

**CITY OF CASTROVILLE CITY COUNCIL
REGULAR CALLED COUNCIL MEETING**

1209 Fiorella

City Council Chambers

September 23, 2025

Tuesday

6:00 P.M.

MINUTES

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Bruce Alexander called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

II. ROLL CALL

Present:

Mayor Bruce Alexander

Scott Dixon, City Administrator

Mayor Pro Tem Sheena Martinez

Debra Howe, City Secretary

Councilmember Houston Marchman

Jim Kohler, Police Chief

Councilmember Phil King

Councilmember David Merz

Councilmember Robert Lee

Others in attendance:

Daniel Jones, new City Attorney, Denton, Navarro, Rodrigues, Santee, Benal & Zech

III. PLEDGE OF ALLEIGENCE

IV. INVOCATION

Pastor Doug Steiner of the Discover Church gave the invocation.

V. CITIZENS COMMENTS

The City Council will hear comments from any citizen or visitor. Speakers must address their comments to the presiding officer rather than individual council members or staff; stand at the podium, speak clearly into the microphone, and state your name and residential address before speaking. Speakers will be allowed a maximum of 3 minutes for testimony. Speakers making personal, impertinent, profane, or slanderous remarks will be given one warning before losing the privilege to speak or may be removed from the room. In accordance with the State Open Meetings Act, the City Council is restricted from discussing or taking action on items not listed on the agenda. Action can only be taken at a future meeting.

No one requested to speak.

Councilmember Lee gave kudos to Billing Clerk Patricia Lanford for discovering high water usage through the new smart meters system and contacting him to check for a possible leak. Mr. Lee said that was the case and was very appreciative of her attentiveness and the new meter system.

Mayor Alexander introduced new City Attorney Daniel (Dan) Jones to the City Council before moving to next item.

VI. CONSENT AGENDA

- a. Minutes for September 9, 2025 Regular Called Council Meeting
- b. Minutes for August 26, 2025 Regular Called Meeting
- c. Discussion and appropriate action on a resolution to adopt the Investment Policy
- d. Approval of renewal of the annual contract with Texas Regulatory Consultants for the period of October 1, 2025-September 30, 2026, in the amount of \$115,000.00, as budgeted
- e. Approval of Operation Stonegarden Grant for the Purchase of a Police Tahoe

Councilmember Merz requested item C. be removed for further discussion.

A motion was made by Councilmember King and duly seconded by Councilmember Martinez to approve the consent agenda items a., b., d., and e. A vote was taken (5:0 all ayes) the motion carried by all present.

Councilmember Merz wished to recused himself from the discussion on item C. Investment Policy.

Councilmember Lee asked about the Investment policy and where the city's funds were invested and if staff were following the training requirements. City Administrator Dixon said the City had negotiated with the local bank for a higher interest rate to keep the funds local and they were insured by the US Treasury. Mr. Dixon said staff did follow the training requirements and he and City Finance Director Vidales were up to date and was scheduled for training this year.

A motion was made by Councilmember King and duly seconded by Councilmember Marchman to approve Item C. Investment Policy of the consent agenda. A vote was taken (4:0:1 recused (Merz) the motion carried by a majority vote.

Mayor Alexander asked if the new bond monies would be invested. Mr. Dixon said no, because of the legalities the City could not make money off of borrowed money.

VII. MAYOR'S REPORT

- a. FY26 Budget & Tax Rate
- b. Capital Improvements
- c. Citizen Involvement

Mayor Alexander read his report saying he had put the budget ordinance back on the agenda for review as he did not agree with the legal language in the ordinance and as such had not signed the budget ordinance.

Mayor Alexander said he did sign the tax rate ordinance. Mayor Alexander summarized the new budget included a new police position, street improvements and new debt for projects including streets, drainage, and water improvements. The City Council would be identifying the projects in a future meeting. Mayor Alexander stressed citizen input on what they wanted was needed for the City Council to meet those needs. Mayor Alexander encouraged citizens to be more involved by serving on the city boards and commissions.

VIII. PUBLIC HEARING

- a. Public hearing on a zoning change request for 1005 Alamo St. Castroville, TX 78009, approximately 1.32 acres located north of Highway 90. east of Alamo St., and south of Lafayette St. The current zoning of the property is CH-C, Central Commercial District. The proposed zoning for the property is C-G, Historic Central Business District

Open: 6:15 p.m.

