

**MINUTES FOR THE
DECEMBER 09, 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.

City Council Members Present

Mayor John Low

Emmy Ballantyne

Bill Mitchell

Peter Mako

City Staff Present

City Manager William Foley

Executive Secretary Kristyn Schones

Fire Chief William Knupp

Asst. Fire Chief Justin Seibert

Police Chief Gail Baham

Asst. Police Chief Gabriel Ortiz

Director Rick Baldarrama

Attorney Richard Lindner

Others Present

Allison Hayne

Suzzie Thomas

Michael Knott

Collier Bashara

Buddy Rosene

Kay Rosene

Allison Levine

Stephen Lucke

Joel Marcos Rua

2. Review/Action of minutes from: November 12, 2024, City Council meeting.

The minutes were reviewed, Mayor Low called for a motion to approve the minutes, Mako motioned, Ballantyne seconded, all voted in favor, and the motion passed.

3. Comments by Citizens.

Mayor Low asked if there were any comments, Kay Rosene wanted to thank the city for having a fine Fire Department and EMS, advised she had never had a need for one till about a month ago, Mayor Low thanked Ms. Rosene, and agreed with her, thanking the Fire Chief, Bill Knupp and the Police Chief, Gail Baham. Mayor Low asked if there were any other comments by citizens, hearing none, Mayor Low closed comments by citizens.

4. Presentation on a Community Garden.

Mayor Low asked Allison Hayne if she would like to make a presentation, Allison Hayne said she had a guest and introduced Stephen Lucke with Gardopia Gardens, Allison said he and she and a few other people had been working together and came up with the idea. Allison said that Stephen would be presenting the idea. Foley advised that the presentation that was provided earlier for last month's meeting had changed and that he was given a link of the presentation by Allison right before the meeting. Foley said he had emailed their iPad and advised the council where they could find the link. Stephen Lucke introduced himself and said he runs a non-profit that teaches people how to grow food to be healthy and sustainable and stated we know we have a public health crisis and a climate crisis. Stephen advised the solution is to teach the youth group, K-12. Stephen advised he is a professor at Trinity as well as a leader of adult education and that their curriculum focuses mainly on stem. He also said his background was in biochemistry and nutrition, and that's how this came about learning about the obesity epidemic. Stephen added that they work at over 11 school districts, so they work with about 4,000 youths on a monthly basis. Stephen advised they work in other communities as well and said told council where they wanted to put the garden was a strip of land by the playground where there is a drainage canal area and access to water. Stephen said ideally what they have created are some raised garden beds, composting, small picket fence, visitors seating, educational signage for trees an arbor entrance and a pocket pollinator prairie. Stephen directs council to slide 3, the layout for the garden, and advised it's a rectangle with garden beds on the perimeter, seating, composting along the fence line, the main entrance walk into with a bulletin board so that you that you would have a QR code and information about how to get involved with the garden as well as some fruit trees, the next slide regarding the pocket prairie and asked Allison if she would like to explain that. Allison advised, yes. Allison said she is the one who manages the purple Marteen houses over by St. David's and by the playground and she also has 3 in Alamo Heights. Allison said she is purposing that the area by St. David's that is unirrigated be turned into a little pocket prairie. Allison advised she is working on getting 5 pounds of wildflower seed, Allison advised they just want to lay the seeds, and this would require zero maintenance and would just be a small pocket prairie that would not need be mowed, maybe some general maintenance like edging. Allison said they are just trying to teach the importance of native plants and the effect on our pollinators. Stephen stated that they have put together a timeline and he advised they are looking at about a year to do planning with the community, and if approved the next step would be to have a community interest meeting to see who wants to be a part. Of the process, if there is a feasibility to help sustain it would people be interested in adopting plots. Stephen advised you can adopt plots for \$25.00 to a \$100.00 per season and that helps in keeping the garden going after the initial investments. Stephen said they could work on a design just so they are all on the same page of exactly what this garden is going to look like and then they could begin the process of construction. Stephen said that they then would hold monthly education opportunities and quarterly harvest events. Stephen said the idea is to have a committee of about 5 people who would help sustain the gardens from year to year. Stephen announced his budget he put together looks to be about \$40,000.00 dollars. Stephen states it does not all have to be built at once, and it could be built in phases as we see buy ins. He further said there could be opportunities with private and public support, where the city could support some of it and then the committee could be tasked with fundraising for another portion of it. Stephen said that the more prominent components he highlighted came out to \$16-\$17,000.00. Stephen asked for any questions, Mayor Low thanked Stephen for the presentation and questioned the exact location, Allison said it is North side of Seford. Mayor Low asked about the fencing size, Allison confirmed location on iPad with council. Mayor Low asked if they would be creating 501c3, Stephen said they are a 501c3 and they could be an umbrella for the community garden club. Mayor Low asked if the budget that created of \$40,000.00 came from grants and private funding and opportunities for sponsorship that were mentioned or is there a request to the city for some part of that money. Allison said there would be a request for support from the city for the garden, possibly water, and that they would like the city to show support, start with raised beds and add to the budget. Mayor Low said our budget for next year is being set today. Mayor Low asked about other community interests. Allison said she cannot imagine the community not wanting it. Mako asked Allison how she intends to get the word out. Allison said that she would get someone to fund a flyer or get on the Terrell Hills app and put signs out. Mitchell asked how does the produce work, and who is in charge. Allison said if beds are rented, those would be active and its ok that people take food and if there is an abundance, then maybe

