

**MERCEDES CITY COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
JUNE 20, 2023 – 6:30 P.M.
MERCEDES CITY HALL – COMMISSION CHAMBERS**

MEMBERS PRESENT:	Oscar D. Montoya Sr.	Mayor
	Joe Martinez	Mayor Pro-Tem
	Jacob Howell	Commissioner
	Armando Garcia	Commissioner
	Ruben Saldana	Commissioner - Virtual

STAFF PRESENT:	Alberto Perez	City Manager
	Martie Garcia-Vela	City Attorney
	Joselynn Castillo	City Secretary
	Javier Ramirez	Asst. City Manager
	Nereida Perez	Finance Director
	David Jimenez	I.T Manager
	Kristine Longoria	Human Resources
	Francisco Sanchez	Interim Police Chief
	Marisol Vidales	Library Director
	Orlando Diaz	Lieutenant

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Mayor Montoya welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order at 6:30 P.M.

2. ESTABLISH QUORUM

All members of the Commission were present which constitutes a full quorum.

3. INVOCATION

Mayor Pro-Tem Martinez said the invocation.

4. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Commissioner Howell led in the Pledge of Allegiance.

5. PRESENTATIONS

a. Recognition of Mercedes Lady Tigers Softball Team

Mayor Montoya invited the Lady Tigers Softball Team to be recognized and read a proclamation in honor of their accomplishments and awards. Mayor Montoya said a few words to the team and the parents. The Commission each took some time to say a few words to congratulate them. The Coach said a few words thanking the commission for the proclamation and recognition for the team.

b. Proclamation recognizing June as Posttraumatic Stress Disorder Awareness Month

Mr. Samuel Perez, a veteran with the Veteran Affairs, spoke about PTSD awareness and supporting programs to help people suffering from PTSD. Mayor Montoya read the proclamation regarding Posttraumatic Stress Disorder and bringing awareness.

c. Presentation Update by Perdue

Ms. Janelle Caso, Attorney at Perdue informed the Commission about the 2021-2022 Fiscal Year. Ms. Caso addressed the Pre-Litigation Program where they

contacted 1,459 by phone, mailed 2,153 letters, and had 314 addresses updated. They conduct 44 field inspections and had 4 delinquent taxpayers enter into a payment arrangement. Ms. Caso informed about the litigation where they filed 33 original petitions and interventions and had 7 bankruptcy filed in federal court in the amount of \$18,197 in base tax. After suit is filed they can move to tax sales, 3 properties were on resale and city received \$13K. They collected a total of \$321,458 in tax collection, \$208,746 of it was delinquent base tax. Collections increased by 16.77% from last fiscal year to this fiscal year. Ms. Caso stated the Texas Homeowners assistance fund program has assisted 167 households. Collection activities they made 1,578 phone calls, 19,104 letters mailed and updated 2,052 addresses. Collections increased by \$171K in comparison to FY20-21. Resolved cases in the amount of \$145,363 does not go to the City. From 2016 to 2022 City Collected \$193K. At a question, Ms. Caso elaborated on the payment arrangements. Commissioner Howell thanked Perdue for all the available options to help the residents. Mayor Montoya stated the goal is to help residents keep their homes and work with the taxpayers.

6. OPEN FORUM

No citizen signed up

7. CONSENT AGENDA:

a. Approval of Minutes for meeting(s) held June 6, 2023

b. Approval of surplus items for auction

Mayor Pro-Tem Martinez made a motion to approve. Commissioner Garcia seconded. Upon a called vote, the motion passed unanimously.

8. ORDINANCES/RESOLUTIONS:

a. Approval of resolution 2023-14 regarding commitment of funds for 2019 Flood HUD most impacted and distressed (HMID) competition grant.

