

Regular Meeting Minutes – City of Plantersville
February 8, 2021

The Board of Alderman of the City of Plantersville, Grimes County, Texas, met in regular session on Monday, February 8, 2021 at 7:00 p.m. in the Plantersville Town Hall, 11335 Lodge Lane, Plantersville, Texas.

Members Present:

Karen Hale, Mayor
Kimberly Allphin, Alderman Secretary
Marilyn Bettes, Alderman
Frank Dean, Alderman
Otis Greenwood, Jr., Alderman

Members Absent:

Kristina Keyser Mayton, Alderman Mayor Pro Tem

Visitors present: Carol Kurten, Johnny McNally, and John Hale

1. Call to Order: Quorum was established. Mayor Karen Hale called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m. Alderman Greenwood led the invocation with pledges recited.
2. Minutes: Meeting Minutes from January 11, 2021
Motion to Approve with Correction*: Alderman Bettes
Second: Alderman Greenwood
Voting Yes: Unanimous
Final Resolution: Motion carries
3. Public Comments: Johnny McNally, Chamber of Commerce
4. Invoices and items currently due and payable:
Mayor Hale presented financial statement of all currently due and payable for the City of Plantersville to Aldermen.
Discussion: Review of Items – Navasota Examiner - 2 Public Advertisements - \$205.00 and McCall Gibson Swedlund Barfoot, PLCC Completed Annual Audit - \$5,500.00: budgeted items
Action - Motion to Approve: Alderman Allphin moved to pay all outstanding invoices and items.
Second: Alderman Bettes
Voting Yes: Unanimous
Final Resolution: Motion carries
5. Resolution 12-21 Designating Official Newspaper
Discussion: Mayor Hale presented the resolution to Designating Official Newspaper, this is required annually. The resolution presented designates the Navasota Examiner as the official city newspaper.
Action - Motion: Alderman Dean moved to approve Resolution 12-21 Designating Official Newspaper as Navasota Examiner for the City of Plantersville
Second: Alderman Greenwood
Voting: Yes: Unanimous
Final Resolution: Motion carries

6. Website and Facebook Presence on the Internet and Posted Content

Discussion: Mayor Hale advised the request by Alderman Dean to review the city website and Facebook presence and content. Alderman Dean voiced concerns regarding the terms and services of Facebook. The privacy issues and the liability exposure that is associated with social media, Facebook. The big business of Facebook and advertisers, the risk of contact lists and viewers of the city page. The discrimination of Facebook with what people can see, what people can hear and what people can say. Alderman Dean expressed the need to remove and delete social media connection with the City of Plantersville.

Alderman Allphin remarked that the immediate communication resource of Facebook was beneficial in communication to the citizens of the city and the residents of the community. This type of communication outweighs the negative as an informational channel, it allows posting with reference for more information on the city website. Alderman Allphin agreed that the platforms and limited speech that Facebook has initiated political or non-political is a concern.

Alderman Greenwood voiced his agreement of Facebook censorship and his right to post with conservative issues. He acknowledged that he too may delete his personal Facebook.

Alderman Bettes discussed the means of communication in our rural community had been virtually nonexistent before Facebook, eliminating the city Facebook page would mean eliminating the source of communicating information to the citizens and general public.

Mayor Hale provided research information regarding the City presence on Facebook and Cyber Security issues as requested by Alderman Dean. Mayor Hale spoke with the Texas Municipal League Cyber Security and TML Intergovernmental Risk Pool Cyber Security Department Head. He stated that some risks are necessary to carry on business, risks are always there even if we do not leave our homes, there is some risk. Every media device, website, auto applications such as OnStar, cell phones, emails, search engines, toll road cameras, traffic intersection cameras, shopping mall security cameras and social media sites are tracking you and collecting data.

Facebook is no more susceptible to cyber security risks than any others. Facebook is the best tool available for a small city to disseminate emergency information quickly to its' citizens. Mayor Hale reminded those in attendance that during the prior emergency with Wildfires, the only means to some at that time was Facebook notifications and alerts. He advised that our biggest risk is if the city were to post anything that was harmful to any person, business or other third party and considered libel, slander, and defamation, that could cause the city to be sued for those actions. He further instructed that the way to prevent this was to have limited posting capabilities with only one or two individuals who are aware of these standards. He inquired as to the function of the city Facebook page and was informed that the Facebook page is used to post announcements, notices, reminders, etc. He advised that in this situation, the city Facebook page is being used as a digital bulletin board and that is the best use for a small city. We were advised that we should not post recordings of meetings because we do not have the resources to maintain recordings as required by Local Government Code.