they would reach out to some local churches, food bank. Stephen said the goal is to make food free and available. Ballantyne asked if they wanted to remove the tree that appeared in their presentation, Stephen advised, no, the plan is to plant in between. Mayor Low asked Frank if there were any insurance concerns and Frank advised, no, not at all but there might be a release form or waiver. Mayor Low asked Gail if there would be parking issues, Baham said she could think of none. Mayor Low asked Stephen what is the withdrawal plan when the novelty wears off, is this something we are left to do. Stephen stated that when we start gardens, we do not want to see them fail so he thinks once past the initial startup costs in to the more sustainability costs, and then give a leadership/committee to run it. Mayor Low asked what their annual budget looked like; Stephen advised \$5-\$10,000.00 annually to maintain. Mayor Low said he would like to see community interest; more feedback and said it is important to get education to youth on pollinators and healthy ground food. Mitchell asked if the pocket prairie is separate, Allison answered yes. Mitchell asked what was needed besides seed. Allison said it requires no maintenance, only seed, maybe a sign. Stephen said compost and an aerator. Mayor Low asked Frank if there was any reason why they couldn't give permission to the pocket prairie part and allow them to plant wildflower seeds. Frank said, no not at all, and he believed that the city manager has the authority to do so. Mayor Low said he was going to ask for a motion for Foley to enter discussions with Allison about developing a pocket prairie on Crestwood. Mitchell motioned, Ballantyne, seconded, all voted in favor and the motion approved. Allison Levine introduced herself, and said she lives on Wiltshire and she started a community garden in Terrell Heights. Mitchell asked how funded, Allison Levine said she used greenspace grant and donations. Suzzie Thomas and Michael Knotts showed support and that they like community involvement, they had one in the old city they lived in. Mayor Low thanked all for coming.

5. Public Hearing: On the Fiscal Year 2025 Operating Budget

Mayor Low opened at 4:35 p.m. and asked if anyone was there to speak. There were no speakers. Mayor Low closed the public hearing at 4:35 p.m.

6. Discussion/Action: Adoption of Ordinance No. 1544 AN ORDINANCE ADOPTING THE BUDGET FOR THE CITY OF TERRELL HILLS, TEXAS FOR THE FISCAL YEAR BEGINNING JANUARY 1, 2025, AND ENDING DECEMBER 31, 2025; AND PROVIDING FOR THE INTRA AND INTER-DEPARTMENTAL AND FUND TRANSFERS; AND DECLARING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

Mayor Low asked if there were any questions on the ordinance of the budget, there were none. Mayor Low called for a motion to approve, Ballantyne made a motion, Mitchell seconded, all voted in favor and the motion passed.

