

**MERCEDES CITY COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
APRIL 7, 2026 – 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 (virtual)
Jonas Gonzalez, Asst. City Manager
Meredith Hernandez, Finance Director
Francisco Sanchez, Police Chief
Michael Rocha, I.T Director
Denisse Hernandez, Planning Director
Marisol Vidales, Library Director
Richard Morin, Recreation Director
Armando Villela, Parks Director
Tomas Villagomez, Public Works Director

OTHERS PRESENT: Juan Vasquez, Kayla Solis, Leroy Hernandez, Jesus Rodriguez

1. Call Meeting to Order

Mayor Pro-Tem Saldana welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order at 6:34 P.M.

2. Establish Quorum

Four members of the Commission were present, constituting a quorum. Mayor Montoya arrived during the Proclamation for Gilberto Perez.

3. Invocation

Commissioner Howell led the invocation.

4. Pledge of Allegiance

Commissioner Garcia led in the Pledge of Allegiance.

5. Open Forum

There were no residents signed up to speak during the Open Forum.

6. Presentation

a. Proclamation Honoring the Musical Legacy of Gilberto Perez

Mayor Pro-Tem Saldana spoke and read the proclamation honoring the musical legacy of Gilberto Perez. The family of Gilberto Perez expressed their gratitude to the City for the proclamation. Ms. Imelda Perez, wife of Mr. Gilberto Perez, stated that his last wish was to be recognized by his hometown of Mercedes. His children shared that he was very proud to be from Mercedes. Commissioner Martinez commented on how special Mercedes is and the talent it produces. Mayor Montoya shared a personal childhood memory. Commissioner Howell expressed pride in the Perez family and noted that students are now playing conjunto music in schools. Chief Sanchez mentioned that last year the inaugural BBQ Cookoff was held and announced that this year it will be in partnership with the Gilberto Perez Foundation.

b. Presentation on Celebration honoring our Nation's 250th Year

Parks Director Armando Villela announced plans to commemorate the nation's 250th year. Joey Del Toro and Joel Davila presented a proposal to host a July 4, 2026, event at HEB Park, which would include production and advertising, with a portion of the proceeds returned to the City. Mayor Montoya recommended that they meet with the City Manager to submit the item for consideration at the next meeting.

7. Consent Agenda

a. Approval of Minutes for Meeting(s) held March 4, 2026, March 17, 2026, March 18, 2026 and March 26, 2026

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

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

a. Consideration and possible action for approval of changes to the Mercedes Library Policy adopting new meeting room procedures and fees

Ms. Marisol Vidales informed the Commission that the current rental policy was in place but proposed lowering the rental fee from \$30 to \$20, and reducing the Program Room fee to \$20 for general use and \$10 for non-profit organizations. She also noted that reservations would be by the hour and the reservation period would be extended due to the implementation of the new Civic Rec program, which allows the public to rent the Texas Room, Program Room, and Study Pods online. Mayor Pro-Tem Saldana motioned to approve the proposed changes. Commissioner Saldana seconded the motion. Upon a called vote, the motion passed unanimously.

b. Consideration and Action to appoint/reappoint members to the Library Board.

Ms. Vidales informed the Commission that Ms. Diane Roman-Goldsberry resigned from the library board and recommended appointing Ms. Imelda Alamia to fill the vacancy. Commissioner Martinez motioned to approve the staff recommendation. Commissioner Garcia seconded the motion. Upon a called vote, the motion passed unanimously.

c. Consideration and Action to approve the request from the Housing Authority for the PILOT Program

Commissioner Martinez motioned to approve the item. Commissioner Garcia seconded the motion. At a question, Mayor Montoya stated that this item was previously approved and will continue to be approved but now for a three-year period. Upon a called vote, the motion passed unanimously.

- d. Discussion and Action regarding the Sponsorship request from MISD for the Superintendent Scholarship

Commissioner Howell motioned to move into Executive Session.

Following the Executive Session, the City Attorney reported that, after a legal review, there was an issue linking the item to public funds and recommended not approving items D, E, and F. Mayor Pro-Tem Saldana motioned to deny the sponsorship requests. Commissioner Garcia seconded the motion. Upon a called vote, the motion passed 4 to 1, with Commissioner Howell voting against. Commissioner Howell recommended that Mr. Izaguirre consult with the City Attorney regarding the matter.

- e. Consideration and Action regarding the sponsorship request by the Mercedes ISD for the Scoreboard Upgrade

This item was denied with the motion stated on Item 8D.

- f. Consideration and Action regarding the sponsorship request from America's Future Workforce Foundation

Commissioner Martinez motioned to move into executive session. Commissioner Garcia seconded. Upon a called vote, the motion passed unanimously.

Following the executive session, this item was denied with the motion stated on Item 8D.

- g. Consideration and Action on Request to change 5th Street name to Dr. Hector P. Garcia Street from Ohio Ave. to Illinois Ave.

