

**MERCEDES CITY COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
AUGUST 4, 2026 – 6:30 PM
MERCEDES CITY HALL – COMMISSION CHAMBERS
400 S. OHIO AVE., MERCEDES, TX 78570**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Mayor Pro-Tem Ruben Saldana
Commissioner Joe Martinez
Commissioner Armando Garcia
Commissioner Rolando Garcia

MEMBERS ABSENT: Mayor Oscar Montoya

STAFF PRESENT: Alberto Perez, City Manager
Jonas Gonzalez, Assistant City Manager
Ruth Castaneda, Clerk II
Martie Garcia Vela, City Attorney
Meredith Hernandez, Finance Director
Francisco Sanchez, Police Chief
Michael Rocha, I.T. Director
Juan Vasquez, I.T Specialist
Tom Villagomez, Public Works Director
Marisol Vidales, Library Director
Denisse Hernandez, Planning Director
Armando Villela, Park Director

OTHERS PRESENT: Kayla Solis

1. Call Meeting to Order

Mayor Montoya called the meeting to order at 6:32 p.m.

2. Establish Quorum

All four Commissioners were present, constituting a quorum. Mayor Montoya was absent. The City Attorney participated in the meeting via Zoom.

3. Invocation

Commissioner Armando Garcia led the Invocation.

4. Pledge of Allegiance

Commissioner Martinez led the Pledge of Allegiance.

5. Open Forum

There were no individuals signed up to speak during Open Forum.

6. Presentations

- a. Presentation by Living Stone Church & Christian Academy regarding Grant Proposal

Cara Jacques and Bertha McBride, representing Mercedes Christian Church, also known as Living Stone Church, and Living Stone Christian Academy, presented information regarding the organization's history and ongoing service to the Mercedes community. The presenters stated that the church has served the Mercedes community for approximately 106 years and has provided assistance during emergencies and community needs, including flood response, food distribution, home restoration, and disaster relief. They highlighted partnerships with various organizations and noted that the church has provided meals, emergency assistance, clothing, food pantry services, and free counseling to individuals and families in need. The presenters discussed current and future initiatives, including the renovation of a Grace Home to serve as a short-term shelter for women and families experiencing emergencies, as well as plans for a multifunctional facility that could include a gymnasium, cafeteria, showers, classrooms, and additional space for crisis response and community services. They also discussed Living Stone Christian Academy, a private school established to provide additional educational opportunities for local families. The presenters stated that the school is working toward accreditation and offers scholarship assistance to families in need. They requested \$20,000 in financial assistance from the City to support special education and specialized learning, nutrition programs, campus and safety improvements, and educational scholarships. The presenters emphasized their desire to establish a stronger partnership with the City of Mercedes and continue providing services to residents without charging for food, counseling, clothing, and other assistance. They also described their involvement in international missions and community programs, including food pantry services and disaster relief efforts.

7. Consent Agenda

- a. Approval of Minutes for Meeting(s) held July 21, 2026
- b. Second and Final Reading of Ordinance 2026-17, amending Chapter 3 "Building Regulations", to add Section 3.12 "Residential Backup Power Systems"
- c. Second and Final Reading of Ordinance 2026-18 abandoning and releasing a five-foot portion of a Public Utility Easement within the Summer Breeze Subdivision
- d. Second and Final Reading of Ordinance 2026-19 amending Chapter 13, Article 9, Section 14, "Sludge transporters," to update regulations and penalties

Commissioner Martinez made a motion to approve Items A, B, C, and D and forgo the reading. Commissioner Armando Garcia seconded the motion. Upon a called vote, the motion carried.

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

- a. Consideration and Action to appoint members to the Capital Improvements Advisory Committee

Commissioner Martinez made a motion to approve. Commissioner Armando Garcia seconded the motion. Upon a called vote, the motion carried.

The Commission discussed the qualifications and selection process for appointments to the Impact Fee Advisory Committee. Planning Director Denisse Hernandez confirmed that the four applicants in the packet met the requirements, with three having contractor experience and one being a realtor. Two applicants reside within the City limits and two within the ETJ. Ms. Hernandez explained that applicants were identified through previous Planning

and Zoning Board applications and outreach to local contractors, realtors, and developers. A fifth application had been received but was not included in the agenda packet, so the Commission agreed to take action on the four current applicants and consider the fifth at a later time.

