

City of Woodbranch Village



Vera Craig, Mayor
Scott Essmeier, Council Position 1
Larry Beard, Council Position 2

Mark Kroll, Council Position 3
Brent Purser, Council Position 4
Clay Dean, Council Position 5

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES FEBRUARY 28, 2019

The City of Woodbranch Village council met in a regular meeting beginning at 7:00 p.m., Thursday, February 28, 2019, in the City Hall Building at 58A Woodbranch Drive, New Caney, Texas, 77357. The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. Roll Call showed as being present Councilman Scott Essmeier, Mayor Vera Craig, City Attorney Leonard Schneider, Councilman Brent Purser and Councilman Clay Dean. Councilman Mark Kroll arrived after roll call. Councilman Larry Beard was not in attendance. City Secretary Charlotte Smith was present to take the minutes of the meeting. Mayor Vera Craig led the meeting with a prayer, followed by the pledge of allegiance to the flag.

REGULAR MEETING (7:00 P.M.)

#5. Sign in Sheet and Resident Comments

No names were on the sign in sheet.

#6. CONSENT AGENDA

#6a. Approve Minutes from the January 24, 2019 – Regular Meeting

Copies of the minutes are on file in the City Secretary's office.

#6b. Approve Minutes from the January 31, 2019 – Special Meeting

Copies of the minutes are on file in the City Secretary's office.

#6c. Approve Financial Statement General Fund – January 2019

Copies of this statement are on file in the City Secretary's office.

#6d. Approve Financial Statement Water & Sewer Fund – January 2019

Copies of this statement are on file in the City Secretary's office.

#6e. Approve Financial Statement Debt Service – January 2019

Copies of this statement are on file in the City Secretary's office.

#6f. Approve Bills for the General Fund – February 2019

Copies of the bills are on file in the City Secretary's office.

#6g. Approve Bills for the Water & Sewer Fund – February 2019

Copies of the bills are on file in the City Secretary's office.

#6h. Approve Bills for the Debt Service Fund – February 2019

Copies of the bills are on file in the City Secretary's office.

#6i. Approve the Ground Storage Progress Report – January 2019

Copies of this report are on file in the City Secretary's office.

#6j. Approve the Police Activity Report – January 2019

Copies of this report are on file in the City Secretary's office.

#6k. Road & Ditch, Bureau Veritas & Storm Water Management Report – January 2019

Copies of these reports are on file in the City Secretary's office.

The motion to approve items 6a, 6b, 6c, 6d, 6e, 6f, 6g, 6h, 6i, 6j and 6k was made by Councilman Mark Kroll. The motion was seconded by Councilman Scott Essmeier, motion carried.

#7. Approve Operator's Report – January 2019

Copies of this report are on file in the City Secretary's office. The motion to approve the report, as submitted, was made by Councilman Scott Essmeier. The motion was seconded by Councilman Brent Purser, motion carried.

Hector Ortiz reported the 2nd blower bid for repair is \$3,759.00 and the bid replacement is \$7,584.00. Mr. Ortiz recommended the repair bid. Jonathan Dawson stated it came with a one-year warranty when asked. Mr. Ortiz also reported the need to rebuild the motor driving the blower because it was aged. The motion to accept the bid to repair the blower was made by Councilman Clay Dean. The motion was seconded by Councilman Mark Kroll, motion carried.

Mayor Vera Craig asked for a cost estimate for the assessment list presented.

#8. Consider, discuss and/or take possible action on the recommended payment sheet for 23 Sweet Gum

Councilman Clay Dean had questions for the operator as to how the lack of billing could occur. Jonathan Dawson explained how they performed the tap, placed a lock on the meter, the resident did not call to activate the account and pay a deposit and application fee and the lock was no longer on the meter. After a brief discussion, the motion to accept the recommended payment sheet was made by Councilman Scott Essmeier. The motion was seconded by Councilman Clay Dean, motion carried. Councilman Scott Essmeier called for a preventative measure to be put in place to avoid future situations like this one.

#9. Consider, discuss and/or take possible action on a payment plan for 31 Woodbranch Drive for excessive water usage – (Councilman Clay Dean)

Councilman Clay Dean wanted to discuss the options for a payment plan and other non-compliance issues regarding this residence. City Attorney, Leonard Schneider reminded council to stay with the topic on the agenda item only. Councilman Clay Dean stated he thought all was relevant in discussing a payment arrangement and asked that it be placed on a future agenda, worded properly, so all could be discussed before a decision was made. Councilman Brent Purser asked about the procedures for hot checks. Jonathan Dawson described the procedure. Councilman Clay Dean asked if the City had rights to file liens. City Attorney Leonard Schneider stated the City does have the right to file liens, under the Local Government Code, but not against a renter. He further stated he would address updating our ordinance and will email the City Secretary to place on a future agenda.

Councilman Scott Essmeier asked the operator to check for theft of service at the location. The operator agreed to do so.

Councilman Clay Dean made a motion to table and take no action on agenda item #9.

