

**CITY OF CASTROVILLE CITY COUNCIL
REGULAR CALLED COUNCIL MEETING
1209 Fiorella
City Council Chambers
March 10, 2026
Tuesday
5:00 P.M.
MINUTES**

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Alexander called the meeting to order at 5:01 p.m.
Mayor Alexander acknowledged a quorum of four members was present.

Mayor Alexander recessed into executive session at 5:02 p.m.

II. EXECUTIVE SESSION

The City Council will convene in closed session pursuant to the Texas Open Meetings Act, Chapter 551 of the Texas Government Code for one or more of the following authorized reasons:

a. The City council will meet in closed session pursuant to the Texas Open Meetings Act, Chapter 551.074, Personnel Matters, to deliberate the appointment, employment, evaluation, reassignment, duties, discipline, or dismissal of the following public officers or employees:

a. City Administrator R. Scott Dixon

Opened: 5:03 p.m.

Councilmember Merz arrived at 5:33 p.m. during the executive session.

Closed: 5:53 p.m.

III. RECONVENE IN OPEN SESSION

Mayor Alexander reconvened in open session at 6:14 p.m.

IV. ROLL CALL

Present:

Mayor Bruce Alexander

Mayor Pro Tem Sheena Martinez

Councilmember Houston Marchman

Councilmember Phil King

Councilmember David Merz

Councilmember Robert Lee

Leroy Vidales, Finance Director

Debra Howe, City Secretary

James, Kohler, Police Chief

John Gomez, Public Works Director

Jonah Chang, Parks and Recreation Director

Mike Haley, Airport Manager

(Cont.)

Absent:

Scott Dixon, City Administrator

Others in Attendance:

Daniel Jones, Denton, Navarro, Rodrigues, Santee, Benal & Zach

V. PLEDGE OF ALLEIGENCE

VI. INVOCATION

Pastor Matt Guterriez, of the Discover Church gave the invocation.

VII. 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.

Brae Robinson, 1310 Fiorella Street, a senior in high school and member of a local 4-H group, spoke to the City Council on him and partner Johnny Gutzman working on a Veterans walkway project at September Square. Mr. Robinson said they had raised \$10,000 in donations and wanted get approval to build a walkway. Mr. Robinson said he would like to be placed on a future meeting to give a presentation on their plan and get approval to move forward with their project.

VIII. CONSENT AGENDA

- a. Minutes for February 11, 2026 Special Called Joint City Council and Planning and Zoning Commission Meeting.
- b. Minutes for February 24, 2026 Special Called City Council Meeting
- c. Minutes for February 24, 2026 Regular Called City Council Meeting

Mayor Alexander requested 8b. and c. minutes for Special and Regular Called meetings for February 24th be removed for corrections.

A motion was made by Councilmember King and duly seconded by Councilmember Marchman to approve 8a. minutes for February 11, 2026 Special Called Joint City Council and Planning and Zoning Commission Meeting. A vote was taken (5:0 all ayes) the motion carried by all present.

Mayor Alexander said under 8a. Special Called minutes for February 24, 2026 item 4a. discussion on identifying, prioritize, and funding capital projects he had asked about streets identified for maintenance in Alsatian Oaks, not Country Village as shown and asked that be corrected.

Mayor Alexander said on 8b. Regular Called minutes for February 24, 2026 item 11h. related to installation of a pump, motor, and electrical components for new Flat Creek water well the motion did not include the names of the Councilmembers who made and seconded the motion and asked that be corrected.

A motion was made by Councilmember Martinez and duly seconded by Councilmember Marchman to approve items b. and c. Special Called and Regular Called Minutes for February 24, 2026 with corrections. A vote was taken (5:0 all ayes) the motion carried by all present.

IX. MAYOR'S REPORT

- a. CIP
- b. CPS Billing Dispute
- c. Development Agreements
- d. Ordinance Updates

