

**CITY OF CASTROVILLE CITY COUNCIL
REGULAR CALLED COUNCIL MEETING
1209 Fiorella
City Council Chambers
February 24, 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 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.

Closed: 6:20 p.m.

III. RECONVENE IN OPEN SESSION

Mayor Alexander reconvened in open session at 6:32 p.m.

IV. ROLL CALL

Present:

Mayor Bruce Alexander

Scott Dixon, City Administrator

Mayor Pro Tem Sheena Martinez

Debra Howe, City Secretary

Councilmember Houston Marchman

James, Kohler, Police Chief

Councilmember Phil King

John Gomez, Public Works Director

Councilmember David Merz

Jonah Chang, Parks and Recreation Director

Councilmember Robert Lee

Mike Haley, Airport Manager

Others in Attendance:

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

V. PLEDGE OF ALLEIGENCE

VI. INVOCATION

Councilmember David Merz 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.

Priscilla Garrett, 702 Florence, spoke to the City Council on the recent tree removal at City Hall. Ms. Garrett said there had been positive and negative comments on the change and the City Council had discussed benches, shading, xeriscape and/or rock/pavers. Ms. Garrett asked that the City look at having a survey developed and sent out to see what the citizens would like to have at the City Hall. Ms. Garrett also requested the front of the building be power washed before any landscaping was put down.

Christopher Fowler, 107 River Forrest, spoke to the City Council on his having received code violations on a vehicle he was restoring. Mr. Fowler said after a complaint the Code Enforcement Officer had spoken with him and he had erected a fence to screen the vehicles but they could still be seen from a certain angle. Mr. Fowler said his mustang was not a junk vehicle and was worth more than a corvette he owned. Mr. Fowler wished to have the City Council address at a future meeting antique cars restoration vs junk vehicles.

VIII. CONSENT AGENDA

- a. Minutes for January 29, 2026 Special Called Meeting
- b. Minutes for February 10, 2026 Regular Called Meeting
- b. Approve a Resolution for the Police Department to submit an application for Operation Stonegarden Grant.
- c. Approve an updated Castroville Municipal Airport Courtesy Vehicle Policy and Use/Indemnification Agreement.

Councilmember Lee requested Item VIII c. be removed for further discussion.

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

Councilmember Lee asked if there were any additional costs to the City on providing courtesy cars. City Administrator Dixon said the Airport had two vehicles designated as courtesy cars and those vehicles were already covered by the City's insurance but in the future there may be additional budget items associated with the policy. Mr. Lee suggested adding a statement to include other options such as Uber, or Lift services.

A motion was made by Councilmember Lee and duly seconded by Councilmember Martinez to approve Item 8c. Municipal Airport Courtesy Vehicle Policy and Use/Indemnification Agreement. A vote was taken (5:0 all ayes) the motion carried by all present.

IX. CITY COUNCIL LIAISON REPORTS

Airport - February 3, 2026 - Martinez
P & Z /Council - February 11, 2026 - Marchman
Library - February 12, 2026 - Lee
HLC - February 17, 2026 - King
Parks and Rec - February 18, 2026 – Merz

Councilmember Martinez briefed the City Council on the February 3rd Airport Board meeting. Ms. Martinez said the Board discussed issues with the new signage, the Courtesy Car Policy, and continued to work on updates to Chapter 18, and once complete they would be sending to legal for review. Ms. Martinez said an aviation business, Alpha Bravo, had recently moved out of the airport and the Airport Advisory Board Aviation Conference in Frisco, Texas.

Councilmember Marchman said the Planning and Zoning Commission did not hold a regular called meeting. (There was a joint meeting held with the City Council on February 11th.)

Councilmember Lee briefed the City Council on the February 12th Library Board meeting. Mr. Lee said the board discussed the lack of space and investigating the service of providing voter registration information and Spanish Library Materials. Mr. Lee said the board had voted in Dr. Julieanna Renner-Ramirez Renner as the Chairman.

