

Minutes of September 16, 2025, Regular City Council Meeting at Heritage Hall, 6:00 PM.

The Merkel City Council met for a Regular City Council Meeting on September 16, 2025, at Heritage Hall, 6:00 PM. Mayor Cobb called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM and announced a quorum present. Council members present were Elaine Chaney, Collin Jacobs, and Matthew Riggan. Amanda Farmer was absent.

Prayer was led by Collin Jacobs.

Mayor Cobb led the Pledge of Allegiance and Texas Pledge.

Citizens were given an opportunity to comment.

Administer Oath of Office to Tyler Newberry, City Council Place 2.

Mayor Cobb presented Certificates of Appreciation for 10 years of service to Andres Garcia, Delbert Russell, and Phillip Conklin.

Elain Chaney motioned to approve Consent Agenda as presented and was seconded by Tyler Newberry. Approved 4-0.

Shaun Martin, Manager of Public Affairs, Atmos Energy spoke to the council giving update on current infrastructure project and timeline of project.

City Manager Hitt presented the council with the Special Event Application from the Chamber of Commerce for the Merkel Music Fest to be held in October. Elaine Chaney motioned to approve the Special Event Application for the Chamber of Commerce and was seconded by Tyler Newberry. Approved 3-0. Matthew Riggan abstained.

City Manager Hitt explained the need to fill the open positions on the Planning and Zoning Committee. Daniel Buckley was in attendance and spoke to the council. Collin Jacobs motioned to appoint Daniel Buckley to the Planning and Zoning Committee and Matthew Riggan seconded. Approved 4-0.

Mayor Cobb opened a Public Hearing to allow public input on proposed Budget Ordinance 09162025 fixing and establishing a Budget for the Fiscal Year beginning October 1, 2025, and ending September 30, 2026, at 6:32 PM.

No citizens spoke during the public hearing.

The public hearing closed at 6:33 PM.

Matthew Riggan moved to approve and adopt the Fiscal Year 2025-2026 Budget of \$4,875,513.56 for All Operating Funds. Motion was seconded by Collin Jacobs and approved 4-0 with Councilmembers Riggan, Chaney, Jacobs, and Newberry all voting yes.

Mayor Cobb opened a Public Hearing at 6:35 PM to allow public input on the proposed tax rate of \$0.5600 per one hundred dollars (\$100.00) valuation for the 2025-2026 Fiscal Year.

No citizens spoke during the public hearing.

The public hearing closed at 6:36 PM.

Matthew Riggan moved that this budget will raise more total property taxes than last year's budget by \$70,177.00 or 8.57%, and of that amount \$11,794.00 is tax revenue to be raised from new property added to the tax roll this year. Elaine Chaney seconded the motion and approved 4-0 with Councilmembers Riggan, Chaney, Jacobs, and Newberry all voting yes.

Matthew Riggan moved that the property tax rate be increased by the adoption of a tax rate of \$.5600 per \$100, which is effectively a 0.0% increase in the tax rate and was seconded by Collin Jacobs. Approved with Councilmembers Rigan, Chaney, Jacobs, and Newberry all voting yes.

Mayor Cobb opened a Public Hearing to allow public input regarding the Potentially Substandard Structure situated on the following property: College of Merkel, Block 14, Lot W100 S150 W2/3, commonly known as 1506 N 3rd at 6:38 PM.

No citizens spoke during the public hearing. The public hearing closed at 6:39 PM.

A.J. Short gave description of the property at 1506 N 3rd. A motion from Elaine Chaney determining that the structure on 1506 N 3rd is a substandard structure was seconded by Matthew Riggan. Approved 4-0.

A motion was made by Elaine Chaney to enter an order to remove or demolish the structure at 1506 N 3rd within 10 days of the date of the order was seconded by Collin Jacobs. Approved 4-0.

Mayor Cobb opened a Public Hearing to allow public input regarding the Potentially Substandard Structure situated on the following property: Sharp of Merkel, Lot 23 & 24, commonly known as 1712 S 2nd at 6:45 PM.

No citizens spoke during the public hearing. The public hearing closed at 6:46 PM.

A.J. Short gave description of the property at 1712 S 2nd. A motion from Collin Jacobs determining that the structure on 1712 S 2nd is a substandard structure was seconded by Tyler Newberry. Approved 4-0.

A motion was made by Tyler Newberry to enter an order to remove or demolish the structure at 1712 S 2nd within 10 days of the date of the order was seconded by Collin Jacobs. Approved 4-0.

Mayor Cobb opened a Public Hearing to allow public input regarding the Potentially Substandard Structure situated on the following property: Original Town Merkel, Block 15, Lot S240 ft of LT 11, commonly known as 208 Lamar at 6:48 PM.

Owner of property was in attendance and asked for extended time to complete demolition. The public hearing closed at 6:53 PM.

A.J. Short gave description of the property at 208 Lamar. A motion from Matthew Riggan determining that the structure on 208 Lamar is a substandard structure was seconded by Tyler Newberry. Approved 4-0.

A motion was made by Elaine Chaney to enter an order to remove or demolish the structure at 208 Lamar within 30 days of the date of the order was seconded by Matthew Riggan. Approved 4-0.

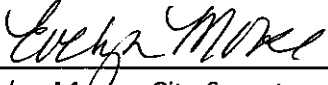
The Council discussed the Merkel Branding Survey and decided to add name and address of person completing the survey. Paper copies to be available at City Hall. City Manager Hitt stated he hopes that the survey will produce 3 options for designs to present at townhall meetings. The survey is to be available online at City Website, Facebook and Merkel Connect.

Motion to reappoint Chris Kelly to the Economic Development Board was made by Elaine Chaney and seconded by Tyler Newberry. Approved 4-0.

The Council entered executive session at 7:09 PM under Texas Gov't Code Section 551.074 (Personnel Matters). Executive session ended at 7:47 PM with no action taken.

Collin Jacob motioned to adjourn was seconded by Elaine Chaney. Approved 4-0.

Meeting Adjourned at 7:48 PM.



Evelyn Morse, City Secretary



Ray Cobb, Mayor

