

**Village of Salado
Salado Municipal Building
301 North Stagecoach Road
Salado, Texas
Minutes of Regular Meeting of Board of Aldermen
October 7, 2021 at 6:30 p.m.**

The Board of Aldermen meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m. by Mayor Michael Coggin. *The meeting was conducted in person and using videoconferencing. Public participation was also available via videoconference.*

Mayor Coggin gave the Invocation and the Board of Aldermen led the Pledge of Allegiance to the United States and Texas flags.

Board Members Present: Mayor Michael Coggin, Mayor Pro-tem Rodney Bell, Aldermen John Cole, Paul Cox, and Jason Howard attended in person. Alderman D. Jasen Graham was absent.

Staff Present: Village Administrator Don Ferguson, City Secretary Cara McPartland, Police Chief Patrick Boone, and Tourism Director Andrea Howard.

Presentations

Presentation of letters of appreciation to Larry Nathanson, Troy Kelley, Kim Bird, and Judge Cliff Coleman.

Mayor Coggin spoke highly of the volunteer work for the First Responders memorial and Mayor Pro-tem Bell presented the letters of appreciation in recognition of all recipients, with Larry Nathanson, Troy Kelley, and Judge Coleman present to accept.

1. Citizens Communications

Adam Dietlein of 1017 Salado Oaks Drive spoke of concerns with dust, dirt, and noise generated from development occurring behind his neighborhood. Village Administrator Ferguson advised Mr. Dietlein that he will address residents' concerns with the developer.

2. Consent Agenda

Approval of minutes of the Regular Board of Aldermen meeting of September 16, 2021.

Alderman Cole moved to approve the Consent Agenda, as presented. Alderman Howard seconded. Motion carried on a vote of 4-0.

3. Discuss and Consider Possible Action Regarding Any Item Removed from the Consent Agenda

No items were heard.

4. Status Reports

A. Village Administrator's Report

- Salado Plaza Drive Reconstruction Project

Village Administrator Ferguson reported the project will be finishing on time, with final concrete pour, clean-up, striping, and signage to be completed late next week.

- All-abilities Playground Project Update

Village Administrator Ferguson reported on a kick-off meeting held with Texas Parks & Wildlife; upcoming Parks Advisory Board discussion of creating a design task force; public participation in the design process; issuance of a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) to secure a professional design/build firm; grant match requirement; Special Revenue Fund established for project revenues/expenditures; fundraising and creation of a maintenance endowment fund; and projected completion date in summer of 2022.

- Recreational Vehicle Ordinance Update

Village Administrator Ferguson reported on discussions with Aldermen Cole and Howard to define issues proposed to be regulated; legal counsel research on the Village's regulatory authority relating to recreational vehicles; and anticipated draft ordinance to be presented for Board workshop discussion on October 21, 2021.

- Habitat Conservation Plan Update

Village Administrator Ferguson reported on recent identification of Bell County as a "County of Interest" by U.S. Fish & Wildlife and associated regulatory issues; a Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) to address federal regulations; grant funds available to help with cost of developing a HCP to manage growth and resources; issuance of an Request for Qualifications (RFQ) by Bell County as the lead agency in the coalition; drafting of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to define stakeholder responsibilities and funding opportunities; and ongoing management costs of a HCP as a living document.

In addition, Village Administrator Ferguson said that 48 flag poles/flags have been installed, with tie-down work planned. He spoke of interest in installation of flag poles at the Main Street/Salado Plaza Drive landscape island and gathering public input on flag/flagpole project(s) and associated costs. There was brief discussion of Pace Park design/improvements and historical significance of existing playground materials, positive comments to Mayor Coggin on the new Main Street flags, legal review of proposed draft of RV regulations, creek clean-out timeframe, concerns related to the Habitat Conservation Plan, and Village of Salado website redesign.

B. Salado Police Chief Status Report

- Calls for Service Report

The following statistics were presented for September: a decrease in calls for service; 17 offense/incident reports; 9 supplemental reports; 1 crash reports; 3 warrants obtained; 69 citations issued; 215 warnings issued; Priority 1-4 response times; and 240 house watches/security checks.

- Citizens on Patrol Program Update

Chief Boone reported that six businesses were found unsecured and owners were contacted.

- National Night Out Report

Chief Boone reported thanked everyone who helped with a well-attended, successful National Night Out event.

- License Plate Reader Program Update

Chief Boone presented September statistics on number of license plate images captured; deleted license plates; license plate images (3) retained for investigative purposes; 5 system alerts; average system notification time for alert (4-6 seconds); system used for suspicious vehicle ID (2); system used for criminal investigative purposes (5); system accessed by SPD/SPD administrative use.