Councilmember King briefed the City Council on the February 17th Historic Landmark Commission meeting. Mr. King said the commission had reviewed one request for a Certificate of Appropriation and discussed the upcoming work session for February 25th on revisions to ordinances associated with the historic district.

Councilmember Merz briefed the City Council on the February 18th Parks and Recreation Board meeting. Mr. Merz said the board had an extensive discussion with the Soccer Association and worked on recommendations for development agreements related to parkland. Mr. Merz said they were unsure if the suggestions should go to the P & Z for review first before the City Council.

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

A motion was made by Councilmember Martinez and duly seconded by Councilmember Marchman to authorize the Mayor to work with the City Attorney on a Performance Improvement Plan to present to the City Administrator; first bringing back to City Council for approval. A vote was taken (5:0 all ayes) the motion carried by all present.

XI. DISCUSSION AND ACTION ITEMS

- a. Discussion and possible action to adopt a resolution authorizing a contract for services with the Castroville Area Chamber of Commerce

Mayor Alexander briefed the City Council on working with the Chamber of Commerce by first appointing Councilmember Marchman as the Council Liaison and now a contract for promoting more tourism/advertisement for the City. Chamber of Commerce Board President Olivia Stone and Vice President Ruby Cantu were present for any questions. Ms. Stone said the board has not met to review

the agreement but would at the next meeting. Ms. Stone said she was uncertain about managing the website shown under 5.3 Visit Castroville Website clause. City Council determined this was not a City Website but one managed by the CAEDC and this language would be removed.

A motion was made by Councilmember Marchman and duly seconded by Councilmember Martinez to accept agreement as written with the removal of 5.3 Visit Castroville Website.

Discussion followed.

Councilmember King asked about a letter the City had received about six months previously stating the Chamber of Commerce could not take over the tourism responsibility and asked what had changed. Ms. Stone said they had written a letter to advocate for the position of Tourism Director Darrin Hamm but since he had left they could take on the responsibilities. Mr. King did not want an automatic renewal clause for the first few years. City Administrator Dixon said the City did now have a liaison to the board. Ms. Stone said that was correct and they were allowed at the beginning of the meetings for questions, not during financial meeting. Councilmember King said the City and Chamber had agreements in the past 10 years and had issues with meeting the requirements. Councilmember Lee said the Chamber currently carried brochures and other promotional information on the City. Mr. Lee said he would like to see a presentation on what they did now and what the future would look like working with the City. Mr. Lee wanted a detailed presentation on exactly what the Chamber would be providing with \$75,000 in Hot Funds the City planned to give the Chamber. Mr. Lee was also not in favor of an automatic renewal clause. The Steinbach Haus was brought up as it was the Visitor Center and if the Chamber would take over the responsibility. Ms. Stone said that had been a discussion of the Chamber and they did not want the responsibility and the City Council agreed. Ms. Stone requested language to that affect be added. Ms. Stone said the board would have to review and approve but she was in favor of a yearly review and renewal. A question of whether the City Council should have a member of council on the Chamber Board was asked. Vice President Ruby Cantu agreed with yearly renewal, not responsible for Steinbach Haus and agreed on not having a having a member of council on the Chamber Board. Ms. Cantu also wanted more information provided before their board would approve. Councilmember King was in favor of having a presentation from the Chamber of Commerce on what they could provide to the City for tourism.

A motion was made by Councilmember Marchman and duly seconded by Councilmember Martinez to rescind their first motion. Motion was rescinded.

A consensus of the City Council agreed on having annual review in the terms.