7. Public Hearing: To change the City Code of Ordinances to update permit time periods.

Mayor Low called the public hearing to order and opened at 4:37 p.m., he asked if anyone was there to speak on the ordinance updating our permit time periods. There were no speakers. Mayor Low closed the public hearing at 4:37 p.m.

8. Discussion/Action: Adoption of Ordinance No. 1545 Updating Permit time period.

Foley introduced, explained how codification wiped out our previous 2019 time period. Foley explained this ordinance goes back to what we had and adds a 6-month time limit on demolition permits. Mayor Low asked if there were questions for Foley on the ordinance and timeline. Garza advised if they do not carry-out the demolition in 6 months, they come for an extension, and this allows a 30-day extension at the cost of the original demolition permit. Garza added this entices them to get it done in those first six months. Mayor called for a motion to adopt ordinance No. 1545, Mako made the motion, Mitchell seconded, all voted in favor and the motion passed.

9. Discussion/Action: Adoption of Ordinance No. 1546 AN ORDINANCE DESIGNATING THE SAN ANTONIO EXPRESS-NEWS AS THE OFFICIAL NEWSPAPER OF THE CITY OF TERRELL HILLS FOR THE PUBLICATION OF OFFICIAL NOTICES

Garza discussed state law requirements on this ordinance. Mayor Low called for a motion to approve ordinance No. 1546, Ballantyne motioned, Mako seconded, all voted in favor and the motion passed.

10. Discussion/Action: Adoption of Ordinance No. 1547 AN ORDINANCE REGARDING PERSONNEL CHANGES IN THE CITY OF TERRELL HILLS SINCE JUNE 2024

Mayor Low called for a motion to approve ordinance No. 1547, Mitchell motioned to approve, Ballantyne seconded, all voted in favor and the motion passed.

11. Discussion about monthly reports as submitted in the council packets.

Mayor Low advised all received in their packets. Mayor Low asked Rick for an update on the Solis properties, Rick said he had spoken with Mr. Solis and Mr. Solis wanted clarification on what he needed to do. Rick advised Mr. Solis what needed done and said 253 Seford and 813 Terrell were to be cleaned out starting tomorrow, Rick advised Mr. Solis applied for a demolition permit for the Tuttle address. Rick also said he spoke with the contractor that is doing the demo, the demo is starting tomorrow, Rick advised council that he was advised that all will be updated and cleaned by 12/12/2024. Mayor Low asked if invoices had been sent for all our expenses, Rick said yes, but they were not paid. Mayor Low asked Garza if we needed to send invoices formally, Garza said the attorneys have emailed them letting them know that the city will issue those liens and abatements if they do not meet the deadline. Mayor Low asked if the council could add the attorney fees to what was owed for having to process the claims and having notified their lender. Mayor Low asked that Garza keep them in the loop. Mayor Low asked if there were any questions or comments. Mitchell asked Baham about personnel status in the police department. Baham said they are down 3 and have 5 applicants. Mitchell confirmed the city is covered and safe, Baham said yes and that they were making it work. Mayor Low said the Christmas party was a success and recognized Kristyn on how hard she worked and advised the party was such a wonderful way to start off the Christmas season. Foley gave an update on the road project and said the SAWS issue was put to bed, and advised hopefully, in January the city will be advertising. Foley also mentioned that he has confirmation that the garbage trucks have been built and are on their journey from Mexico to here. Mayor Low said the last couple of years the council did not meet in January due to having been cancelled and wanted to know if there would be a meeting in January. Foley advised it was too early to tell but it looks good to cancel, and he will email if needed. Mayor Low asked Kristyn how the open enrollment was going, Kristyn said it is going well. Kristyn said we have thirty-five who have signed up and fourteen to go, so she was confident all will meet the deadline. Mayor Low asked if there was any other business to come before this meeting and there were none.

12. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 4:50 p.m.

ATTEST:

MAYOR

SECRETARY-MANAGER