The applicants were Ruben Sosa Jr., Johnny Gonzalez Jr., Laura Diaz, and Edwin Espinoza.

b. Consideration and Possible Action on Interlocal Agreement between the City of Mercedes and the County of Hidalgo for OSSF

Commissioner Martinez made a motion to approve. Commissioner Armando Garcia seconded the motion. Upon a called vote, the motion passed.

The City Manager, Alberto Perez, discussed the annual agreement with the County regarding septic systems. It was explained that the agreement allows the County to continue inspecting septic systems within the City. The City collects the applicable fees and remits them to the County in accordance with the established fee schedule.

c. Discussion and Possible Action on the request to host Siggno Fest at the Dome Park

The Parks Director Armando Villela presented a proposal to host the first annual Siggno Fest at the Dome in Mercedes. The City would provide public safety and event resources, including EMS, Police, Fire, and fencing, while the event organizers would be responsible for entertainment and production. The City would not provide upfront funding and may receive a portion of ticket sales, parking fees, and sponsorship proceeds to help offset costs. The event is intended to become an annual standalone event.

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

9. Bids/Contracts

a. Discussion and Possible Action on list of Contracts to renew or to solicit bids:

1) Border Affairs, LLC (Grant Writing Services)

2) Perdue, Brandon, Fielder, Collins & Mott, LLP (Dlqt. Tax Attorney/Court Fines & Collection)

3) Langley & Banack (Post ETJ, Annex & DeAnnex Attorneys)

The Commission discussed Item 9A regarding the renewal of professional services contracts and rates. Commissioner Martinez made a motion to approve the renewals listed under Items 9A2 and 9A3 and to direct the City Manager to negotiate a more favorable rate for Item 9A1. Commissioner Rolando Garcia seconded the motion.

Following discussion, the motion was approved by a vote of 3-1, with Mayor Pro-Tem Saldana voting against.

At this time, Commissioner Martinez made a motion to convene into Executive Session for Items 9B, 9C, and 9D. Commissioner Armando Garcia seconded the motion. Upon a called vote, the motion passed unanimously. The Commission convened into Executive Session at 7:03 p.m.

b. Consideration and Possible Action on contract with Galindo Auctions for

Auctioneering Services

Commissioner Martinez made a motion to approve. Commissioner Armando Garcia seconded the motion. Upon a called vote, the motion passed.

Mayor Pro-Tem Saldana asked whether a buyer's fee would be assessed, noting that the contract had the fee left blank and that the agreement provided for a 15% fee or \$4,000, whichever is higher. The City Manager, Alberto Perez, clarified that the City has not previously assessed a buyer's fee. Mayor Pro-Tem Saldana acknowledged the clarification and stated that he had no further questions.

- c. Consideration and Possible Action on First Amendment to Memorandum of Understanding between the City of Mercedes, Hidalgo County Drainage District No. 1, and Hidalgo County Urban County Program regarding Coordination for the 2018 CDBG-DR Infrastructure Competition

Commissioner Martinez made a motion to approve. Commissioner Rolando Garcia seconded the motion. Upon a called vote, the motion passed.

Mayor Pro-Tem Saldana asked whether the contract was for the South Lateral project and whether it replaced the bids rejected at the previous meeting. City Manager Alberto Perez confirmed that it was and explained that several standard components had been modified, with no significant changes or unusual provisions. Mayor Pro-Tem Saldana noted that the contract would allow the project to move forward and confirmed that the groundbreaking was scheduled for August 13 at 10:00 a.m.

- d. Consideration and Possible Action on agreement between the City of Mercedes and CB3 for Non-Hazardous Liquid Sludge Disposal

Commissioner Martinez made a motion to seek additional information and legal review on the item prior to taking further action. It was clarified for the record that taking no action would allow the matter to be brought back for future consideration. The motion died due to the lack of a second.

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)

Mayor Pro-Tem Saldana called the meeting into Executive Session at 7:03 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

11. Open Session

Mayor Pro-Tem Saldana called the meeting back to order at 7:56 p.m. and began with items 9B, 9C and 9D.

- a. Possible Action pertaining to executive session item A
No action was taken on item A.

b. Possible Action pertaining to executive session item B
No action was taken on item B.

c. Possible Action pertaining to executive session item C
No action was taken on item C.

12. Adjournment

Commissioner Martinez made a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Rolando Garcia seconded the motion. Upon a called vote, the motion passed. Mayor Pro-Tem Saldana adjourned the meeting at 8:01 p.m.

[MIN_SIGNATURES]