The Chamber of Commerce would provide a presentation to the City Council at the March 24th meeting.

b. Discussion and possible action to establish a committee to evaluate the City Hall, Steinbach Hus, and Display Structure at the Steinbach Hus

Mayor Alexander briefed the City Council on the Steinbach Hus having a donation line in the budget from the tours Priscilla Garrett provided and could be used for maintenance. Councilmember Lee said he had recently stopped in at the Steinbach Hus and Wagon display and was concerned with the wood timbers needing attention caused by the elements. Mr. Lee provided photos of the Steinbach Hus and Display structure showing the issues and the need to maintain the buildings. Mr. Lee also provided photos of the City Hall windows and doors which had some wood rot and needed to be scraped and repainted to protect the wood from moisture and the sun. Council decided to form a committee to go and look at the buildings. Councilmember Lee wanted the maintenance issues corrected quickly.

A motion was made by Councilmember King and duly seconded by Councilmember Merz to approve a committee consisting of two Councilmembers - King and Marchman, the City Historic Preservation Officer Selina Angel, and anyone else deemed necessary to evaluate the Steinbach Hus and Display structures condition and provide recommendations. A vote was taken (4 ayes: 1 nay (Lee)) the motion carried by a majority vote.

Mayor Alexander asked if there needed to be another committee formed for the City Hall evaluation. **A motion was made by Councilmember Merz and duly seconded by Councilmember Lee to have the same committee to evaluate the windows and doors of the City Hall and provide recommendations. A vote was taken (5:0 all ayes) the motion carried by all present.** Councilmember Martinez asked if the monies in the CIP could be used for the windows and door preservation. Councilmember Lee said he wanted something done now, not later.

- c. Discussion and possible action to authorize clean up and the installation of a safety fence along the back of the Steinbach Hus property

Mayor Alexander briefed the City Council saying he felt this was a safety and maintenance issue and did not require City Council action. Councilmember Lee spoke on this item saying it was a very steep descent to the river and was concerned with public access and safety. Mr. Lee said the property needed to be cleaned up including brush removal, fencing, and signage put in. Mr. Lee provided photos of the area. Councilmember King suggested the fencing being removed from the pool could be used for this project. Councilmember Merz was in favor of fencing and signage and asked if the City might ask permission from the State to fence closer to the river.

A motion was made by Councilmember Lee and duly seconded by Councilmember Merz to authorize clean up, safety fencing and signage along the back of the Steinbach Hus property. A vote was taken (5:0 all ayes) the motion carried by all present.

Mayor Alexander spoke on the upcoming subjects that he had put on the agenda. Mayor Alexander said some of the items had been discussed earlier and was looking for a plan of action.

- d. Discussion and appropriate action to identify and fund street and drainage maintenance projects

Mayor Alexander briefed the City Council on maintaining the drainage in the City. Mayor Alexander said this was an ongoing issue, with no maintenance plan in effect, and this could be addressed in-house with the city crew.

A motion was made by Councilmember Marchman and duly seconded by Councilmember Martinez to direct staff through the City Administrator to perform street and drainage maintenance to include cleaning of street edges and bar ditches on city streets to accommodate the efficient drainage of water during a rainfall event.

Discussion followed.

Councilmember Merz felt the City may not be able to accomplish this task without hiring more staff or pull the crew off the Geneva Street Drainage/ Wastewater Treatment Plant Ponds projects. City Administrator Dixon said staff would bring back a plan of action to move forward. Councilmember

Merz suggested hiring more staff now, and having a 10–20-year plan, adding new areas . Mr. Merz said The City did not need a full plan ready, just needed to add funding to the new budget. Councilmember Lee said concerning City cleanup the curbs on Hwy 90 had grass growing over and he understood in some cases it was the business owners responsibility but the City’s looks were important. Councilmember Merz said the City could enforce the ordinance in place for property owners to maintain a 10 ft. area in front of their properties or just take care of. Subdivisions were different as the City owned up to 10 ft. and was to take care of.

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

e. Discussion and appropriate action to identify and fund street paving projects

Mayor Alexander said he had placed on the agenda as the City needed a street paving plan of action for the County to work with the City. City Administrator Dixon said he would bring back a streets plan for the County to see.