Mayor Alexander briefed the City Council on the recent CIP meeting on February 24, 2026, they had all attended. Mayor Alexander summarized the meeting saying the City Council took action approving funding for streets maintenance for \$600,000 this budget year with a plan to come back for approval; \$469,367 for a 50/50 match with the \$750,000 grant received by the City for an all-inclusive playground at Lions Park; \$549,000 for remodel of the public library; \$1 million for the remodel of the City Hall; \$200,000 Regional Park parking; and \$205,000 for new pool showers/bathrooms building. Mayor Alexander said he had spoken to the Library Director and Parks Director on expediting their projects. Mayor Alexander spoke on moving forward with cleaning bar ditches to help drainage as soon as possible. Mayor Alexander spoke on working with the CPS on a billing dispute that originally was shown as \$1.9 million, reduced to \$625,000, and after working with them and agreed on with the City paying approximately 10% of the reduced amount at \$62,563.07. Mayor Alexander said there were ongoing discussions on transmission costs and hoped to foster a better working relationship with CIP in the future. Mayor Alexander said P3 Consultants were working on current and past development agreements for any changes and the agreements would be brought back for discussion and action. Mayor Alexander thanked the Planning and Zoning Commission for starting the reviews of the ordinances in their parameter. Mayor Alexander asked the City Secretary to look at what was needed to update Chapter 2 regarding posting times for meetings since the legislation had changed the requirements during last session.

X. Consider possible action(s) resulting from items posted and legally discussed in Executive Session

Consider and take possible action regarding the Performance Improvement Plan for the City Administrator

A motion was made by Councilmember Marchman and duly seconded by Councilmember Martinez to approve the Performance Improvement Plan provided by the City Attorney for the City Administrator. A vote was taken (3ayes: 2 nays (King, Merz) the motion carried by a majority vote.

XI. DISCUSSION AND ACTION ITEMS

- a. Consider and take appropriate action on approving a contract between the City of Castroville and Medina County Elections Administrator for Election Services for the May 2, 2026 General Election

City Secretary Howe briefed the City Council on the contract for election services with Medina County Election Administration for the upcoming 2026 May General Election. Ms. Howe said the election costs were split with the school district and the estimated cost for the City was \$8,500. Ms. Howe said the FY26 budgeted amount was shown as \$10,000.

A motion was made by Councilmember Martinez and duly seconded by Councilmember Marchman to approve a contract between the City of Castroville and Medina County Elections Administrator for Election Services for the May 2, 2026 General Election and authorizing the City Secretary/Election Coordinator for the City of Castroville to sign the agreement. A vote was taken (5:0 all ayes) the motion carried by all present.

- b. Discussion and appropriate action regarding results of traffic calming study for the following intersections: Gentilz and Athens, Country Lane & Village Path, Fiorella & London Streets

Police Chief Kohler briefed the City Council on results of the traffic calming studies completed for the intersections of Gentilz and Athens, Country Lane and Village Path, and Fiorella and London Streets. Chief Kohler said there was moderate speeding found on Gentilz and Athens; and with the amount of traffic coming from the Park, during Special Events, and complaints received from citizens living in this area on concerns of safety for the walkers, he recommended making the intersection a 4-way. Chief Kohler said there was a request made for a more visible dead-end sign to alert drivers when leaving the Park. Chief Kohler said the intersection of Fiorella and London had always been a safety issue due to the building on the corner location. The building extended out into the line of sight causing drivers to pull into the intersection to check for cross traffic. Chief Kohler recommended making the intersection a 4-way with the additional stop signs; but with the change, one-two parking spaces would be removed on the street as per State Law. Chief Kohler provided the traffic code on parking restrictions near stop signs. Mayor Alexander clarified the law stated no parking within 30 feet of a stop sign. Chief Kohler said that was correct, and this was to keep vehicles from impeding sight at an intersection. Chief Kohler said the intersection of Country Lane and Village Path had only one stop sign; and in meeting with Councilmember Merz on issues he witnessed regularly; he recommended making the intersection a 3-way for safety purposes. Councilmember Merz provided a survey of 16 neighbors on what they felt would help with traffic control. The survey provided results from categories of options to help control the flow/speed of traffic with the following in support of: painted lane lines (13), marked street parking (7), speed limit reduction to 15 miles per hour (8), speed bumps (12), and stop signs (7). Mr. Merz said some people were open to speed bumps and some were willing to pay for if that was a consideration. Chief Kohler said another option was a speed reduction. Mayor Alexander said he was in favor of all of the suggested changes. Councilmember Merz said he had no issues with the first two intersection recommendations; but with his neighborhood, he wanted a 3-way stop sign intersection with painted lines for safety. Mr. Merz said he had almost been in an accident recently and would like to have enhanced painting and bollards installed. The suggestion of flashing signage to help slow down the traffic was a possible option. Mr. Merz felt it would not help and wanted to implement a pilot program and physical traffic measures. Councilmember Lee asked what area Councilmember Merz wanted to do this at and suggested reviewing again in 3-4 months after the installation of the stop signs. Chief Kohler said they would also increase enforcement in the area. Councilmember Merz did not think adding the two stop signs would decrease the speeding on Alvina.

