MERCEDES CITY COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
MARCH 18, 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, Asst. City Manager Meredith Hernandez, Interim Finance Director Francisco Sanchez, Police Chief Javier Campos, Fire Chief/EMC Kristine Longoria, Human Resources Michael Rocha, I.T Director Tom Villagomez, Public Works Director Armando Villela, Parks Director Adrian Perez, Planning Director Marisol Vidales, Library Director Richard Morin, Recreation Director

OTHERS PRESENT: Juan Vasquez

1. **Call Meeting to Order**
   Mayor Montoya welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order at 6:36 p.m.

2. **Establish Quorum**
   All members of the Commission were present, which constitutes a full quorum.

3. **Invocation by Commissioner Martinez**
4. **Pledge of Allegiance by Commissioner Howell**
5. **Open Forum**
   There were no residents signed up for open forum.

6. **Consent Agenda**
   a. Approval of Minutes for Meeting(s) held March 4, 2025

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

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

a. Approval of appointment(s) to the Planning & Zoning Commission

Member George Salinas submitted his resignation from the Planning and Zoning Board. Mr. Michael Rivera has submitted his application. Mayor Pro-Tem Saldana motioned to appoint Mr. Michael Rivera. Commissioner Garcia seconded. Upon a called vote, the motion passed unanimously.

b. Approval to accept the Certificate of Unopposed Candidates for the May 2025 Election

City Secretary Castillo informed the commission that the candidates were unopposed. The next step is to certify that the election is unopposed. Commissioner Martinez motioned to accept the Certificate of Unopposed Candidates for the May 2025 election. Commissioner Howell seconded. Upon a called vote, the motion passed unanimously.

c. Approval to cancel the May 2025 Election for Commissioners Place 2 and Place 4

Commissioner Howell motioned to accept the candidate and approve canceling the election. Commissioner Garcia seconded. Upon a called vote, the motion passed unanimously. At a question, Ms. Castillo stated the City would avoid spending $45,000 that was budgeted for the election.

8. **Bids/Contracts**

a. Approval of E-Rate Category 2 bids for Library

Ms. Vidales inforemd the commission that this is federal funding to purchase new network equipment with a 15 percent match for funds from next fiscal year. Mayor Pro-Tem Saldana motioned to approve. Commissioner Garcia seconded. Upon a called vote, the motion passed unanimously.

b. Agreement for Specialized Professional Ambulance Billing Services.

Fire Chief Campos stated the current billing contract with S&V Billing ends May 31, 2025. Chief Campos stated that partnering with Emergicon will significantly increase revenues and improve billing services. Mr. Brent Irving from Emergicon was present virtually. He provided a brief history of the company and stated they would handle all aspects of the EMS account management, including coding, billing and payment posting. With Emergicon's expertise and technology-driven approach, it could result in a potential increase in overall billing revenue from $399,562.08 to a projected $825,000.00. Emergicon will go live on May 1, 2025. At a question, Chief Campos stated their monthly report would provide stats. It's a one-year contract and will automatically renew unless the city opts out. Commissioner Howell motioned to approve. Mayor Pro-Tem Saldana seconded. Upon a called vote, the motion passed unanimously.

9. **Monthly Departmental Reports**

a. Planning Monthly Report

Mr. Adrian Perez stated projects are going as planned. They are currently working on updating that all businesses get their business license. Mayor Pro-Tem Saldana stated he has received compliments about good customer service from the planning department. No action required

b. Library Monthly Report

Mayor Pro-Tem Saldana commended the library for receiving the Library of Excellence Award. No action required.

c. Finance Monthly Reports

Ms. Hernandez stated they are at 80 % complete on the audit. Ms. Hernandez stated she updated her monthly report and started a new format. No action required.

d. IT Monthly Report

Mr. Rocha informed about the light pole needed to install the camera behind the fire department. He stated we have moved forward with the Agenda software and provided chromebooks for the commission meetings. He added the website update is almost complete. No action required.

e. Fire Department Monthly Report

Chief Campos informed about the progress on the brush truck and ambulance chassis. There was discussion about CodeRed. No action required.

f. City Sec/HR Monthly Report

Ms. Castillo informed about the numbers for the numbers on her report. Ms. Longoria added the HR related information such as vacancies, resignations, retirements and new hires. No action required.

g. Parks Monthly Report and Project Status Spreadsheet

Mr. Villela informed the commission about the parks and stated he could provide commission on the revenues collected for the rental of the fields. They will be updating the play structure at HEB park and adding mulch for the swing sets.

Mr. Morin from the Rec/Dome Center spoke about their programs, sports for adults and children's leagues and lifeguard hiring.

Chief Sanchez from PD spoke about training, Stock show traffic plan and autism awareness.

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 Martinez motioned to go into executive session. Commissioner Garcia seconded. Upon a called vote, the motion passed unanimously. The meeting went into executive session at 7:54 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 Montoya called the meeting back to order at 8:17 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.

12. Adjournment

Commissioner Martinez motioned to adjourn. Mayor Pro-Tem Saldana seconded. Upon a called vote, the motion passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 8:17 p.m.