In addition, brief discussion addressed Halloween events and related safety issues. Mayor Coggin complimented Chief Boone and the Salado Police Department for a successful National Night Out.

C. Salado Fire Chief Status Report

- Calls for Service

No report was heard, as Fire Chief Shane Berrier was unable to attend tonight's meeting.

D. Tourism Director's Report

- Salado Marketing Activities

Tourism Director Andrea Howard reported on the following September marketing statistics: 22% increase in number of website/app users, including percentage of new/returning visitors; increased total sessions and total pageviews; status of website update; and State Fair of Texas participation for promotion of Salado tourism.

- Visitors Center

Tourism Director Howard reported 432 visitors stopped in the Visitors Center in September. She noted increased weekend hours on Saturdays from 9:00 a.m.- 4:00 p.m. and Sundays from 10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. She reported on the Texas Model T party that brought in visitors on October 1st and said event organizers are looking to bring more events to Salado in 2022 or 2023.

- Upcoming Events

Tourism Director Howard reported on dates for upcoming events through December, including: Christmas in October, Octoberfest at Barrow's, Volkside, Salado Chamber Golf Tournament, Fright Trail at Tablerock, Pioneer Hickory Golf Tournament, PALs Brunch with the Art Bunch, Scottish Festival, and Salado Stroll.

In addition, there was brief discussion of HOT fund grant distributions for specific events and confirmed that the date/time for the Christmas Parade will be December 2, 2021 at 6:00 p.m.

5. Discussion and Possible Action

- A. Discuss and consider possible action regarding a proposal to acquire and install two (2) flag poles and flags in the landscape island located at the intersection of Salado Plaza Drive, North Main Street, and IH-35 Access Road and to amend the FY 2022 Operating Budget to reflect the expenditure. (*Mayor Michael Coggin*)

Mayor Coggin spoke on the proposal to install two large flag poles in the large landscape island at Salado Plaza Drive and N. Main Street and cost estimates. Village Administrator Ferguson stated that excess funds from Fiscal Year 2021 that were rolled into Fund Balance can be used to help cover costs. Mayor Coggin and Village Administrator Ferguson discussed flag pole heights, flag sizes, and lighting, with the recommended flag pole height of 80 feet. Village Administrator Ferguson cited the following costs: \$47,850 for flag poles and installation; \$1,700 for each flag; and \$10,000 for tentative number of 10 spotlights. He noted that TxDOT approval is required and spoke of alternate funding opportunities. Mayor Coggin requested Board input on moving forward with the proposal and fundraising options.

Discussion addressed consensus on the need for public input on this expenditure before taking action; alternative funding options; maintenance costs; anticipated maximum 90-day timeframe for TxDOT review/approval; direction of lighting; and increased cost for larger flags/flag poles.

Alderman Cole moved to have Mayor Coggin and Village Administrator Ferguson proceed with factfinding to pursue obtaining donations and citizens' opinions, with Mayor Coggin as the point of contact for donations. Alderman Cox seconded.

Discussion addressed getting preliminary approval from TxDOT, while pursuing donations and/or pledges; presentation of finalized costs and donations/pledges to the Board before action is taken; approximate timeframe of up to 90 days for TxDOT approval; feasibility of July 4, 2022 deadline for project completion; and potential supply chain issues with flag orders.

Mayor Coggin called for a vote. Motion carried on a vote of 4-0.

- B. Discuss and consider possible action relating to the disposition of a 2.092 acre tract of Village of Salado property located in the 400 block of South Main Street in Salado, Bell County, Texas. (*Mayor Michael Coggin*)

Mayor Coggin reviewed the history of the subject property, including past uses and agreement. He noted that under the Stagecoach Inn Development Agreement, ownership of the property was to be transferred from the Village to the Stagecoach owners once the decommissioned wastewater

treatment plant was removed from the property. He advised the transfer of ownership has not taken place due to legal concerns related to compliance issues with the agreement and laws regarding donation of public property to a private entity. Mayor Coggin reported that discussions have been held to arrive at a fair solution to allow shared use of the public parking lot, which is operated by the new Stagecoach owners, but efforts to reach an agreement have been unsuccessful.

Mayor Coggin spoke on parking signs to be installed next week and various sale/lease options.

Discussion addressed the agreement's applicability to the parking lot area only; statutory process for sale of property that includes public input; ability to lease or retain ownership of the property; need to update the agreement to address multiple legal issues; summary of months-long discussions to date with Stagecoach ownership/property management; and need for downtown public parking.