A motion was made by Councilmember Merz and duly seconded by Councilmember Lee to direct staff through the City Administrator to prepare a proposed plan of action for 2026 Street Paving Projects and identify future revenue sources for City Council approval. A vote was taken (5:0 all ayes) the motion carried by all present.

f. Discussion and appropriate action to authorize and establish funding and a timeframe for closure of the wastewater treatment plant effluent ponds in compliance with TCEQ

Mayor Alexander briefed the City Council on the length of time the City had been dealing with the ponds and wanting to move forward with the closure of the effluent ponds to be in compliance. City Administrator Dixon said the staff that was completing the Geneva Street project was also doing the filling in of the ponds. Mr. Dixon said TCEQ was not a threat as they had submitted a compliance plan and were going by that plan. Mr. Dixon said they had been taking leftover materials from other/outside projects to fill the area in but he could order materials to expedite the project. Mr. Dixon said there was still water in one of the ponds and that water could be run through the plant, and if the waterline at the park was replaced they could use the water for irrigation. Councilmember King said the one pond was approximately 30% filled with dirt at that time.

A motion was made by Councilmember King and duly seconded by Councilmember Lee to direct staff through the City Administrator to provide the City Council a timeline and cost estimate to complete the Wastewater Treatment Plant Effluent Pond project in compliance with the TECQ. A vote was taken (5:0 all ayes) the motion carried by all present.

The City Council moved to discuss 11h. before 11g.

h. Discussion and appropriate action to authorize the installation of a pump, motor, and electrical components for the recently drilled Flat Creek municipal water well

Mayor Alexander said this item was to install the pump, motor, and electrical components in the recently drilled Flat Creek well.

A motion was made by Councilmember Marchman and duly seconded by Councilmember Lee to authorize the installation of a pump, motor, and electrical components to operate the recently drilled Flat Creek municipal water well.

Discussion followed.

Councilmember Merz asked if this installation would be connecting this well. Mr. Dixon said no they would not connect at this time. Mr. Merz asked if the cost of the elevated tank be more or less with this installation. Mr. Dixon said it would cost less. Councilmember Lee ask about installing a soft start pump on this well. Mr. Dixon said there were two plans and they were looking at and a soft pump was being considered. Council asked for the cost of the elevated tank and was told \$16,000,000 to \$22,000,000. The City had pledged debt service of \$3.5 million for the drilling of the Flat Creek water well and the project had come in under budget by \$1 million and would be used for this project.

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

Mayor Alexander reverted back to the regular agenda order.

g. Discussion and appropriate action to identify and fund waterline replacement projects

Mayor Alexander said there were utility funds set aside for the San Jacinto water line replacement and the City could use leftover bond monies for other waterline replacements. Mayor Alexander said the City used to have a replacement program and would like to start back up. City Administrator Dixon asked if this was something to be done in-house. Mayor Alexander said to come back with a list of waterline replacement and how they could do in-house.

A motion was made by Councilmember King and duly seconded by Councilmember Marchman to direct staff through the City Administrator to provide the City Council with a list of waterline improvements projects that can be done using current city staff and equipment for consideration with funding consideration/approval. A vote was taken (5:0 all ayes) the motion carried by all present.

i. Discussion and appropriate action to obtain an engineering cost estimate to rebuild the underground electric distribution system in the Country Village subdivision

Mayor Alexander briefed the City Council on the history of the Country Village system built in 1985. Mayor Alexander said this system was built by the same contractor as River Bluff and was still in acceptable operation but the City should be proactive before the system failed. The current estimate was noted as \$3 million for this project.

A motion was made by Councilmember King and duly seconded by Councilmember Merz to direct staff through the City Administrator to prepare a plan of action, including a cost estimate, to rebuild the underground electrical distribution system for the Country Village Subdivision for City Council review and consideration. A vote was taken (5:0 all ayes) the motion carried by all present.