Action - Motion: Alderman Dean moved to delete and remove the City of Plantersville Facebook page.

Second: Alderman Greenwood

Voting Yes: Alderman Frank Dean, Alderman Otis Greenwood

No: Alderman Kim Allphin, Alderman Marilyn Bettes, Mayor Karen Hale

Final Resolution: Motion fails

7. 2021-2022 Community Development Fund, Community Development Block Grant, TxCDBG
Community Development Fund

Discussion: Mayor Hale advised that Request for Qualifications were sent to 10 engineering firms with a requested response. There were 2 respondents to the request, Bleyl Engineering and Goodwin-Lasiter-Strong GLS. Research Comparison of the two with their proposals, information and local recommendations were reviewed by the committee. The committee recommends Bleyl Engineering to the Board. Bleyl Engineering and Steve Duncan have a favorable history including previous grant work projects with DP Water Supply, Grimes County and the City of Anderson and City of Navasota.

Action – Motion: Alderman Bettes moved to approve Bleyl Engineering.

Second: Alderman Allphin

Voting: Yes: Unanimous

Final Resolution: Motion carries

8. May 2021 Election of Officers

Discussion: Mayor Hale advised that the last day to file for place on the ballot is February 12, 2021.

Alderman Dean inquired if the contract for election had been received. Mayor Hale advised that she had not received it. Alderman Dean advised that the administrator had told him the contract had been emailed 2 weeks ago. Mayor Hale confirmed that she would review her email attachments again from Election Administrator, Lucy Ybarra and contact her.

Action: None

9. Resolution 13-21 Community Calendar Posting Local Events on City Website

Discussion: Mayor Hale provided the information with Resolution 13-21 and 13-21 Attachment A. The community calendar would be posted on the city website, a completed request is required to be submitted for review. The guidelines and information must be adhered to with submission as directed to the city residents and community. Mayor Hale noted that the calendar would be on the website only and not on the Facebook page except to refer for more information to the city website.

Action - Motion: Alderman Allphin moved to accept Resolution 13-21

Second: Alderman Greenwood

Voting: Yes: Unanimous

Final Resolution: Motion Carries

Appointment - Mayor Hale appointed Alderman Allphin as chair of the Community Calendar Committee with Alderman Greenwood assisting.

10. Public Notice and Request for Qualifications for hiring City Attorney/Legal Services

Discussion: Mayor Hale presented the Public Notice that will be posted Request for Qualifications for City Attorney/Legal Services to the board for review and discussion.

Action – Motion: Alderman Dean moved to accept the Public Notice and Request for Qualifications as presented for hiring City Attorney/Legal Services.

Second: Alderman Greenwood

Voting: Yes: Unanimous

Final Resolution: Motion Carries

11. Ordinance 07-18A Amendment to Ordinance 07-18

Discussion: Mayor Hale reviewed amendment Ordinance 07-18 Rules of Procedure, Section 3.5 c Meeting Decorum regarding the media portion which only allowed media to use cell phones to record the meetings. The amendment 07-18A will allow the public to record the meetings in addition to the media. Mayor Hale reviewed amendment Ordinance 07-18 Rules of Procedure, Section 3.5 k Meeting Decorum adding no recording equipment will be located closer than eight (8) feet to the Board of Aldermen's table without prior approval of the Board. No equipment will block public or board member ability to see or hear proceedings. Movements, equipment set-up and take-down, adjustments, etc. must be carried out in such a manner as to not disrupt Board proceedings or the ability of the public to see and hear the

proceedings. Board members discussed the amendment and the broadening of the recording and the interpretation of the recording equipment location.

Action – Motion: Alderman Bettes moved to approve Ordinance 07-18A to amend Ordinance 07-18

Second: Alderman Greenwood

Voting: Yes: Unanimous

Final Resolution: Motion Carries

12. Community Interest:

Discussion: City of Navasota Texas Bash, first weekend of March. Town Hall Renovations to begin with announcement on 2/19/2021, City of Plantersville board members invited to attend.

13. Executive Session/Closed Meeting: None required

14. No Action Taken

15. Mayor Hale adjourned the meeting at 8:23 p.m.

*Corrected minutes with removal of Sandra Kuta listed twice as visitor on 2/8/2021
Motion – Alderman Bettes, Second – Alderman Greenwood
Voting – Yes; Unanimous
Motion Carried