City Administrator Dixon briefed the City Council on the request to change the zoning for 1005 Alamo Street from CH-C (Central Commercial District) to CG (Historic Commercial District). The property had historic structures but was not recognized in the Historic District. The Planning and Zoning Commission recommended approval.

No one requested to speak.

Closed: 6:18 p.m.

IX. DISCUSSION AND ACTION ITEMS

- a. Discussion and possible action on adopting an Ordinance for a zoning change request for 1005 Alamo St. Castroville, TX 78009, approximately 1.32 acres located north of Highway 90. east of Alamo St., and south of Lafayette St. The current zoning of the property is CH-C, Central Commercial District. The proposed zoning for the property is C-G, Historic Central Business District

A motion was made by Councilmember King and duly seconded by Councilmember Marchman to adopt an Ordinance for a zoning change request for 1005 Alamo St. Castroville, TX 78009, approximately 1.32 acres located north of Highway 90. east of Alamo St., and south of Lafayette St. The current zoning of the property is CH-C, Central Commercial District. The proposed zoning for the property is C-G, Historic Central Business District.

Discussion followed.

Councilmember Lee gave kudos to the new owners for requesting the zoning change to be protected under the historic guidelines in the future. Councilmember Merz said the request to change the property was not in line with the current City Comprehensive Plan land use and would need to be updated. The current land use map showed the property as single family residential, not commercial. Councilmember Lee was not in favor of keeping residential, in a commercial district and said the City Comprehensive Plan was a guide but not a requirement.

A vote was taken (5:0 all ayes) the motion carried by all present.

- b. Discussion and appropriate action on an Ordinance adopting the FY 2025-2026 Annual Budget for the Fiscal Year beginning October 1, 2025, and ending September 30, 2026, and authorizing expenditures as therein provided

Mayor Alexander said he brought this item back as he did not agree with the legal language. Mayor Alexander said the ordinance in the back up was different from the previous ordinance he was to sign. Mayor Alexander said the tax rate numbers were different. City Administrator Dixon said he understood that the Mayor was concerned with the ordinance language and his interpretation that it would remove City Council oversight but Mr. Dixon said staff would not overstep council authority. Mr. Dixon said there would be a future workshop planned for staff and the City Council to have a better understanding of what projects and roles each played. Mr. Dixon said Mayor Alexander had concerns with outdated policies including the personnel policy and he agreed the policies needed to be brought up to date and would

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bring back at a future meeting. Mayor Alexander said he took an oath to go by the rules, regulations, and ordinances. Mayor Alexander wanted the ordinances in line with the finances.

No action was taken as the ordinance had been approved by the City Council at the previous meeting.

Mayor Alexander moved to items f. and g. to accommodate the candidates in attendance.

- f. Consider and take appropriate action on a Resolution nominating a candidate for the election of the Medina Central Appraisal District Board of Directors for the 2026-2027 year

City Secretary Debra Howe briefed the City Council on receiving a resolution to nominate a candidate for the Medina Appraisal District Board. Ms. Howe said Cindy Malone was the current representative and would like to be renominated, her resume and letter to the City Council were included in the backup. Ms. Malone was in attendance for questions.

A motion was made by Councilman King and duly seconded by Councilman Martinez to adopt a Resolution nominating Cindy Malone for the election of Medina Central Appraisal District Board of Directors for the 2026-2027 year. A vote was taken (5:0 all ayes) the motion carried by all present.

- g. Consider and take appropriate action on application(s) submitted for open positions on Boards and Commissions

City Secretary Debra Howe briefed the City Council on the city receiving an application from Shari Biediger for an open position on the Library Advisory Board. Ms. Biediger was present and introduced herself to the City Council. Ms. Biediger spoke on her involvement on acquiring a digital grant for the Library. She would be mentoring two students, Breana Malone and Orlando Moralez from San Antonio University this fall on writing about the City.

A motion was made by Councilmember King and duly seconded by Councilmember Martinez to appoint Shari Biediger to the Library Advisory full board position (#4) for a two-year term ending June 2027. A vote was taken (5:0 all ayes) the motion carried by all present.

Mayor Alexander reverted back to original order.

