Bayou Park Lights. [Roz Epting, Parks and Recreation Director]**

Mayor Rigby confirmed there was no Council objection to moving forward with the item as presented.

- (m) **Klein Retreat Park Options (Councilmember Earp) [Roz Epting, Parks and Recreation Director]**

Councilmember Earp noted he had brought this forward for the agenda when he thought the rec center would not be placed here, but acknowledged it would now be included in review for item e above. He said he would like this, as one of the few last waterfront properties open to all the residents, not to be sold for another purpose. The City Manager confirmed it had never been designated as parkland. Councilmember Jay Martin asked for consideration of using the seven acres as a park, even if it were not officially labelled as such. Mayor Rigby confirmed there was no Council objection to waiting to see the options for the fitness center with the item as presented. Director Epting noted it would be included in the survey for the Parks Master Plan.

- (n) **Outdoor Fitness Equipment at Fairmont Park (Councilmember Ojeda) [Roz Epting, Parks and Recreation Director]**

Councilmember Ojeda recommended Option #2 for 5-6 separate pieces located for a total of \$50,000. Mayor Rigby asked Director Epting to bring costs for the asphalt millings over limestone for upgrading other parks, as she had suggested, for a future budget year. Councilmember Gillett suggested including this in the Parks Master Plan survey. Mayor Rigby confirmed there was no Council objection to moving forward with the item as proposed by Councilmember Ojeda.

- (o) **Paved Parking Lot at Recycling Center (Councilmember Ojeda) [Don Pennell, Public Works Director]**

Mayor Rigby confirmed there was no Council objection to waiting approximately ninety days for the preliminary report before deciding on the item.

- (p) **Continuation of Sidewalk on Farrington to Fairmont Park entrance (Councilmember Ojeda). [Don Pennell, Public Works Director]**

Councilmember Ojeda suggested the entire item as presented move forward in the interest of safety. Councilmember Gillett asked that an inventory be taken to program other such issues. Asst. City Manager Jason Weeks noted staff had reviewed this item with LP ISD but would need to do so again for any additional items, as school bus service can potentially be cut if there is a continuous sidewalk radius around the school. Mayor Rigby confirmed there was no Council objection to moving forward with the item as presented and asking staff to review other areas in the city with similar issues and reporting back.

- (q) **Funds for Artist Grants to be used for Outdoor Public Art Installations (Councilmember Ojeda). [Ryan Cramer, Economic Development Coordinator]**

Mayor Rigby confirmed there was no Council objection to starting the program with additional information from staff on how it will be managed, funding, and allocated, to report back to Council, for \$25,000, as presented by Councilmember Ojeda.

- (r) **Uniform Plants & Planters along Main Street (Councilmember Ojeda). [Ryan Cramer, Economic Development Coordinator]**

Councilmembers Ojeda and Kristin Martin expressed concerns about downtown beautification. Councilmember Earp reminded the Council that business owners may not be in support and reminded all there are additional commercial areas. Councilmember Gillett said that he believes parking, alleys, and sidewalk repair are needed and that any reluctance comes from concern over increased regulation. Councilmember Earp suggested the Planning and Zoning Commission review the prior report. Councilmember Jay Martin suggested funding to replant and respace the current planters. Councilmember Ojeda asked that Parks be tasked with maintaining the planters. Mayor Rigby requested the businesses located near the planters currently be consulted, acknowledging the planters belong to the City. Mayor Rigby confirmed there was no Council objection to maintaining the current thirteen at this time.

- (s) **\$5,000 for Startup (Seed Money) of Youth Advisory Council through TML (Councilmember Ojeda). [Jason Weeks, Assistant City Manager and Roz Epting, Parks and Recreation Director]**

(Councilmember Zemanek stepped away from the meeting from 2:15-2:17 p.m.) Councilmember Ojeda suggested each member of Council make an appointment and offered to assist. Mayor Rigby confirmed there was no Council objection to moving forward with the item as presented. *(The Council recessed from 2:25-2:41 p.m.)*

- (t) **Shelter in Place Procedures. (Councilmember Engelken) [Kristin Gauthier, Emergency Management Coordinator]**

- (u) **City Safety Record, Policies, & Procedures (Councilmember Engelken). [Matt Hartleib, Human Resources Manager and Matt Daeumer, Assistant Police Chief]**

(Councilmember Kristin Martin left the meeting at 3:28 p.m.)

- (v) **Employee Evaluation and Merit Pay Increase Procedures (Councilmember Engelken). [Matt Hartleib, Human Resources Manager, and Michael Dolby, Finance Director]**

Councilmember Gillett moved to continue with the current process of evaluating employees. The motion failed, 4-4, Councilmembers Zemanek, Bentley, Engelken, and Earp voting against.

(w) Presentation and discussion of meeting procedural items with the City Secretary's Office. [Lee Woodward, City Secretary]

City Secretary Woodward discussed several topics, with the Council in agreement as to:

- Leaving an item on Council Committee agendas to set the date for the next meeting;
- Allowing staff presentation and Council debate prior to a motion being made for an item;
- Posting candidate packets on the City's elections page; not finding it necessary to notify the Council when a physical packet is picked up at the City Secretary's office; not posting completed filings or campaign finance reports on the City website (they are available via Public Information Requests);
- Testing a brief version of noting the topics on which public commenters mention;
- Bringing a proposal for the budget for transparent dais desk insets to provide monitor viewing below as well as being able to use more of the desktop area.

3. COUNCIL COMMENTS regarding matters appearing on the agenda; recognition of community members, city employees, and upcoming events; inquiry of staff regarding specific factual information or existing policies.

Councilmembers thanked the Council and staff for their work today.

4. ADJOURNMENT – Without objection, Mayor Rigby adjourned the meeting at 4:39 p.m.

Lee Woodward, City Secretary