

Village of Salado
Salado Municipal Building
301 North Stagecoach Road
Salado, Texas
Minutes of Regular Meeting of Board of Aldermen
May 4, 2023, 2023, 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 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, and Aldermen Paul Cox, John Cole, D. Jasen Graham, and Jason Howard attended in person.

Staff Present: Village Administrator Don Ferguson, Assistant Village Administrator Andrea Howard, and Acting Police Chief Chris Dunshie.

PRESENTATION

Presentation by a Representative of the Betty Martin Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution Relating to the Patriotism Exhibited by the Village of Salado.

A representative of the Betty Martin Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution presented Mayor Coggin and the Board of Aldermen with a Certificate of Appreciation to recognize the Village for appropriately flying the American flag and for its on-going demonstration of patriotism.

1. CITIZENS COMMUNICATIONS

Bell County property owner Janet Ackerman expressed concern with the recently filed permit application for the Mustang Springs wastewater treatment facility, questioning its accuracy in several areas.

Nancy Best with the Salado Chamber of Commerce invited board members to the ribbon cutting for *Wristy Business* – a new business located on Main Street.

2. CONSENT AGENDA

(A) Approval of Minutes of the Regular Board of Aldermen Meeting of April 20, 2023.

(B) Approval of Elizabeth Whitfield to the Village of Salado Parks Advisory Board.

Alderman John Cole moved to approve the Consent Agenda, as presented. Alderman Jason Howard seconded. Motion carried on a vote of 5-0.

3. **DISCUSS AND CONSIDER POSSIBLE ACTION REGARDING ANY ITEM REMOVED FROM THE CONSENT AGENDA**

No items were removed.

4. **STATUS REPORTS**

(A) Village Administrators Report

- Main Street Lighting Update

Village Administrator Don Ferguson reported that TxDOT representatives were unable to attend the meeting. He said the light replacement project will be let on May 31st with all lights to be replaced by the end of September 2023.

- Solana Ranch MUD Update

Village Administrator Ferguson said legislation creating the Solana Ranch Municipal Utility District will be considered by the Texas House of Representatives on May 6th.

- Mustang Springs Development

Village Administrator Ferguson advised board members that the wastewater consultant for the Mustang Springs development is working resolve issues with the development's wastewater discharge permit application. He added the developer continues to work with the Clearwater Underground Water Conservation District to determine groundwater availability for the development. Ferguson added the plat for Phase I of the development has been filed.

- 2023 Village of Salado General Election

Village Administrator Ferguson said Election Day is May 6th. He said the polls at the Civic Center will be open from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. He said a Special Meeting of the Board of Aldermen will be held on May 11th or May 16th to canvass the results of the election.

- FY 2023 Road Improvement Projects

Village Administrator Ferguson reported the Center Circle Overlay Project will go out to bid in late June, with construction to be complete in mid-September. He added the Salado School Road Reconstruction Project will go out to bid in late-May, with construction to be complete by mid-September.

Ferguson said road repairs on Van Bibber Road will be done in late May and Thomas Arnold drainage improvements are expected to be complete the week of May 8th.

- New Municipal Building

Village Administrator Ferguson said building and site plans for an approximately 5,500 square foot new Municipal Building are being developed in hopes of having the project ready to bid in June. He noted approval of the building plans by the Bell County Commissioners and Board of Aldermen will be required in advance of bidding.

(B) Salado Police Chief Status Report

Acting Police Chief Chris Dunshie briefed board members on the March 2023 Calls for Service Report and provided updates on the License Plate Reader Program and Citizen on Patrol (COP) activities.

COP representative Lynn Wilton said her volunteer organization remains committed to the Salado Police Department. She criticized the Village Administrator and his handling of matters relating to the Police Department.

(C) Tourism Director's Report

Assistant Village Administrator Andrea Howard updated board members on the Village's tourism marketing activities, Visitor's Center activities, and upcoming community events.

5. RESOLUTION

Consider Approval of a Resolution Supporting the Village of Salado Applications to the Texas Department of Transportation's 2023 Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside (TA) Call for Projects.

Village Administrator Ferguson said the Village of Salado is seeking TA funding assistance for the following projects:

- Development of an Active Transportation Plan for the Village of Salado
- Design and construction of a sidewalk along the south side of Pace Park Road from Main Street to Pace Park
- Design and construction of a sidewalk on the south side of Mill Creek Road from Main Street to Chisholm Trail

If project funding is awarded, Ferguson said the Village would not be responsible for any matching funds. He said approval of the proposed supporting resolution is required for the Village to submit the application for project funding.

Alderman Cole moved to approve the resolution, as presented. Mayor Pro-tem Rodney Bell seconded. Motion passed on a 5-0 vote.

6. DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION

- (A) Discuss and Consider Possible Action Regarding the Proposed Pedestrian Bridge Over Salado Creek.

Village Administrator Ferguson said the owners of Barrow Brewing Company recently presented plans for a six (6) foot wide temporary pedestrian bridge to be installed over the Salado Creek. He said the bridge would connect the northwest corner of the brewery's property to the southwest corner of Pace Park.

Ferguson said the owners of the brewery would acquire, install, and maintain the bridge at their cost. He noted the only cost to the Village would be the development of a path in the park to the bridge, should the Village desire to do so.

Plans for the bridge have been reviewed and approved by the Village, along with various federal and state agencies.

