

Minutes of the April 11, 2022, Regular City Council Meeting at Heritage Hall, 7:00 PM.

The Merkel City Council met for a Regular City Council Meeting on April 11, 2022, at Heritage Hall, 7:00 PM. Mayor Schrampf called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM and announced a quorum present. Council members present were Matthew Riggan, Brady Rutledge, Shae Garrett, Larry Hewitt, and Joseph Wilson.

Mayor Schrampf led the Pledge of Allegiance and Texas Pledge.

Citizens were given an opportunity to comment.

Brady Rutledge motioned to approve the minutes of the March 14, 2022, Regular City Council Meeting and was seconded by Joseph Wilson. Approved 5-0.

Chief Conklin gave the March Police Department Report. Conklin stated there are 2 candidates in the Police Academy. Chief Harris gave the March Fire Department Report. Harris stated that the new 12 x 12 door accommodating the new fire engine has been installed and the deck gun on the new engine has been replaced. City Manager Campbell gave the March Municipal Court report. Councilman Riggan inquired on Code Enforcement report requested at previous meeting and Campbell explained has not yet been completed. Chief Conklin explained that violations reported in PD monthly reports are for citations. Campbell gave the March Water Usage report.

The Council discussed appointment of EDC Board member, qualifications, and residency requirements. Campbell explained that First Financial employee is not available. The City Manager's recommendation was to appoint businessperson Matt Travis to the board. Councilman Riggan inquired about qualifications and requested that Mr. Travis come to next meeting to meet the council. Campbell provided Mandy Schuman's vitae for consideration on the EDC. Councilman Riggan motioned to table the discussion until May meeting and was seconded by Joseph Wilson. Approved 5-0.

Council discussed the Mutual Aid Agreement for Taylor County. Motion was made by Shae Garrett to approve the Mutual Aid Agreement for Taylor County, Texas was seconded by Matthew Riggan. Approved 5-0.

City Manager Campbell discussed some proposed expenditures for FY 2022-2023 Budget including replacement of police vehicle, new vac trailer for public works, and salary increases. Police department requests a new in-car video system and body cameras due to support from current supplier ending and will need to begin the process with letter of intent to Axon due to supply issues.

Chief Harris presented council with drawings for a new Fire Station. Harris discussed history of current fire station and repairs/improvements made to current building to add life to existing facility. Harris also discussed getting a ladder truck. Campbell gave current cost estimates of similar metal buildings. Council discussed if station could be built as shell and then added on to later. Campbell

stated that with new build it should include housing for EMS if available. Mayor Schramper and council agreed to speak further on plans for fire station.

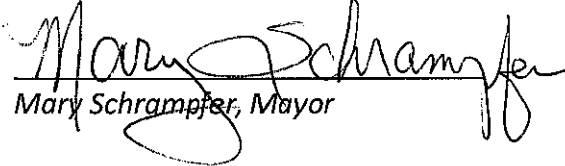
Councilman Riggan started the discussion of "Sweep of Merkel to remove the junked vehicles" and how it should be completed. Campbell proceeded to list the code enforcement procedures for removal of a junked vehicle. Riggan stated that current system not effective and wants all violators processed equally. Mayor Schramper asked if possible to break down the city in sections to process code enforcement. Councilman Rutledge strongly opposed the sweep stating current issues the City has must take precedent with the staffing shortage, water/sewer issues, sewer farm and aging infrastructure. Riggan suggested that fines from code enforcement violations and property taxes can help fund infrastructure repairs. Motion made by Matthew Riggan to continue discussion of code enforcement and sweep of Merkel to remove junked vehicles was seconded by Larry Hewitt. Denied 3-2.

Brady Rutledge's motion to adjourn was seconded by Larry Hewitt and approved 5-0.

Meeting Adjourned at 9:21 PM.



Evelyn Morse, City Secretary



Mary Schramper, Mayor