



CITY OF IOWA COLONY

CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

**Tuesday, May 27, 2025
6:00 PM**

Iowa Colony City Council Chambers, 3144 Meridiana Parkway, Iowa Colony, Texas 77583

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STATE OF TEXAS

COUNTY OF BRAZORIA

CITY OF IOWA COLONY

BE IT REMEMBERED ON THIS, the 27th day of May 2025, the City Council of the City of Iowa Colony, Texas, held a meeting at 6:00 P.M. at the Iowa Colony City Council Chambers, there being present and in attendance the following members to wit:

Mayor Wil Kennedy
Mayor Pro Tem Marquette Greene-Scott
Councilmember Nikki Brooks
Councilmember Tim Varlack
Councilmember Kareem Boyce
Councilmember Sydney Hargroder

And Councilmember Arnetta Murray being absent, constituting a quorum at which time the following business was transacted.

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Kennedy called the meeting to order at 6:00 P.M.

INVOCATION

Councilmember Varlack prayed aloud.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge of Allegiance and Texas Pledge were recited.

CITIZEN COMMENTS

Brenda Ledbetter expressed her support for allowing residents to obtain a burning permit. She encouraged the city council to clearly define the circumstances under which a permit would be required and when it would not.

Robert Wall voiced his support for permitting burning within the city, provided that appropriate restrictions are in place. However, he raised concerns about enforcement—specifically, who would be responsible for monitoring compliance. He cautioned that the city may be moving too quickly on this issue. As a rural resident without access to city water, sewer, or garbage services, he asked the council to reconsider the permitting requirements.

Carolyn Bowen pointed out that the city currently has an ordinance prohibiting burning within city limits. She noted that this creates a hardship for residents with larger properties. She emphasized that different cities have varying approaches to managing open burning. For example, a neighboring city

issues annual burn permits, while Star Harbor, Texas, allows burning without a permit as long as wind speeds are under 10 mph and the burn pile does not exceed 3x5 feet.

ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION

1. Consideration and possible action regarding potential adjustment for city employees based on the compensation study.

Motion made by Councilmember Hargroder to approve the three-phase compensation plan as presented including a 3% pay adjustment for employees earning under \$100,000 effective June 1, 2025, a 3% COLA for eligible employees, and targeted market adjustments based on survey data and qualifications, both effective October 1, 2025, contingent on final revenue review, Seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Greene-Scott.

Voting Yea: Councilmember Barnett, Mayor Pro Tem Greene-Scott, Mayor Kennedy, Councilmember Hargroder, Councilmember Varlack, Councilmember Boyce

2. Consideration and possible action on allowing burning within city limits on property larger than three acres.

Fire Marshal Albert Cantu presented a series of recommendations for permitting burning within city limits. These included setting a minimum acreage requirement, requiring a burn permit, conducting a pre-burn safety inspection, ensuring proper supervision of the burn site, establishing operational guidelines, and implementing additional safety rules.

Councilmember Varlack raised the question of whether residents should be required to show proof of liability insurance to cover any potential incidents related to burning. He added that a significant challenge will be the fact that rural areas are increasingly surrounded by subdivisions. He also had additional questions regarding the specific requirements and restrictions of the proposed permit system.

Councilmember Brooks expressed concern that the proposed requirements might be overly burdensome. She inquired about assigning specific roles in the burning process and whether guidance would be provided regarding the requirements. She also asked about penalties associated with burn permits and requested data from the City of Manvel on incidents involving uncontrolled fires. Additionally, she asked whether rural residents have been consulted on the need for burning and their opinions on the matter. She later questioned whether rural areas have a Municipal Utility District (MUD) or another entity that supplies water.

Councilmember Boyce noted that while he supports the safety benefits of restrictions, he questioned why the proposed measures seem so strict and how they would serve the broader community.

Mayor Pro Tem expressed concern about relying on a volunteer fire department, asking whether the fire trucks are equipped with water.

Fire Chief Josh Walters emphasized that safety is his top priority. He stated that the size of the acreage is not his main concern—as long as fires are properly monitored and burn parameters are clearly defined. He reiterated that the focus should be on implementing strong safety measures rather than setting limitations based solely on land size. Chief Walters confirmed that the ICVD (fire department) has the fastest response time in ESD 3 and that their trucks do carry water. He also discussed liability considerations associated with issuing permits and stressed the need for well-defined safety protocols.

Councilmember Hargroder asked why burn bans exist in the ETJ (extraterritorial jurisdiction) if burning is not permitted. It was clarified that the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) does allow open burning in the ETJ, provided a permit is obtained through TCEQ.

Chief Bell shared that during his five years serving as Fire Marshal in a neighboring city, he does not recall any incidents where a fire became uncontrollable due to authorized burning. Prior to any burn, residents would notify the city, and he would conduct an on-site inspection. He stated there were no significant issues that he can recall. The purpose of the permit, he explained, is primarily to keep a record of who is burning so the city can remain informed and aware.

3. Discussion on monument signage for Masterplan Subdivisions.

Dinh presented the recommendations from staff regarding monument signage standards for master planned subdivisions.

Dinh presented a comparison of similar municipalities with frontage along Highways 288 and 45, including Pearland, Manvel, and League City. These cities allow developers to submit a master signage plan. The City previously received a request for a variance to the sign ordinance for a monument sign, which was denied. As a result, staff began exploring alternatives through a master signage plan approach.

Councilmember Varlack inquired about the appropriate mechanism or guidance that should be given to the Planning Commission in situations where a developer proposes a large-scale sign, such as a 300-foot "Colossus." He emphasized that the Planning and Zoning Commission is responsible for thoroughly reviewing all aspects of such proposals and providing recommendations.

Councilmember Hargroder noted that the matter was brought to Council after a variance was denied, prompting a deeper review of the ordinance to determine whether it remains appropriate. She asked what the developer had originally requested. Dinh clarified that the Creekhaven developer had proposed a 40-foot-tall monument sign along SH 288. He also noted that the monument's scale and effective area were significantly larger than typical signage. He emphasized the importance of distinguishing between monument structures and signage elements when evaluating such proposals.

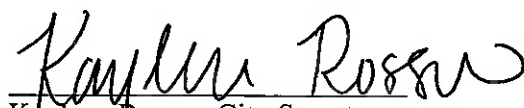
Councilmember Brooks sought clarification regarding the Sterling Lakes sign, pointing out that features like the waterfall and pond represent the monument portion, while the lettering constitutes the signage. She asked how the recommended effective area compared to other signage across the city and whether there were any studies measuring signage effectiveness. Dinh responded that the study considered both signage size and vehicle speed in the area. For large master-planned communities, he stressed the importance of maintaining consistency and ensuring that signage is effective throughout the city.

The Mayor Pro Tem asked whether different types of signage would be treated differently under a revised plan. She expressed interest in developing a framework with clear options to reduce the need for variances. Dinh responded that the current sign ordinance already allows for flexibility in design options.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting is adjourned at 7:49 P.M.

APPROVED THIS 21st DAY OF JULY 2025


Kayleen Rosser, City Secretary


Wil Kennedy, Mayor

