

**MERCEDES CITY COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
FEBRUARY 18, 2025 – 6:30 PM
MERCEDES CITY HALL – COMMISSION CHAMBERS**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Mayor Oscar Montoya
Commissioner Jacob Howell
Commissioner Armando Garcia
Mayor Pro-Tem Ruben Saldana

MEMBERS ABSENT: Commissioner Joe Martinez

STAFF PRESENT: Alberto Perez, City Manager
Joselynn Castillo, City Secretary
Martie Garcia Vela, City Attorney (Virtual)
Kristine Longoria, Human Resources
Javier Campos, Fire Chief/EMC
Michael Rocha, I.T Specialist
Tom Villagomez, Public Works Director
Marisol Vidales, Library Director

OTHERS PRESENT: Juan Vasquez

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Mayor Montoya welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

2. ESTABLISH QUORUM

Four members of the Commission were present which constitutes a quorum. Commissioner Martinez was absent.

3. INVOCATION

Mayor Pro-Tem Saldana said the invocation.

4. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Commissioner Howell led in the pledge of allegiance.

5. OPEN FORUM

There were no residents signed up for open forum.

6. PRESENTATION

There were no presentations at this time.

7. CONSENT AGENDA

a. Approval of Minutes for Meeting(s) held January 30, 2025 and February 4, 2025

b. Approval of Budget Amendment No. 202425-520-512

Commissioner Garcia motioned to approve. Mayor Pro-Tem Saldana seconded. Upon a called vote, the motion passed unanimously.

8. MANAGEMENT ITEMS: Present, discuss, consider and possibly take action regarding:

a. Approval of Request by the Hidalgo County Elections Department for the use of a Polling Location during Early Voting and Election Day for the 2025 May Election

Ms. Castillo addressed the Commission about the request from the Election Department. She stated they are requesting the use of the Mercedes HEB Park for elections being held in May

and in November. Commissioner Howell motioned to approve. Mayor Pro-Tem Saldana seconded the motion. Upon a called vote, the motion passed unanimously.

b. Presentation of previously approved Section 125 Cafeteria Plan Health and Wellness Program

Mayor Pro-Tem Saldana motioned to reject the previously approved Section 125 Cafeteria Plan. Commissioner Garcia seconded. Upon a called vote, the motion passed unanimously. Mr. Perez stated the item was an addition to the current city health plan which is not necessary. The City is still providing their current services through blue cross blue shield.

c. Approval of appointment of Members to the Keep Mercedes Beautiful Committee

Commissioner Garcia motioned to approve the 5 applications to the board. Mayor Pro-Tem Saldana seconded. Upon a called vote, the motion passed unanimously.

ADDENDUM: Item 8D: Approval to begin the planning of the formation of the Parks and Recreation Board.

The Commission discussed re-establishing a Parks and Recreation Board. Commissioner Howell supported moving forward, and Mayor Pro-Tem Saldana agreed that the timing was right. Mayor Montoya emphasized the need to involve representatives from all sports organizations, including baseball, football, and soccer, with recommendations coming from the Parks Director.

Legal will review the bylaws before bringing the matter back for formal consideration. Mayor Montoya also suggested adding a fundraising component. Mayor Pro-Tem Saldana noted that board recruitment would be necessary. No action was taken at this time.

9. ORDINANCES/RESOLUTIONS:

a. Approval of First Reading of Ordinance 2025-06 amending the zoning code to R-1 Single Family Residential District

Commissioner Howell motioned to have a joint approval of item 9A and 9B and forego the reading. Commissioner Garcia seconded. Upon a called vote, the motion passed unanimously.

b. Approval of First Reading of Ordinance 2025-07 amending the zoning code to R-2 Duplex-Fourplex Residential District

This ordinance was passed in the same motion as Item A.

10. BIDS/CONTRACTS

a. Approval of the Facility usage agreement for Collier Park Baseball Fields

The Commission reviewed proposed changes to the facility usage agreement for Collier Park, as recommended by Parks Director Villela. Key changes included requiring organizations to have 501(c)(3) status, prohibiting sub-leasing, mandating field cleanup, and setting a schedule for field lights. Mr. Villela clarified that leagues would manage the fields during the season, but usage would be limited to games, not practices. He also provided a breakdown of repair costs for the park. Mayor Pro-Tem Saldana motioned to approve the agreement pending legal review, seconded by Commissioner Garcia. Saldana emphasized the need for revenue to support park maintenance, while Commissioner Howell suggested sponsorship opportunities. The motion passed unanimously.

ADDENDUM: 10B: Approval to select and contract a Pony Organization for 2025 Spring Baseball Season.

The Commission discussed two Pony League organizations interested in using the city fields. Mr. Villela requested they select one, but the organizations brought the matter to the Commission. Representatives Ms. Nora Martinez and Mr. Rene Guajardo addressed the Commission, with Mr.

Guajardo emphasizing that his league meets national standards. Ms. Martinez expressed willingness to merge with Mr. Guajardo's league.

Mayor Montoya encouraged collaboration and adherence to bylaws through an election process. Mayor Pro-Tem Saldana motioned to select Mr. Guajardo while ensuring cooperation, which Commissioner Garcia seconded. The motion passed unanimously. The Commission emphasized following regulations, and Mr. Guajardo expressed appreciation and commitment to compliance.

11. MONTHLY DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS

Monthly Reports are included for the Commission to review. No action required.

a. Planning Monthly Report

b. IT Department Monthly Report

c. City Secretary/HR Monthly Report

d. Recreation Center Monthly Report

e. Library Monthly Report

f. Fire Department Monthly Report

12. EXECUTIVE SESSION: *Chapter 551, Texas Government Code, Section 551.071 (Consultation with Attorney), Section 551.072 (Deliberation regarding Real Property), Section 551.074 (Personnel Matters) and Section 551.087 (Economic Development)*

Commissioner Garcia motioned to go into executive session at 7:50 p.m. Commissioner Howell seconded. Upon a called vote, the motion passed unanimously.

a. Discussion with City Manager regarding personnel matters - Section 551.074

b. Consultation with Attorney regarding update on litigation - Section 551.071

c. Discussion regarding Project BCIE - Section 551.087

d. Consultation with Attorney regarding contract negotiations - Section 551.071

13. OPEN SESSION

Mayor Montoya called the meeting back to order at 8:40 p.m.

a. Possible Action pertaining to executive session item A

No action.

b. Possible Action pertaining to executive session item B

No action.

c. Possible Action pertaining to executive session item C

No action.

d. Possible Action pertaining to executive session item D

No action.

14. ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Garcia motioned to adjourn. Mayor Pro-Tem Saldana seconded. Upon a called vote, the motion passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 8:40 p.m.