

**MINUTES FOR THE REGULAR
MAY 7, 2024
CITY COUNCIL MEETING**

1. Call to Order and Recording of Quorum

The meeting was called to order at 4:00pm and a quorum was established.

Council Members Present

Mayor John Low
Emmy Ballantyne
Bill Mitchell
Peter Mako
Kate Lanfear

City Staff Present

City Manager William Foley
Asst. City Manager Michelle Pack
Asst. Fire Chief Justin Seibert
Police Chief Gail Baham
Asst. Police Chief Gabriel Ortiz
Director Rick Baldarrama
Attorney Frank Garza

Others Present

Reed Williams
Bob Newman
Tori Marks
Frank Burney
Greg Sethness
Ty Goletz
Phil Vaughan
Unknown male
Dede Summerville

2. Review/Action of minutes from:

a. April 9th Regular Meeting

The minutes were reviewed, Ballantyne motioned to approve, Mako seconded, all voted in favor and the April 9, 2024 meeting minutes were approved as submitted.

3. Comments by Citizens

Reed Williams began by thanking the council and staff for being fiscally responsible and for providing such great services to citizens. He said their efforts made it the “easiest political argument I’ve ever had to make”. He closed by congratulating the council. Bob Newman spoke next and thanked the council and staff for providing the necessary information to make it easy for Reed to make the argument. He closed by saying the numbers and figures made it easy to see what the issues were. Frank Burney was the last to speak and began by thanking Reed, the council and the mayor for getting the information out. He ended by saying the city should continue to highlight the services that are offered so that citizens can continue to have an appreciation. Low closed the citizen comments section by thanking both sides of the proposition. He continued by

saying how much he appreciated everyone's involvement, the large turnout of voters and that an informed citizenry is the easiest to govern.

4. **Administration of the Oath of Office for Mayor, Council Place One and Council Place Two.**

Mitchell administered the Oath of Office for Low. Low administered the Oaths of Office for both Mitchell and Lanfear.

5. **Election: Of Mayor Pro-Tempore to serve a term effective from May 8, 2024 to May 12, 2025.**

Low asked for a motion, Mitchell motioned for Mako to serve as Mayor Pro-Tempore, Ballantyne seconded, and all voted in favor. Mako will serve as the Mayor Pro-Tempore until May 12, 2025.

6. **Presentation/Acceptance of: Annual Financial Report as presented by Phil Vaughan.**

Vaughan began by saying that he and his associates serve as independent observers to provide a clean opinion to the council and the citizens of Terrell Hills. He said that they did not find anything of concern to address. He noted that spending was up due to the 5% COLA raise. He also stated that the original budget was planned to take \$550,000 from the fund balance but the city ended up being able to add \$293,000 to the fund. He closed by saying the city has roughly 6-7 months of operating cushion and that they recommend changing how vacation time is recorded in the financial statements. Mitchell asked if the remaining ARPA funds would expire. Vaughan said the funds must be obligated by the end of 2024. He further explained that the funds must be liquidated by 2026 or they must be given back. Foley commented that roughly \$321,000 is going to CRI for the generator and that the remaining money will be used. Low thanked Vaughan for the positive working relationship.

7. **Discussion/Provide Staff Direction: Guidance on FY 2024 Budget Calendar**

No changes were made, and the council advised staff to send out the calendar as proposed.

8. **Discussion/action on police department using license plate readers.**

Low introduced the discussion by reminding the council that Baham had already provided them with a detailed presentation on the license plate readers and that the burglaries this month were a reason to get the readers. Summerville, a representative from Motorola Solutions, gave a presentation on the quick deploy and vigilant system. During the presentation Ballantyne asked how long the battery life lasted and if police would receive a low battery notification. Summerville said that the battery life is good for approximately 7,000 scans and a low battery notification would be sent out in the app. Mitchell asked if the readers would capture people's faces. Summerville said "no" and that the readers only capture alpha and numeric images into the system. Mako asked if rain would affect the capturing of the plates. Summerville responded by saying that weather should not affect it as they have tested their product in both Alaska and Africa with no issues. Mako also asked if other municipalities in our area have used their

product. Summerville said she will provide the council with a reference list. Low asked about theft and Summerville said the warranty will fully cover any cameras that are stolen or damaged with no questions asked. Several council members spoke about possible public concern of “big brother” and open record requests. It was confirmed that the information is not subject to PIA requests as it is for law enforcement use only, similar to TLETS. Summerville also said there is an aggressive auditing system within their company to make sure the data and information is strictly accessible to law enforcement. Lanfear asked about the readers placement and how many the city was getting. Baham said that they are requesting six portable readers to go on poles and then have the five vehicle dashcams upgraded to read license plates. Foley commented on how the readers are being funded by asset forfeitures. Low asked what the initial cost of the reader is and Baham told him \$41,000. The council advised staff to proceed with getting the readers and Mako ended the conversation by telling Baham that if they want more readers to simply ask.

9. **An Ordinance Canvassing the vote from the Special Election regarding the senior tax freeze held on May 4th, 2024.**

Garza provided the council with the official Bexar County results, Ballantyne motioned to approve, Mako seconded, all voted in favor and the ordinance was passed.

10. **An Ordinance repealing the application of the exemption from local sales and use taxes on receipts from the sale of telecommunication services within the City of Terrell Hills.**

Garza introduced this item and item 11 by stating that most cities have already repealed the exemptions. He said that the city and VIA will be able to collect the sales tax from telecommunication companies if they eliminate the exemption. It was confirmed that residents would not see an increase in taxes as they are already paying the tax, the difference is that the city and VIA would receive a portion of what they are already paying. Foley mentioned that a VIA representative was present if anyone would like to ask him questions. Mitchell motioned to approve, Lanfear seconded, all voted in favor and the motion carried.

11. **An Ordinance repealing the application of the exemption from local sales and use taxes on receipts from the sale of telecommunication services within VIA Metropolitan Transit Authority’s Entity Area of Telecommunications Services and approves Via’s intent to impose such a tax on telecommunication services.**

Mitchell motioned to approve, Mako seconded, all voted in favor and the ordinance passed.

12. **Discussion from monthly reports as submitted in the council packets.**

There was no discussion.

13. **Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 4:55pm.

MAYOR

ATTEST:

SECRETARY-MANAGER