- c. Discussion and appropriate action on an Ordinance adopting the FY 2025-2026 Annual Budget for the Enterprise and Airport fund for the Fiscal Year beginning October 1, 2025, and ending September 30, 2026, and authorizing expenditures as therein provided

A motion was made by Councilmember King and duly seconded by Councilmember Martinez to approve an Ordinance adopting the FY 2025-2026 Annual Budget for the Enterprise and Airport fund for the Fiscal Year beginning October 1, 2025, and ending September 30, 2026, and authorizing expenditures as therein provided.

Discussion followed.

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City Administrator Dixon briefed the City Council on the Enterprise and Airport Funds. Mr. Dixon said the new gas rates were not reflected in the Enterprise Fund and he would be doing a future forecast and bring back to the City Council.

A vote was taken (5:0 all ayes) the motion carried by all present.

d. Discussion and appropriate action on adopting Comprehensive Fee Schedule Ordinance

City Administrator Dixon briefed the City Council on the recommendations from staff, Mayor Alexander and Councilmember Lee.

A motion was made by Councilmember Merz and duly seconded by Councilmember King to adopt a Comprehensive Fee Schedule Ordinance with recommendations by Councilmember Lee. A vote was taken (4 ayes: 1 nay(Marchman)) the motion carried by majority vote.

Discussion followed.

Councilmember Lee had recommendations for tie down fees from \$35 to \$50; utility deposits Electric \$200, Water \$150, Gas \$100; eliminate after hours reconnect fee if disconnected for non-payment and increase EAA fees from .35 cents per 1,000 to .50 cents per 1,000 gallons, and .50 cents per 1,000 gallons for Water Acquisition fees. Mr. Lee recommended several other increases which were noted in the exhibit for City Council to review. Councilmember Merz was in favor of the changes Councilmember Lee had recommended including the lower utility deposits equaling \$450.00. Mayor Alexander had suggested \$200 deposit per utility. Councilmember Lee said he would be in favor of the increases to help offset bad debt. Mr. Lee said in the past the city had a large amount of bad debt due to customers leaving and having a balance not covered by the deposit. Councilmember Marchman asked the amount of debt for non-payment. City Administrator Dixon said he would need to look up. Councilmember Lee asked Mayor Alexander why he had recommended removal of the after hours reconnect fee. Mayor Alexander said he was recommending not doing any reconnects after hours. Councilmember Lee was against that idea as the City was there to serve the citizens and supported \$50.00 for all. City Council discussed further staff recommendations with modifications on deposits.

A motion was made by Councilmember Martinez and duly seconded by Councilmember Merz to reconsider recommendations by staff and modifications of recommendations by Councilmember Lee. A vote was taken (5:0 all ayes) the motion carried by all present.

A motion was made by Councilmember Merz and duly seconded by Councilmember Martinez to adopt a Comprehensive Fee Schedule Ordinance with staff recommendation, including Councilmember Lee recommendations, with additional changes to utility deposits at \$200 each, \$50 after hours reconnect fee, and .50 cents per 1,000 water acquisition fee with an effective date of October 1st. A vote was taken (5:0 all ayes) the motion carried by all present.

e. Discussion and appropriate action on adopting an Ordinance amending the FY 2025 Annual Budget

City Administrator Dixon briefed the City Council on the year end budget amendment. Mr. Dixon said the backup with explanation was included in the packets.

A motion was made by Councilmember King and duly seconded by Councilmember Merz to adopt an Ordinance amending the FY 2025 Annual Budget. A vote was taken (5:0 all ayes) the motion carried by all present.

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- h. Discussion and possible action on the Stakeholder Advisory Committee and public engagement opportunities for the Castroville Active Transportation Plan

City Administrator Dixon briefed the City Council on staff working on a Stakeholder Advisory Committee for an Active Transportation Plan after receiving a grant. Mr. Dixon said this had been brought to the City Council at a previous meeting with City Council members to provide a representative from each of their districts. The committee would consist of a City Council member, (1) P & Z member, (1) HLC member, (1) Parks Board member, (1) Business representative, (1) School District representative, (2) Community residents, and (1) TxDOT representative. Mr. Dixon said a list was provided for the City Council to consider and representatives from District 1 and 4 were still needed. Staff recommended: P & Z member – Jim Welch who also resided in District 3, HLC member – Doug DeMino – resided in District 2, Parks member – Adriana Calk resided in District 5, Business representative – Erin Braden, Harzheim Properties, MVISD Board member – Steven Conard, Health and Safety Director, and TxDOT representative (advisory) – Chip Perry. Councilmember Merz was chosen as the City Council liaison. Councilmember Lee preferred the members be residents of the city when possible

A motion was made by Councilmember King and duly seconded by Councilmember Marchman to approve the recommendations and appointing Councilmember Merz as the Council Liaison. A vote was taken (5:0 all ayes) the motion carried by all present.

