

**MERCEDES CITY COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
APRIL 1, 2025 – 6:30 PM
MERCEDES CITY HALL – COMMISSION CHAMBERS
400 S. OHIO AVE., MERCEDES, TX 78570**

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

MEMBERS ABSENT:

STAFF PRESENT: Alberto Perez, City Manager
Joselynn Castillo, City Secretary
Martie Garcia Vela, City Attorney
Patricio Avila, Assistant City Manager
Meredith Hernandez, Interim Finance Director
Francisco Sanchez, Police Chief
Michael Rocha, I.T Director
Tom Villagomez, Public Works Director
Kristine Longoria, Human Resources
Javier Campos, Fire Chief/EMC
Richard Morin, Recreation Director
Armando Villela, Parks 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

All members of the Commission were present, which constitutes a full quorum.

3. Invocation by Commissioner Howell

4. Pledge of Allegiance by Commissioner Garcia

At this time, Commissioner Howell motioned to move to item 6 for the proclamation. Commissioner Garcia seconded. Upon a called vote, the motion passed unanimously. After this item, they would move back to item 5, Open forum.

5. Open Forum

Ms. Yolanda Molina addressed the commission about concerns with the city. Ms. Molina informed the commission about her history as a leader and representing the people. She stated she applied to run for commission and was told she couldn't. Ms. Pena played a recording of a conversation with Mr. Andre Montgomery from TML. She expressed her

disappointment with city professionals.

Ms. Jessica Zuniga addressed the Commission regarding speeding concerns on Mile 2 W. Ms. Zuniga stated their signatures were considered after the permanent residents that live there requested the speed bumps. She added that the cause of the road damages are due to the semi trailers driving. Ms. Zuniga also expressed her gratitude for the Mayor, Commission and the Police Department for taking her calls.

Mr. Luis Saldana addressed the Commission regarding the recent rain event on March 27, 2025. He stated they have 52 acres of their property submersed with water at the Rio Grande Valley Livestock Show. He stated that Texas Ave. and Vermont Ave. were clear of water the next day. He appreciated all the phone calls answered. It cost them \$3,000 per day. Mr. Saldana thanked the City for what they are doing.

6. Presentation

a. Proclamation for Mercedes ISD Powerlifters

Mayor Montoya said a few words and read the proclamation. No action required. Coach Brigido Gonzalez thanked the community, staff and commission for the recognition. At this time, they moved to open forum.

7. Consent Agenda

a. Approval of Minutes for Meeting(s) held March 18, 2025

b. Approval of Interlocal Cooperation Agreement between the County of Hidalgo, Texas and the City of Mercedes, Texas on behalf of Dr. Hector P. Garcia Memorial Library
Commissioner Martinez motioned to approve items A and B. Commissioner Garcia seconded. Upon a called vote, the motion passed unanimously.

8. City Manager Comments

a. Assessment of the rain event on March 27, 2025

Fire Chief/EMC Campos informed the Commission about the rain event that occurred on March 27, 2025. He played some videos of Capisallo Terrace and Valle De Palmas which were severely impacted. The NWS stated it would be 2 to 4 inches of rain. They received alerts at 3:00 p.m. that a large storm cell was headed to the Mercedes area. EOC was established and activated by 3:30 p.m. They worked closely with the school district to keep the children safe from the storm. They had 4 pumps that were pre-deployed to the storm and had a pump in the staging area. At around 5:00 p.m. they began receiving water rescue calls. At this time, they activated the shelter operations. They utilize star request to request the proper equipment for the city. The city received 13 inches of rain from 3:00 p.m. to 11:00 p.m. on March 27, 2025. He added that they rescued 188 people. That night they sheltered over 200 residents. The county CSA department also assisted in placing some families in hotels. From 3:00 p.m. to 6:00 a.m. the city received between 18 and 21 inches of rain, which equates to a year's rainfall for the city. The water plant was fully operational and did not shut down. On March 28, 2025, the Mayor signed the disaster declaration. Staff were deployed to do damage assessments. He stated he would be meeting with FEMA tomorrow morning and would continue to meet with first responders regarding the

assessments. Chief Campos added that 10 inches of rain is expected over the weekend and will continue to operate. He stated that in 2018 the city received about 18 inches of rain and took about two weeks to drain and this year the city received 18 to 21 inches of rain and the city drained in 3 days. Mr. Perez stated there is a lot of improvement and will continue to look at further improvements to the areas that are still being flooded. Commissioner Howell stated that the flooding could have lasted between 30 to 50 percent longer without the detention ponds. The Commission thanked the first responders. Mr. Perez stated that USW played a key role and thanked them for working through the storm to keep the water and sewer plant operational. Mayor Montoya thanked the cities and counties that assisted Mercedes during the storm. Mayor Montoya stated it's imperative that the community report their damages on the ISTAT system.

b. Commending the Fire/EMS Department for their service to a resident in need
Mr. Perez read a letter received by a resident recognizing staff at the fire department due to their assistance. Paramedic Sean Casarez is the paramedic that assisted this elderly resident. He stated he has been a paramedic for 11 years and has only worked with Mercedes for 7 months and this is the first time he being recognized.

9. Management Items: Present, discuss, consider and possibly take action regarding:

a. Approval to Extend the Declaration of Local State of Disaster

On March 28, 2025 the Mayor signed a declaration and by law the Commission need to extend it if needed. Mayor Pro-Tem Saldana motioned to approve extending the declaration. Commissioner Martinez seconded. Upon a called vote, the motion passed unanimously.

b. Approval to select a bidder for the Mile 2 E Sanitary Sewer Expansion Project

Mr. Avila stated the City went out for bids for sewer extension for a subdivision that self annexed on Mile 2 E. City Engineer Ivan Garcia recommended Valley Urban Works. Mayor Pro-Tem Saldana motioned to approve the recommendation of Valley Urban Works. Commissioner Garcia seconded. Upon a called vote, the motion passed unanimously.

c. Approval of appointment(s) to the Building & Standards Commission

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

10. 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 Howell motioned to go into executive session. Mayor Pro-Tem Saldana seconded. Upon a called vote, the motion passed unanimously. The meeting went into executive session at 7:26 p.m.

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

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

c. Consultation with Attorney regarding Project Updates and Project M30 - Section

551.087

11. Open Session

- a. Possible Action pertaining to executive session item A
Mayor Montoya called the meeting back to order. No action.
- b. Possible Action pertaining to executive session item B
- c. Possible Action pertaining to executive session item C

12. Adjournment

Commissioner Martinez motioned to adjourn. Commissioner Garcia seconded. Upon a called vote, the motion passed unanimously.

[MIN_SIGNATURES]