Darlene Walsh of 1002 Mill Creek Drive spoke of the history of Morris Foster's donation of the subject property and a former wastewater treatment plant to the Village and her knowledge of the property's value, including the former treatment plant and easement. She spoke of her service on the initial wastewater committee and said Mr. Foster had the property appraised in 2014 for around \$1,100,000 to \$1,300,000. She questioned how much the property is worth in today's market, cited heavy traffic problems in the area of Main/Royal Streets and lack of sidewalks/lighting. She said that perhaps a deal could be reached to retain the property and allow permits for Stagecoach/Shady Villa customers to use the parking lot and impose a nominal parking fee for park visitors to help pay for upkeep.

Village Administrator Ferguson state that Mrs. Walsh's suggestions have been discussed among other options without success.

Alderman Howard made a motion that the Village retain full possession of the property (ID No. 459518), with that property to be used for the sole purpose of full-time public parking. Alderman Cole seconded.

Discussion addressed current parking arrangements; lighting to enhance night safety; access gates and proposed hours to open/close gates; designating parking areas for Stagecoach guests/employees and the public; possible towing after midnight versus gate closures; use of bollards/chains to control access during certain times.

Mayor Coggin restated Alderman Howard's previously stated motion. Alderman Howard requested to amend his previous motion by adding that physical barriers are to be used to block access from 12:00 a.m. to 7:00 a.m. Alderman Cole seconded the amendment as stated by Alderman Howard.

Discussion established that the physical barrier (chains/bollards) will be used to block access from 12:00 a.m. to 7:00 a.m. and possible legal challenges that may result without continued progress on updating the agreement.

Motion, as amended, carried on a vote of 4-0.

- C. Discuss and consider issues relating to the development of a spending plan for funds award to the Village of Salado under the American Rescue Plan Act. (*Village Administrator*)

This item was heard after Agenda Item 5E.

Village Administrator Ferguson advised the Village has been awarded \$587,252.70 in federal relief funds under the American Rescue Plan Act. He noted funds may be used to support public health expenditures, address negative economic impacts caused by the public health emergency, replace lost public sector revenue, provide premium pay for essential workers, and invest in water, sewer, and broadband infrastructure. He said preliminary budget discussions focused on spending the funds for wastewater and drainage improvements. He stated that Central Texas Council of Governments (CTCOG) has agreed to serve as the Village of Salado's reporting agency at no cost and noted an agreement will be presented to the Board of Aldermen for future action. He advised that the Village has three years to spend the allocated funds.

Discussion addressed timeframe for receipt of total funds and for finalizing spending plan; engineering studies needed for drainage/wastewater projects; scheduling a workshop; cost estimates for discussion of priority drainage (or wastewater) projects; engineering study for priority Chisholm Trail drainage improvements; and low water crossing improvements, with clarification that funds may not be used for clean-out costs.

Village Administrator Ferguson that development of a spending plan will be included on the Board's next regular meeting agenda for discussion and possible action.

- D. Discuss and consider possible action approving the Fiscal Year 2022 Village of Salado Employee Holiday Calendar. (*Village Administrator*)

This item was heard after Agenda Item 5B.

Village Administrator Ferguson requested an addition to the proposed calendar to include a new federal holiday on Monday, June 20, 2022 in observance of Juneteenth.

Alderman Cox moved to approve the calendar, as presented, with the addition of Monday, June 20, 2022. Mayor Pro-tem Bell seconded. Motion carried on a vote of 4-0.

- E. Discuss and consider possible action authorizing the closure of a portion of Pace Park Road on the evening of Sunday, October 31, 2021, for a community Halloween event. (*Village Administrator*)

Village Administrator Ferguson spoke of last year's Halloween event and said 250-300 people are expected to attend this year. He recommended approval of the request to close the designated portion of Pace Park Road from 5:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. on Sunday, October 31, 2021 in order to enhance safety.

Alderman Cole moved to approve the closure of a portion of Pace Park Road on the evening of Sunday, October 31, 2021 for a community Halloween event. Alderman Cox seconded. Motion

carried on a vote of 3-0. (Mayor Pro-tem Bell was briefly away from the dais and returned shortly after the vote was taken.)

Adjournment

Alderman Cole moved to adjourn. Mayor Coggin called the meeting adjourned at 8:13 p.m.

Recorded by:

Cara McPartland

These minutes approved on the 21st of October, 2021.

APPROVED:


Rodney Bell, Mayor Pro-tem

ATTEST:


Cara McPartland, City Secretary

