

THE CITY OF WOODBRANCH VILLAGE  
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES  
OCTOBER 24, 2019

The City of Woodbranch Village council met in a regular meeting at 7:00 p.m., Thursday, October 24, 2019, in the City Hall Building at 58A Woodbranch Drive, New Caney, Texas, 77357. The regular meeting was called to order at 7:02 p.m. by Mayor Vera Craig. Roll call showed as being present Councilman Scott Essmeier, Councilman Mark Kroll, Mayor Vera Craig, Councilman Brent Purser and Councilman Clay Dean. City Attorney Leonard Schneider 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. City Attorney stand in Richard Pecore appeared after roll call.

REGULAR MEETING (7:00 P.M.)

#5. Sign In Sheet

No names appeared on the sign in sheet to discuss items on the agenda

Sign In Sheet to discuss items not on the agenda

Sandra Griggs – resident thanked everyone for listening to what she was about to say. She stated she lives at 374 Elm Street and they were told it never flooded before and now they have flooded twice. Her husband and her looked and it was caused by the drainage. She stated they got quite a bit of water and the man next to her got some too. She stated she hasn't been here yet because they are out of their home, living with family, and both her and her husband have been ill. She stated neither can stay in the house because of all the sheetrock dust. She asked when there was going to be a solution to the drainage problem in the community?

Mayor Vera Craig stated she could respond. She informed Mrs. Griggs the City typically we reached out to the Commissioner's office for assistance with clogged culverts and digging ditches out. But the Commissioners have changed hands and we've waited, and requested, and were not given any input from the Commissioner's office. She reported, at the last council meeting, council decided not to rely on the Commissioner's office anymore and to reach out to an independent source. She reported City Secretary, Charlotte Smith had a meeting today, with Texas Drainage, and they evaluated the area, she gave them a list of the needs and they are going to evaluate that and give us an idea of what its going to cost and a time line that they can respond to it.

City Secretary, Charlotte Smith reported she did have the Griggs residence on the list.

Mrs. Griggs stated she just wanted to make sure of what the City was doing about it. She heard the drainage problem has been going on since 2015.

Mayor Vera Craig stated there is always going to be a drainage problem, and that Mrs. Griggs has to understand given the last 2 major rain events, in the last 2 years, there is not any amount of drainage going to handle that kind of rainfall. She stated she will say drainage, in the City of Woodbranch, has been an issue. There are limited funds, our City's tax base is .2227/\$100, which is not a lot. So, we try to do the best we can with what are given to do with, but we are trying to look in to the problem.

Mrs. Griggs asked how many people in the City of Woodbranch flooded this last time for Imelda.

City Secretary Charlotte Smith stated the most accurate number she had was 102.

Mrs. Griggs asked how many residents are in the City of Woodbranch?

Mayor Vera Craig reported there were 510 residential water connections.

Mrs. Griggs stated that was a good amount.

Mayor Vera Craig agreed.

City Secretary Charlotte Smith stated a large portion of our city backs up to the creek.

Mrs. Griggs stated she was aware of that but to flood up here?

Councilman Clay Dean stated that the flood drainage was built to handle 12” of rain and after Harvey they raised it to 16”. He stated we got 30 something inches. If you get 30” of rain here tomorrow, it’s gonna flood again. You can’t contain it. Nobody can.

Mrs. Griggs stated she understood for the majority of the people in the subdivision, but her house should have never flooded.

Councilman Clay Dean stated we were gonna look in to it. He knew several homes that had never flooded and he has lived in the subdivision forever.

Mrs. Griggs stated they flooded the first time in May of this year and again in September. She thanked council, stated her 3 minutes were up and hopes we look in to it and give her some answers.

#### #6. CONSENT AGENDA

##### #a. Approve Minutes from the September 26, 2019 – Regular Meeting

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

Mayor Vera Craig requested that a correction be made to the minutes. She stated she was asked if Lilliput Farms Section 3 was in the city limits and she misspoke on that, stating she thought it was in the county. She stated the engineer followed up on that and sent her the correction. Lilliput Farms Section 3 is in the city limits so she wanted to make that correction.

Councilman Clay Dean requested to comment on item #8 of the minutes. Councilman Dean had comments regarding Mr. Barrett’s issue with Lilliput Farms.

Councilman Dean stated he was on page #3 of the minutes. Councilman Dean stated on this particular thing he wants to make comments on and make sure we are clear because it is not on the agenda for us to speak, but he can speak to the minutes. He stated there was a situation where a group of people, the Sycamore Families Association, which none of those people flooded, have hired an attorney to talk about the drainage in Lilliput Farms. We had all kinds of documentation and pictures that was everything to the contrary to what these people are claiming. Secondly, the City has not accepted any of these roads or any of these ditches there. And our City attorney cut us off and he took it upon himself to tell them, and took over telling them, we will take care of this. We don’t want the city attorney spending anymore tax payer’s money on something we don’t have anything to do with right now. Councilman Dean further stated he wanted the attorney to stand down. He stated we don’t want him talking to these people. We have no reason to talk to these people. We don’t have a street there. We don’t have a ditch there. And we don’t need to be spending tax payer’s money fighting that battle. If the attorneys have to talk to Charlotte, to get stuff for things, that’s fine. But he doesn’t want to spend any tax payer’s money on the Sycamore Families Association.