Mr. Ramirez stated this is the commitment for the Mercedes portion for the Gate 3 project/ Mercedes Lateral. The commitment amount for the city is \$100K and will be receiving \$1Mil from GLO. Commissioner Howell made a motion to approve. Mayor Pro-Tem Martinez seconded. The area will service from Ohio to the Little League Area and will assist in the flow behind Alicia's restaurant. Upon a called vote, the motion passed unanimously. Commissioner Howell suggested permanent flood lights.

9. MANAGEMENT ITEMS:

a. Approval of grant reimbursement for historically designated property 236 S. Missouri Ave.

Mayor Pro-Tem Martinez motioned to approve. Commissioner Saldana seconded. Mayor Pro-Tem Martinez clarified that the owners paid \$40K and will only get reimbursed \$10K. The grant was \$5K for Leveling and Façade and \$10K for Roofs. The funding comes from Hotel/ Motel. This grant is only available to properties marked historic. The owners have to provide 3 quotes and samples of the items being purchased to meet the historical qualifications. Mayor Pro-Tem Martinez rescinded his motion to approve items 9A and 9B. Commissioner Saldana seconded. Upon a called vote, the motion passed unanimously.

b. Approval of grant reimbursement for historically designated property 230 S. Texas Ave.

This item was approved during item 9A.

c. Sponsorship request from DHR Health for Fishing for Hope Tournament

Commissioner Howell motioned to table the item. Mayor Pro-Tem Martinez seconded. Upon a called vote, the motion passed unanimously.

10. BIDS/CONTRACTS:

a. Approval of contract renewal with TIF Services of South Texas

Mayor Pro-Tem Martinez motioned to approve. Commissioner Saldana seconded. Mayor Pro-Tem Martinez rescinded his motion and Commissioner Saldana rescinded his second. Commissioner Saldana motioned to move in lieu of contract renewal to authorize city manager to go out for bids for TIF Services. Mayor Pro-Tem Martinez seconded. Upon a called vote, the motion passed unanimously.

b. Approval of Auction Agreement with Galindo Auctions, LLC

Ms. Castillo informed the Commission that auction will be held July 22, 2023 at 10:00 A.M. Galindo Auctions will receive 10% commissions or \$4,000 whichever is greater. At a question, Ms. Castillo stated that the contract is per auction because the city needs time to gather items for an auction and it is more cost effective due to the city holding one auction per year on average. Mayor Pro-Tem Martinez motioned to approve. Commissioner Saldana seconded. Upon a called vote, the motion passed unanimously.

11. DEPARTMENTAL MONTHLY REPORTS

At a question by Commissioner Saldana, Chief Campos stated they were dispatched to a fire and there were about 500 tires burning. There was a request for flight due to a potential person in the canal and the drone was utilized to locate the person. At a question by Mayor, Chief Campos stated they have had several emergency management meetings regarding rain events. At a question by Commissioner Howell, Chief Campos stated he would speak with the Public Works director regarding funding for lights at the volunteer station. Mayor Montoya asked Interim Chief Sanchez regarding light poles being out. Mayor Montoya would like a report of light pole numbers checked and outreach. At a question by Commissioner Saldana, Ms. Perez stated the \$8.5 is the expenditures year to date, the numbers are not finalized, hence the difference from page 50. Ms. Perez stated that it takes meter readers about 2 weeks to cut off service and some people come in to pay during that time causing them to void the disconnect. Ms. Perez stated that the park fund is a new fund. Commissioner Saldana stated they started a column in the newspaper to feature the positive things in the city.

Mayor Pro-Tem Martinez made a motion. Commissioner Garcia seconded. Upon a called vote, the motion passed unanimously. The meeting went into executive session at 8:06 P.M.

12. EXECUTIVE SESSION:

a. Discussion with City Manager regarding personnel matters – Section 551.074

Mayor Montoya called the meeting back to order at 8:42 P.M.

13. OPEN SESSION:

a. Item A from executive session

No action

14. ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Pro-Tem Martinez motioned to adjourn. Commissioner Howell seconded. Upon a called vote, the motion passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 8:43 P.M.