Mayor Coggin asked for public comment on the proposed bridge.

Downtown business owner Jessica Greenfield expressed support for the bridge indicating it will be a benefit to local businesses in the area.

Residents Ashley Lewis and Jim Boynton said the bridge would be a great addition to the downtown area that will help facilitate pedestrian access.

Resident Charles Simmons expressed his opposition to the bridge.

Aldermen D. Jasen Graham moved to approve the plans for the proposed bridge. Mayor Pro-tem Bell seconded. Motion was approved on a 5-0 vote.

- (B) Discuss and Consider Possible Action Regarding Drainage Improvements in the Areas of Stagecoach Circle and Chisholm Trail.

Village Engineer Solomon Thomas presented the following options and cost estimates for drainage improvements that would address the significant drainage issues facing residents in the areas of Stagecoach Circle and Chisholm Trail:

- Detention Pond West of IH 35 - \$295,000.00
- Detention Pond East of IH 35 - \$261,200.00
- Culverts under Soccer Fields (2~5' X 3') - \$1,427,735.00
- Culverts under Soccer Fields (2~6' X 4') - \$1,843,620.00
- Stagecoach Circle Culvert - \$351,500.00
- Chisholm Trail Driveway Culvert Replacements - \$160,400.00

Thomas said the options involving the culverts under the soccer fields would have the biggest impact on the drainage problems.

Mayor Coggin suggested moving forward with the Stagecoach Circle Culvert and Chisholm Trail Driveway Culvert Replacement at this time and looking at the culverts under the soccer fields and detention pond projects in the future.

Aldermen Howard said it was important to make sure the waterway where the drainage will be routed has the capacity for the additional stormwater.

Thomas indicated Alderman Howard's concerns would be explored prior to any work being done.

After further discussion, Alderman Graham made the motion to go out to bid on the Stagecoach Circle Culvert and Chisholm Trail Driveway Culvert Replacements, as proposed. Aldermen Cole seconded. Motion carried on a 5-0 vote.

(C) DISCUSS AND CONSIDER POSSIBLE ACTION REGARDING THE ROYAL STREET IMPROVEMENT PROJECT. (*VILLAGE ADMINISTRATOR*)

Village Administrator Ferguson briefed the board on the ability of the Village to obtain a low interest loan from TxDOT's State Infrastructure Board to fund the Village's share of the construction cost for the Royal Street Improvement Project. He said the Village's share of the \$2 million project cost is approximately \$400,000.

Ferguson said obtaining the loan would allow the Village to construct the original scope of the project which will strengthen and increase the lifespan of the heavily traveled roadway.

Mayor Pro-tem Bell asked staff to see if the engineering and design costs can be included in the loan.

Aldermen Graham expressed support for the loan, indicating the Village could pay off the loan early if it so desired.

After further discussion, Alderman Graham moved to direct staff to pursue a loan from the State Infrastructure Bank to fund the Village share of the original scope of the Royal Street Improvement Project. Mayor Pro-tem Bell seconded. Motion passed on a 4-1 vote, with Alderman Cole voting no.

(D) Discuss and Consider Possible Action Regarding a Proposal to Reclassify the School Resource Officer Positions in the Salado Police Department.

Village Administrator Ferguson reported the Salado ISD has provided the Village with notice of its intent to discontinue the School Resource Officer Program with the Village, effective May 24, 2023, as the SISD will be establishing its own police department consisting of a police chief and two (2) officers.

With the upcoming elimination of the SRO program, Ferguson said a decision needs to be made regarding the status of the existing SRO positions in the Police Department. It is not known how many SROs, if any, will be hired to be part of the SISD Police Department.

Ferguson recommended the following regarding the existing SROs:

- Reclassify the existing SROs as regular Police Officers, effective May 24th.
- Fill the two (2) existing vacant Police Officer positions in the Police Department with those SROs not hired by the SISD.
- Create a new Police Officer position, if necessary, for any remaining SRO should a vacant Police Officer position not exist.
- Increase the hourly pay rate for a Police Officer from \$24.17 to \$26.55 which is the current hourly pay rate for SROs.

Mayor Pro-tem Bell expressed his support for the recommendations but said he would like to see police officers earn \$58,000 a year and the Sergeant earn \$66,560 a year.

Board members expressed their support for the work being done by the Salado Police Department.

Mayor Pro-tem Bell moved to reclassify the existing SROs as regular Police Officers, effective May 24th; to fill the two (2) existing vacant Police Officer positions in the Police Department with two (2) of the existing SROs and to create a new Police Officer position for the remaining, existing SRO; to set the hourly pay rate for a Police Officer such that the officer earns \$58,000 a year; and to set the hourly pay rate for the Sergeant such that the Sergeant earns \$66,560 a year. Alderman Cole seconded. Motion passed on a 5-0 vote.

- (E) Discuss and Consider Possible Action Regarding a Proposed Compensation and Staffing Study for the Village of Salado.

Village Administrative Ferguson said the item had been pulled from the agenda and will be placed on a future agenda for consideration.

ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Coggin called the meeting adjourned at 8:40 p.m.

Recorded by:

Don Ferguson

These minutes approved on the 18th of May, 2023.



APPROVED:

Michael Coggin, Mayor

ATTEST:

**Don Ferguson,
Village Administrator/Acting City Secretary**