##### #b. Approve Financial Statement General Fund – September 2019

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

##### #c. Approve Financial Statement Water & Sewer Fund – September 2019

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

#d. Approve Financial Statement Debt Service – September 2019

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

#e. Approve Bills for the General Fund – October 2019

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

#f. Approve Bills for the Water & Sewer Fund – October 2019

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

#g. Approve Bills for the Debt Service Fund – October 2019

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

#h. Approve the Ground Storage Progress Report – September 2019

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

#i. Approve the Court Activity Report – September 2019

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

#j. Approve the Police Activity Report – September 2019

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

#k. Approve the Road & Ditch, Bureau Veritas & Storm Water Management Report – September 2019

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

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

#7. Operator's Report – September 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 Mark Kroll, motion carried.

#8. Consider, discuss and/or take possible action on the appointment of Trisha Marie Cranney to fill the vacancy in Council Position 2

The motion to appoint Mrs. Cranney was made by Councilman Clay Dean. The motion was seconded by Councilman Scott Essmeier, motion carried. City Secretary, Charlotte Smith administered the Oath of Office, and executed the Statement of Elected Officer, and Councilman Cranney took her seat.

#9. Christine Shelton – resident to request a variance to Ordinance 158 with regard to permission to construct a second dwelling on her property above her garage

Resident requesting permission to build an elevated living structure above her garage after suffering substantial damage to her home with the last two major flood events. After some discussion, the motion to allow Mrs. Shelton to go through the permit process, without the need for a variance, was made by Councilman Clay Dean. The motion was seconded by Councilman Mark Kroll, motion carried. Councilman Scott Essmeier was opposed.

#10. Consider, discuss and/or take possible action on the request, submitted by Cecilia McDonald, to use the city hall meeting room

Resident requesting permission to use the city hall building meeting room to meet with citizens and to provide speakers for the purpose of educating citizens. She stated she would like to change her request to "as needed" or "with approval. She stated she desires to have speakers come and address citizens and stated she met with a representative from the San Jacinto River Authority and Commissioner Metts. She stated they provided some useful information and would like to give the neighbors of the community a little more opportunity for education so they can be a part of the conversation on things that concern them. After a brief council comment period, Mrs. McDonald agreed to gather

more information regarding the name and purpose of the group for consideration at a later date. No action was taken on this item.

#11. Consider, discuss and/or take possible action on the Venus ditch drainage project in Woodway Forest (Clay Dean, Councilman)

After a brief discussion amongst Council and representatives from Roman Forest it was decided a workshop, to be scheduled in the near future, would be necessary to proceed with a solution. No action taken on this item.

#12. Consider, discuss and/or take possible action on requests, submitted by residents affected by Tropical Storm Imelda, for payment arrangements on excessive water bills

After a brief discussion it was decided to use the same approach as with Hurricane Harvey flood victims. The motion to average out the excessive water usage, caused by flooding and for only residents that flooded, and waiving all disconnects and disconnect fees was made by Councilman Scott Essmeier. The motion was seconded by Councilman Clay Dean, motion carried.

#13. Consider, discuss and/or take possible action on how to proceed with delinquent water and sewer bills for 104 White Oak North

After a brief discussion, the motion to terminate the resident's access to sewer, and bill for the past illegal sewer usage, was made by Councilman Scott Essmeier. The motion was seconded by Councilman Clay Dean, motion carried. Councilman Mark Kroll was opposed.

#14. Consider, discuss and/or take possible action on the permitting process and complying with the NFIP and FEMA regulations (Vera Craig, Mayor)

After a brief discussion amongst Council and Bob Schmidt, the Flood Plain Administrator took place, the motion to have Mr. Schmidt begin the process of identifying homes that were substantially damaged, and send out substantial damage letters, was made by Councilman Clay Dean. The motion was seconded by Councilman Mark Kroll, motion carried.

#15. Consider, discuss and/or take possible action on the conveyance of infrastructure for Lilliput Farms Section 1 (Vera Craig, Mayor)

After a brief discussion amongst Council, Derek Wind, Engineer for Lilliput Farms, Bob Schmidt and resident Mr. Lybrand, who lives in Section 1, the motion to accept the conveyance, with a condition that the drainage is closely monitored for any obstructions 3 times daily by the police department, was made by Councilman Clay Dean. The motion was seconded by Councilman Brent Purser, motion carried. Councilman Scott Essmeier was opposed.

#16. Consider, discuss and/or take possible action on changing the November regular meeting to Thursday, November 14, 2019 (Vera Craig, Mayor)

The motion to change the November meeting, because of the election calendar and the Thanksgiving Holiday, was made by Councilman Scott Essmeier. The motion was seconded by Councilman Mark Kroll, motion carried.

#17. 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.)

Mayor Vera Craig announced the early voting period was currently going on.

No other announcements were made.

#18. Adjourn

The motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:59 p.m. was made by Councilman Scott Essmeier. The motion was seconded by Councilman Clay Dean, motion carried.