Councilmember Lee asked that an isolation plan be included in the plan.

j. Discussion and possible action on a Franchise Agreement with West Texas Gas (WTG Energy)

Mayor Alexander spoke on putting this back on for discussion and consideration. Mayor Alexander said the City could collect franchise fees within the City limits for the natural gas and West Texas Gas was looking to provide natural gas to some of the new developments. City Administrator Dixon said NP Homes were putting in gas lines at their cost and Alsatian Oaks and Flat Creek were currently not. The question was if it was more economical for the City to build out and provide the service or enter into a Franchise Agreement with no cost to the city. Councilmember Lee said the citizens voted to keep the natural gas system so the City needed to see what it would take to provide the service the voters wanted to keep. Mr. Lee felt the City Council needed a presentation from the staff on the CCN area the City was responsible for and how they overlapped with projected developments and project costs to run line to the areas before deciding on an agreement. Councilmember King asked if developers could chose who they wished to buy natural gas from and if the City could require gas service be provided by the City. Mr. Dixon said due to the cost the City may only want to look at providing natural gas to only Alsatian Oaks and Flat Creek Developments. A question of whether the developments would be paying a franchise fee was asked. Mr. Dixon said only West Texas Gas would pay the fee for providing gas. Mr. Dixon said NP Homes was smaller and could be the first and use it as a templet, then others may want to put in the gas system and have the PID changed. Councilmember Merz spoke on gas redundance and could be faze out but the average citizen wanted to keep and the City should own if inside the city limits. Mr. Merz was against the gas franchise agreement for any part of the city.

A motion was made by Councilmember Merz to reject a franchise agreement with West Texas Gas (WTG Energy). The motion died from a lack of a second.

Councilmember King was unsure of whether the City should enter into a franchise agreement with West Texas Gas or look at cost to build out and what the revenues would be. No action was taken.

XII. CITY ADMINISTRATOR REPORT

- a. Drainage Projects
- b. BMA Trail Access
- c. Streets, Maintenance and Paving Plan
- d. WWTP Ponds
- e. CPS Energy Dispute
- f. Community Center Construction
- g. Lions Park Splash Pad
- h. Facilitated Council Workshop
- i. Hwy 90 TxDOT Construction Project
- j. County Streets Plan
- k. Multimodal Planning Effort
- l. TxDOT Hwy 90 Improvements
- m. Warrant Roundup
- n. Departmental Reports
 - Animal Control Monthly Report
 - Code Enforcement Monthly Report
 - Community Development Monthly Report

- Library Monthly Report
- Parks and Recreation Monthly Report
- Police Department Monthly Report
- Public Works Monthly Report

City Administrator Dixon provided his report for City Council review. Mayor Alexander announced he had been appointed to the Alamo Transportation Committee by County Judge Lutze. Councilmember Lee asked about the Public Works Staff Report speaking to the SCADA System issues with quality control of new parts. Councilmember King asked about stipulations he had read on entities receiving Tx Parks and Wildlife Grants and parks must remain open to the public forever and no fees were to be charged if grant supported. Parks and Recreation Director Jonah Chang said he did not think the City's grants had those stipulations but would research. Mr. Dixon said the warrant roundup had 9 arrest and broke even. Mayor Alexander asked would the possible partial government shut down affect the City. Mr. Dixon said it would not. Councilmember Martinez said it was only affecting the Homeland Security.

XIII. DISCUSSION ON FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

Councilmember Merz said the Parks and Recreation Board would be bringing to the City Council revisions to Development Parkland requirements and a Community Center Policy. Councilmember Lee said he thought the Comprehensive Fee Ordinance was wrong having the reconnect fee for utilities as \$100 and he thought it had been voted on to put at \$50.00. He wanted it researched and corrected.

XIV. ADJOURN

Mayor Alexander adjourned the meeting at 8:53 p.m.

Bruce Alexander
Mayor

ATTEST:

Debra Howe
City Secretary