A motion was made by Councilmember Marchman and duly seconded by Councilmember Martinez to create and bring back for consideration an Ordinance for the installation of the recommended stop signs at the intersections of Gentilz and Athens, Country Lane and Village Path and Fiorella and London Street.

Before the vote Councilmember Merz requested an amendment to the motion to include a traffic pilot program for Country Village. Councilmembers Marchman and Martinez did not wish to amend their motion to include his request.

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

- c. Discussion and appropriate action to adopt a resolution authorizing submission of an application to the State Homeland Security Grant Program for a Police Patrol Vehicle

Police Chief Kohler briefed the City Council on submitting an application to the State Homeland Security Grant Program for the purchase of a new patrol vehicle. Chief Kohler said the amount shown in the resolution was \$101,280.00 and was higher than the last resolution due to this unit being fitted with new equipment. Chief Kohler said in the past they had been able to reuse old equipment to save on costs. Chief Kohler said this grant was not a matching grant, and the City would not be out any funds. Mayor Alexander was happy that the department was receiving so many grants and hoped the department would be awarded this one. Councilmember Martinez was pleased the department was going out for the grants.

A motion was made by Councilmember Martinez and duly seconded by Councilmember Merz to approve a resolution authorizing the Castroville Police Department to apply for and accept grant funding through the State Homeland Security Grant Program (HSGP), grant #5905901 in the amount of \$101,280.00 for the purchase of one Police Patrol vehicle. A vote was taken (5:0 all ayes) the motion carried by all present.

- d. Discussion and appropriate action to accept the Racial Profiling Report for 2025

Police Chief Kohler briefed the City Council on the 2025 Racial Profiling Report. Mayor Alexander asked if this was required, and Chief Kohler said the department was to present for acceptance yearly. Chief Kohler said there had been 5,920 total stops with 2,633 written warnings. Councilmember Merz asked who evaluated the reports. Chief Kohler said he assumed it was TCOLE, and the data input could not be changed by the department. Councilmember Martinez applauded the officers for stopping speeders.

A motion was made by Councilmember Merz and duly seconded by Councilmember Martinez to accept the 2025 Racial Profiling Report. A vote was taken (5:0 all ayes) the motion carried by all present.

- e. Discussion and appropriate action to accept a Texas Parks & Wildlife (TPWD) grant award for the Lion's Park Improvement project

Mayor Alexander said the City Council had approved the submission of the grant application back in August/September time frame; and the City had notification it had been awarded the grant with the match

funding approved at the February 24th council meeting. Mayor Alexander questioned why this item was back on the agenda. Parks and Recreation Director Chang said at the last meeting he realized the City Council may have more questions about the plan submitted for the grant. Mr. Chang said he had not heard anything from the TPWD on when the City would receive the official documents.

Mayor Alexander said he would prefer to have the grant in hand before they took action to accept. Councilmember Martinez asked if the project would take away from the soccer fields. Mr. Chang said no they would adjust to fit the area. Councilmember Lee said the maintenance of the design shown with the flowers and trees that were just decoration could be costly to the City. Mr. Lee said in his research the normal life span of playground equipment was 15 to 20 years, which agreed with what Mr. Chang said. Mr. Lee thought it was going to be expensive for the equipment that had a short life span. His concerns were the availability of parts as companies tended to change designs. Mr. Lee thought the City should concentrate more on the equipment and less on decorative accessories. Mr. Lee wanted the City to look at other equipment suppliers and bring back information and references from others using the equipment to get the best value for the money along with maintenance. Mayor Alexander agreed. Mr. Chang said there might be some room to make changes but they had to work within the parameters of the grant. No action was taken.

f. Discussion and possible action to amend the Castroville Comprehensive Fee Schedule to modify the fees related to utility reconnect and highway banner

Councilmember Lee briefed the City Council on amending the Comprehensive Fee Schedule to change the reconnect fee from \$100 back to \$50 and reduce the banner fees to a more reasonable amount. Councilmember Lee said the increase approved earlier in the year was too high saying the citizens not able to pay their bill could not afford to pay a reconnect fee that high. A question of whether a reconnect fee should be charged for vacation hold accounts was discussed. Councilmember Merz felt a recovery fee should be enforced as staff continued to maintain while turned off. The City Council decided to vote on the two items reconnect fee and banner fees separately. Councilmember King clarified that the reconnect fee would be reduced back down to \$50.00 and the after-hours customer requested reconnect fee was an additional \$50.00. Councilmember Lee also wanted an option of all reconnect fees to be waived by the City, if the situation warranted.