- i. Consider and possible action on reduction of full board members on the Historic Landmark Commission and set appointment dates for June of each year for two year staggered terms
Skipped – no information. This item would be brought back.
- j. Discussion and possible action on formation of an Impact Fee Advisory Committee

City Administrator Dixon briefed the City Council on needing new members for the Impact Fee Committee. Due to changes made by the State Planning and Zoning members could not make up most of the committee as before.

A motion was made by Councilmember King and duly seconded by Councilmember Marchman to create a new committee per State guidelines and bring back by-laws for City Council consideration. A vote was taken (5:0 all ayes) the motion carried by all present.

- k. Discussion and appropriate action to adopt a resolution to dissolve the Castroville Economic Development Corporation

Councilmember Merz said this item had been discussed at a previous meeting. Councilmember King suggested not dissolving, just not be active as he felt the city had spent money on forming this corporation and the board may be needed in a few years.

A motion was made by Councilmember Martinez and duly seconded by Councilmember Lee to adopt a resolution to dissolve the Castroville Economic Development Corporation. A vote was taken (5:0 all ayes) the motion carried by all present.

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l. Discussion and possible action on traffic control and traffic calming measures in District 4

Skipped – Councilmember Merz stated he could not provide backup material for his item before deadline so he had requested to move to following meeting.

m. Consider and possible action on formation of a Design Review Board for Commercial Development

Skipped – no information. This item would be brought back.

X. CITY ADMINISTRATOR REPORT

- a. Drainage Projects
- b. Highway 90 TxDot Construction
- c. Streets, Maintenance and Paving Plan
- d. WWTx Plant Ponds
- e. CPS Energy Dispute
- f. Community Center Construction
- g. Lions Park Splash Pad
- h. Community Development
- i. Economic Development
- j. Airport Operations
- k. Library
- l. Code Compliance
- m. Animal Control
- n. Police Department
- o. Tourism - Business

City Administrator Dixon briefed the City Council on his report adding employee Max Lunstrom had received his Class B Wastewater License. Officer John Sapper was working on police grants. Councilmember Martinez asked about the recent departure of the Gas Superintendent and the next steps to fill the position. Mr. Dixon said the position would be filled with a second technician. Council asked about the issues with the BMA canal/trails and if they would be fencing off. Mr. Dixon said they would not and was unaware of any issues until the city received the termination letter. Mr. Dixon said limiting access to the canal with gated entrance was to have been done by the city in the previous agreement. Mr. Dixon said if it was worked out he would be coming back to the City Council for discussion on funding options for electric fencing/gating. Mr. Dixon said the City Council may wish to appoint a representative to speak with the BMA. Mayor Alexander announced he has been invited by CPS to breakfast with CPS representatives and the San Antonio Mayor the following day would give a report back to the City Council. Mayor Alexander said kudos to Helen Delevan as he had met with Representative Tony Gonzales and Mr. Gonzales spoke very highly of Helen Delevan on her involvement with the Regional Park over the years. No further comments.

XI. DISCUSSION ON FUTURE AGENDA ITEM

City Administrator Dixon said he and the Mayor had spoken and he would look at facilitators for a future

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workshop. Mayor Alexander said he as East Medina Water representative , Mr. Dixon, and RESPEC had met with a desalination group. Councilmember Martinez wished to discuss at the next meeting the \$3.5 million for projects since the city had received the funds. Mr. Dixon said he would like to wait for the costs for the remodel of City Hall was included in the projects. Mr. Dixon would also be looking at a CIP workshop on projects. Councilmember Merz's traffic calming item for would be on next agenda. Councilmember Lee would be submitting items on tasking the Airport Advisory Board to review Chapter 18, and look at installing temporary outside showers at the pool for safety. Councilmember Lee wanted information on the number of parking spaces currently at the City Hall and what would be needed with the expansion. Mr. Dixon said he would provide the information.

XII. ADJOURN

Mayor Alexander adjourned the meeting at 7:58 p.m.

Bruce Alexander
Mayor

ATTEST:

Debra Howe
City Secretary