

Minutes of March 18, 2024, Regular City Council Meeting at Heritage Hall, 7:00 PM.

The Merkel City Council met for a Regular City Council Meeting on March 18, 2024, at Heritage Hall, 7:00 PM. Mayor Schramper called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM and announced a quorum present. Council members present were Larry Hewitt, Gary Hicks, Brady Rutledge, Matthew Riggan and Keith Darby.

Prayer led by Larry Hewitt.

Mayor Schramper led the Pledge of Allegiance and Texas Pledge.

Citizens were given an opportunity to comment.

Brady Rutledge motioned to approve the minutes of the February 12, 2024, Regular City Council Meeting. Gary Hicks seconded the motion. Approved 5-0.

The council discussed the staff reports. City Manager Weaver spoke on the current water projects, the city auction, and the spring cleanup.

Motion to accept the Certification of Unopposed Candidates for the May 4, 2024, City Election was made by Brady Rutledge and seconded by Larry Hewitt. Approved 5-0.

Gary Hicks made a motion to approve the Order of Cancellation for election scheduled to be held on May 4, 2024. Keith Darby seconded the motion. Approved 5-0.

Brady Rutledge motioned to award bid for the Wastewater Treatment Plant Lagoon Dredging to Merrell Bros. Inc. and Matt Riggan seconded. Approved 5-0.

Motion was made by Gary Hicks to approve the request to waive the accrued payments in lieu of taxes (PILOT) in the amount of \$10,130.67 from the Housing Authority of the City of Merkel. Matthew Riggan seconded the motion. Approved 5-0.

The council discussed the Downtown Revitalization Program through the Texas Community Block Grant Program.

A motion was made by Matthew Riggan to approve Resolution 03182024 A Resolution of the City Council of Merkel, Texas, authorizing the submission of a Texas Community Development Block Grant Program Application to the Texas Department of Agriculture for the Downtown Revitalization Program. Keith Darby seconded the motion. Approved 5-0.

Matthew Riggan motioned to approve Resolution 03182024-1 A Resolution of the City Council of the City of Merkel, Texas, determining that an area of the city contains conditions which are detrimental to the public health, safety, and welfare of the community and constitutes a blighted area. Larry Hewitt seconded the motion. Approved 5-0.

A motion made by Gary Hicks to approve Resolution 03182024-2 A resolution of the City of Merkel authorizing intervention in AEP Texas inc.'s requested rate change proceeding before the commission; approving cooperation with the cities served by AEP Texas; hiring Lloyd Gosselink Attorneys and Consulting Services to negotiate with the company and direct any necessary litigation and appeals; requiring reimbursement of cities' rate case expenses; finding that the meeting at which this Resolution is passed is open to the public as required by law; requiring notice of this resolution to the company and legal counsel was seconded by Matthew Riggan. Approved 5-0.

The council discussed the Resolution of the EDC to provide grant to Lupe Rubio for demolition of the old Merkel Motel and Restaurant.

Matthew Riggan motioned to approve Resolution No. 03182024-3 A Resolution of the City of Merkel, Texas authorizing the Merkel Economic Development Corporation to undertake a project to promote new or expanded business enterprises by providing a grant to Lupe Rubio. Larry Hewitt seconded and was approved 5-0.

City Manager Weaver started discussion with Lance Flores from Hilltop Securities for investing in Government Investment Pools. Flores recommended TexStar or Logic. The council discussed the current interest rates, minimum balance, deposits, withdrawals, and how to access funds. Weaver stated that he will have a resolution prepared for the next city council meeting.

The council discussed an Interlocal Agreement with the Merkel EDC for salary and benefits for an EDC Director position.

Council discussed the potential sale of property near the sewer farm, public notice, and survey. Survey cost will be added to the cost of land. A motion made by Brady Rutledge to approve the sale of property was seconded by Keith Darby. Approved 5-0.

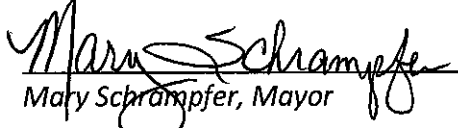
City Manager Weaver started the discussion of updating the current building code ordinance. Weaver suggested adopting the 2018 residential code in full and amending it. Discussion of issues for current builders, timeframes, and current inspection requirements. Weaver stated that there is a need for consistency with the process. Mayor Schramper urged Weaver to move forward with the ordinances to keep builders on track.

Brady Rutledge motioned to adjourn and was seconded by Gary Hicks. Approved 5-0.

Meeting Adjourned at 8:36 PM.



Evelyn Morse, City Secretary



Mary Schramper, Mayor