A motion was made by Councilmember King and duly seconded by Councilmember Merz to approve modifying the Comprehensive Fee Schedule and reduce the reconnect fees to \$50.00 including an additional \$50.00 for customer requested after-hours reconnects. A vote was taken (5:0 all ayes) the motion carried by all present.

Councilmember Lee spoke on the large increase from \$75 to \$600 to the banner fees approved by the City Council. Mr. Lee said he understood that the Chamber of Commerce had not had a banner installed advertising Old Fashion Christmas this past year due to the large increase. Mr. Lee said the purpose of advertising events in the City was to bring tourism to the City and felt the fee needed to be revisited. Mr. Lee recommended changing to \$200. Councilmember Martinez said in Hondo their fees were \$25 for an application fee and from \$50-\$250 to hang. Councilmember King said the City did not allow other organizations to post. Mr. King said he understood the City would have no control over banners if they did. The City Attorney agreed. Mayor Alexander said they needed to look at the banner policy. Councilmember Lee suggested bringing back the policy for the City Council to review.

A motion was made by Councilmember Martinez and duly seconded by Councilmember Marchman to approve the change from \$600 to \$100 per hour not to exceed \$200 total. A vote was taken (3ayes:2 nays (King, Merz)) the motion carried by a majority vote.

g. Discussion and possible action regarding the marketing of airport property on the Castroville Economic Development Council website(s)

Councilmember Lee briefed the City Council on his request to discuss the information on the Castroville Area Economic Development Council website related to the airport. Mr. Lee said the property at the airport would cost millions of dollars to develop and felt the City was not ready and should not promote the area without a plan of business first. Mr. Lee provided an up to date map from the current Airport Master Plan and said the out of date map shown on the CAEDC website should be taken down from the site. Mr. Lee said the City had identified it wanted green space as the City developed and the airport was the one area the City could control that could be part of the green space plan, but nothing had been identified yet. His concern was if the City did not do something before the land was developed it could be too late. He felt if a developer came to the City now, before they had a well thought out plan in place the City would not know how to proceed and could make regrettable mistakes. Mr. Lee said the City had no idea of the cost to improve the area with utilities, roads, taxiways and other needs not identified. Mr. Lee said this should be addressed as a future agenda item. Mayor Alexander said he had noticed the site information did not match the current layout of the Airport. Arnie Dollase, Chairman of the CAEDC gave a brief history on the group saying they were a 501C6 and been in operation since 2008 to promote the City and Medina County for development and started the GoMedina Association. Mr. Dollase said there had been an interest in the Airport in 2014 from a Korean company that manufactured windshield wipers. Mr. Dollase said this business would have met the requirements set by the FAA, but they chose to do business in McAllen instead as it was more economical. Mr. Dollase said he had spoken to his board on the out-of-date materials; and since they were updating their website now they could include the updated map. Councilmember Martinez was in favor of the CAEDC promoting and to update their site with the current layout from the Airport Master Plan on their website. Councilmember Merz felt this item should not have been put on the agenda for discussion by the City Council as this was a private website, and they had no control over. Councilmember Lee said there could be many issues come up with the outdated information on a website and others talking to developers about City properties. Mayor Alexander said the Airport Master Plan was a public document and anyone could publish. Mayor Alexander said he was in favor of updating the information on the CAEDC website and felt Mr. Dollase would send any interests of development to the City for discussions. Mr. Dollase said they would make the changes and be ready within a week. Airport Manager Mike Haley was recognized and made a recommendation to put a link to the current Master plan on the website with all the information and denote requirements to operate out of the Airport and that no funding sources were identified. Mr. Haley said in looking 3-5 years out to budget for improvements to the access road he felt they would have more business options. Mr. Haley and Mr. Dollase would work together to get the current information up. No action was taken.

Mayor Alexander recessed the meeting for a short break at 8:07 p.m.

Mayor Alexander reconvened the meeting in open session at 8:16 p.m.

h. Discussion and appropriate action to authorize the purchase of a vehicle for the Gas Utility Department

Public Works Director John Gomez briefed the City Council on the requested purchase of a vehicle for the Gas Utility Department. Mr. Gomez said this staff had gone back and requested a quote from Buyboard and the local vendors on a F250 versus F350 costs. Mr. Gomez said Buyboard was higher and recommended going with a local vendor. Aaron Garcia, Gas Superintendent, was in attendance saying they were looking at a 2-wheel drive instead of a 4-wheel drive with an enclosed service body, and he recommended the F350 over the F250 since the price difference was only \$1000. Councilmember Merz asked the difference in the models. Mr. Garcia said the F350 had more heavy-duty suspension. Councilmember Lee asked where the truck would be serviced since it would come out of San Antonio. Mr. Gomez said the local dealerships serviced all models. Mr. Gomez said they recommended purchasing a Ford F350 from Red McCombs for a price of \$76,358.00.