#10. Consider, discuss and/or take possible action on the construction of a new storage building at City Hall – (Vera Craig, Mayor)

Mayor Vera Craig recommended we start over and get a construction plan together. Councilman Clay Dean stated he has heard this being discussed since before he was on council and would like to see the City involve an architect to

draw up plans of what everyone wants. He further stated he is not a fan of a storage building and would like to see the money used for other improvements, but if we are to do it then it needs to be done right. Mayor Vera Craig asked for a motion to hire an architect. Councilman Scott Essmeier made the motion to hire an architect. City Attorney Leonard Schneider recommended council instruct the City Secretary to seek Request for Qualifications for an architect to be later presented to council and the process could take 2 to 3 months. Councilman Scott Essmeier made the motion to seek RFQs. The motion was seconded by Councilman Mark Kroll. Councilman Clay Dean and Councilman Brent Purser were opposed. Mayor Vera Craig voted for seeking RFQs breaking the tie vote.

#11. Consider, discuss and/or take possible action on nuisance and abatement enforcement (Councilman Clay Dean)
Councilman Clay Dean stated the progress of the nuisance and abatement enforcement. He asked the City Attorney how council should proceed with cases of no contact or no response from the homeowner, if a 2nd notice should be sent before a citation is issued. City Attorney Leonard Schneider stated compliance requirements of the ordinance cited and he would review the nuisance and abatement ordinance.

Councilman Dean reported receiving phone calls with complaints regarding deed restriction, junked vehicles on the streets and other ordinance violations in Woodway Forest. He also reported taking the City Secretary over to observe the types of violations and will be putting a list together. He reported a positive response to the first round of letters and hopes that will continue.

Councilman Brent Purser stated the police department could be utilized in asking the residents to remove the vehicles off the streets.

#12. Consider, discuss and/or take possible action on the 2018 Racial Profiling Report

The motion to approve the report was made by Councilman Scott Essmeier. The motion was seconded by Councilman Brent Purser, motion carried.

#13. Consider, discuss and/or take possible action on the Police Department liaison position – (Vera Craig, Mayor)
Mayor Vera Craig stated the City has a new Police Chief who is getting acclimated to the routine of being the Chief of Police in the City of Woodbranch. She stated in the past the City has had a police department liaison position that has been a councilmember who has checked in with procedure and that sort of thing with the police department. She stated that it needed to be someone that can be available. She further stated Councilman Mark Kroll was currently appointed but his work schedule was very busy and requested whether council would like to continue with a liaison position or appoint Councilman Brent Purser to the position because he has expressed interest in doing it.

Councilman Mark Kroll recommended Councilman Brent Purser for the position citing his level of law enforcement experience.

Councilman Clay Dean asked where the outline for what the police department liaison position does is located. Mayor Vera Craig stated she did not believe there ever was an outline. Councilman Clay Dean made reference to the 3rd party report that previous council acquired. He referred to page 3, of the report, that recommends the position to be abolished. He stated the report, requested by previous council and paid for with tax payer dollars, noted 5 recommendations to the previous council and zero were used. Councilman Clay Dean read the recommendation aloud and stated the council hired the Chief of Police and he believes the Chief should be able to address the Mayor and Council directly and does not need a 3rd party to do so.

Mayor Vera Craig again stated the position was appointed by previous councils.

Councilman Clay Dean stated he did not think it served the City well since a 3rd party was hired and the recommendations were not considered.

Councilman Scott Essmeier asked that Mayor and Council go in to closed executive session.

Councilman Clay Dean asked why should council go in to closed session when the item was on the agenda.

Mayor Vera Craig called for a motion to either abolish the position or appoint someone.

Councilman Clay Dean made the motion to go with the recommendations of the report and abolish the police liaison position. The motion did not carry.

Councilman Brent Purser stated he was not on board with the position either, but felt like the Chief needed someone available if he needed assistance and it could be anybody not just one person. He also stated he did not understand what that position was supposed to do with no guidelines or job description.

City Attorney Leonard Schneider offered the suggestion that Councilman Clay Dean withdraw his motion, because he had a recommendation to council. He recommended council skip item #13 and go to item #14, come out of closed session and go to item #15 and take action and then the Mayor could revisit item #13.

Councilman Clay Dean withdrew his motion.

#14. Closed Executive Session in Accordance with the Open Meetings Act TEX. GOV'T CODE 551.074 – To discuss personnel matters – Chief G. A. Palmer

Council went in to closed session at 7:47 p.m.

(A) – to deliberate the appointment, employment, evaluation, reassignment, duties, discipline and or dismissal of a public officer or employee

#15. Reconvene and take possible action

Council reconvened in to open session at 8:29 p.m. No action was taken on the closed session.

Council took no action on item #13.

#16. Item of Community Interest – (Hear announcements concerning items of community interest from the Mayor, Councilmembers, and City staff for which no action will be discussed or taken.)

Councilman Brent Purser mentioned he would like to have a “meet the Chief” get together, after Chief Palmer has had the opportunity to hire some officers, and maybe have hamburgers and hot dogs. Mayor Vera Craig said that could be discussed.

No other announcements were made.

#17. Adjourn

The motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:30 p.m. was made by Councilman Scott Essmeier. The motion was seconded by Councilman Mark Kroll, motion carried.