Commissioner Martinez recommended going from Texas Ave. to Illinois Ave. Mr. Skyler Howell stated that the location was selected due to the library being there and he added that the family also agreed on the section being renamed. Mayor Pro-Tem Saldana recommended bringing a team together to possibly select a different and longer street. Mayor Pro-Tem Saldana motioned to approve the request of renaming a street and put a team together to bring back some options of other streets that will do right by Dr. Garcia and have a committee of 5 members to include Skyler Howell, Mayor Pro-Tem Saldana, Marisol Vidales, and two other members. Commissioner Martinez seconded. Upon a called vote, the motion passed unanimously.

9. Ordinances/Resolutions

- a. Consideration and Action on Resolution 2026-18 authorizing changes to key executive signatories on account held with Wells Fargo Bank

Ms. Meredith Hernandez addressed the Commission regarding changing the signatories for the Wells Fargo bank account. Commissioner Martinez motioned to approve the request. Commissioner Saldana seconded the motion. Upon a called vote, the motion passed unanimously.

b. Consideration and Action on First Reading of Ordinance 2026-08 to Rezone Lot 7 Block 66 Capiasallo District

Ms. Denisse Hernandez explained that apartments were previously built on the property without rezoning, resulting in a stop-work order. The City has been working with the property owner to bring the property into compliance. Mr. DeLeon is requesting to rezone the property to allow apartments so he can continue the process. While there are outstanding issues with setbacks and building compliance, these are being addressed. Additionally, one of the buildings encroaching into the setbacks and right-of-way will need to be moved. Mayor Pro-Tem Saldana motioned to approve the rezoning request. Commissioner Howell seconded the motion. Upon a called vote, the motion passed unanimously.

c. Consideration and Action on First Reading of Ordinance 2026-09 to Rezone Lot 4 Block 64 Capiasallo District

Ms. Denisse Hernandez explained that this is a new subdivision located on Highway 49 near Mile 8, next to Los Prados. The developer is proposing 210 single-family lots on 40 acres and is requesting to rezone the property for single-family use as part of the development process. Mayor Pro-Tem Saldana motioned to approve the item. Commissioner Martinez seconded the motion. Upon a called vote, the motion passed unanimously.

d. Consideration and Action on First Reading of Ordinance 2026-11 to amend Article 13 "Utilities"

Commissioner Martinez motioned to approve the item and forego the reading. Commissioner Garcia seconded the motion. Upon a called vote, the motion passed unanimously.

e. Consideration and Action on First Reading of Ordinance 2026-12 to amend Article A8.000 "Utility Rates and Charges"

Commissioner Howell motioned to move this item to Executive Session. Commissioner Martinez seconded the motion. Upon a called vote, the motion passed unanimously.

Following the Executive Session, Commissioner Howell motioned to approve item 9E. Commissioner Garcia seconded the motion. Upon a called vote, the motion passed unanimously. The approval stipulates that there will be no increase to any existing rates for the City or Indian Hills and that only impact fees will apply to future development.

10. Bids/Contracts

a. Consideration and Action to Renew the Agreement between the City of Mercedes and Waste Connections for Solid Waste Disposal

Commissioner Howell motioned to extend the contract for 90 days and to solicit bids. Commissioner Martinez seconded the motion. Upon a called vote, the motion passed unanimously.

- b. Consideration and Action to Ratify the Interlocal Cooperation Agreement between the County of Hidalgo, Texas and the City of Mercedes, Texas regarding MVCPA Task Force

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

- c. Consideration and Action on Interlocal agreement between Hidalgo County and the City of Mercedes regarding the Hidalgo County Library System.

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

- d. Consideration and Action on Agreement between the County of Hidalgo Elections Department and the City of Mercedes regarding the 2026 May Election for Mayor, Commissioner Place 1 and Commissioner Place 3

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

11. City Manager Update

- a. Update regarding closing on Neuhaus Property 25 Acres

Mr. Perez stated that the Neuhaus Property, consisting of 26 acres near Public Works, could potentially be used in the future to build a new water well and water plant.

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)

Mayor Pro-Tem Saldana moved to go into executive session. Commissioner Garcia seconded the motion. Upon a call for the vote, the motion passed unanimously. The meeting entered executive session at 7:32 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 - Section 551.087
- d. Discussion regarding Project Updates by DCM 3.04, 10.00, LGC 501 and 504 - Section 551.087

13. Open Session

Mayor Montoya called the meeting back to order at 9:06 P.M.

- a. Possible Action pertaining to executive session item A
No action on item A.
- b. Possible Action pertaining to executive session item B
No action on item B.
- c. Possible Action pertaining to executive session item C

No action on item C.

d. Possible Action pertaining to executive session item D

No action on item D.

14. Adjournment

Commissioner Saldana motioned to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Garcia seconded the motion. The meeting adjourned at 9:12 P.M.