A motion was made by Councilmember Martinez and duly seconded by Councilmember Marchman to authorize the purchase of a 2026 Ford F350 from Red McCombs Ford in the amount of \$76,358.00 for the Gas Utility Department. A vote was taken (5:0 all ayes) the motion carried by all present.

Council asked when the truck would be delivered and was told 3 months out.

i. Discussion and appropriate action to establish the proposed scope of the Regional Park Pool bathroom and shower building

Parks and Recreation Director Jonah Chang briefed the City Council on the proposed pool bathroom and shower building. Mayor Alexander asked if it was a prefab or stick-built structure. Mr. Chang said this would be a metal framed building with optional outer material and the original building design had been more ornate. Mr. Chang said the new building would not effect any of the current buildings and would be going out for bids. Mayor Alexander asked when construction would be complete once it was bid. Mr. Chang said hoped to have by the summer. Councilmember Martinez asked about the cost. Mr. Chang said a prefabricated metal building was shown in option #2 and Frontera, the company building the Community Center, might be able to do for under the \$205,000. Councilmember Marchman asked about the number of restrooms shown. Mr. Chang said there would be two unisex and one ADA accessible family restroom to meet the ADA compliance. Councilmember King corrected the building type as pre-engineered not prefabricated. Mr. Chang said they could go back and have stone or another material on the outer facade of the building to tie in with the Community Center look. Mr. Chang said the roof materials could be changed to reduce cost. Mr. Chang said it would be a simple change to the design plans and could be brought back for City Council to review. Mr. Chang said he had brought this back after the CIP discussions, thinking some of the members may have had some confusion on the two options. He wanted the City Council to have another opportunity to ask questions and get clarity. Councilmember King asked would Frontera honor the original bid amount. Mr. Chang said he would be contacting them to have that discussion. Councilmember Merz felt adding nice trim to the building would not cost a lot extra and they needed something nice. Mr. Merz said the Parks Board had recommended Option #2. Councilmember Lee said the building needed to match the other buildings and needed a utility storage room with space for water heaters and make the outside showers closest to the pool for ease of access.

A motion was made by Councilmember King and duly seconded Councilmember Martinez to authorize staff to bring back to the City Council both options #1 and #2 for design and build.

Further discussion followed.

Councilmember King said Option #2 was a larger building with an extra restroom, and this was not designed. Mr. King said the City could put out as a design build project and save on time. With a design built project, the bidder would design the project with costs to specs provided by the City, not bid on engineered plans. Option #1 was shown with concrete masonry unit (CMU) lower walls and had a higher cost. This option needed to be redesigned as a metal framed building. Councilmember King did not think this building would be ready this swim season. Mayor Alexander disagreed and thought it could be completed.

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

XII. DISCUSSION ON FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

Councilmember Merz requested his items of changes to the Subdivision ordinance on parkland dedication, Creating an Institutional Zone, and 811 line locate notifications.

Councilmember Lee requested discussion and action on Airport appraisal on baseball fields and discussion on non-aviation airport properties for regional sports/park complex. Mr. Lee requested staff report on conditions of all city generators including testing cycles and readiness to put online in an emergency. A report on dead and live tree that threaten powerlines and plan for removal. Projections for existing and additional water and wastewater facilities needed for future development. Report on Expansion of the Natural Gas System to meet future growth. Discussion on use of treated wastewater for irrigation purposes and discussion on sales and property tax applicable to Airport Businesses and assets.

Mayor Alexander requested staff update reports from the CIP meeting.

Councilmember Merz noted the request from Brae Roberson to present the September Square Memorial Project at a future meeting. Mr. Merz requested a discussion on creating a Traffic Calming Pilot Policy, Banner Policy and a presentation on a sports complex at regional park in April.

Mayor Alexander said there would be a Special Called Meeting on Monday March 16, 2026 at 5:30 p.m. with an executive session to provide the Performance Improvement Plan to the City Administrator.

Mayor Alexander also notified the City Council he would not be at the April 14th meeting due to going to Washington DC to speak at a water symposium.

XIV. ADJOURN

Mayor Alexander adjourned the meeting at 8:52 p.m.

Sheena Martinez
Mayor Pro Tem

ATTEST:

Debra Howe
City Secretary