

**MERCEDES CITY COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
SEPTEMBER 3, 2024 – 6:30 P.M.
MERCEDES CITY HALL – COMMISSION CHAMBERS**

MEMBERS PRESENT:	Oscar D. Montoya Sr.	Mayor
	Dr. Ruben J. Saldana	Mayor Pro-Tem
	Dr. Jacob C. Howell	Commissioner
	Armando Garcia	Commissioner
	Jose Martinez	Commissioner

STAFF PRESENT:	Alberto Perez	City Manager
	Martie Garcia Vela	City Attorney (Virtual)
	Joselynn Castillo	City Secretary
	Meredith Hernandez	Interim Finance Director
	Armando Villela	Parks Director
	Juan Vasquez	I.T Specialist
	Denisse Hernandez	Planning Admin Asst.
	Alvaro De Leon	Chief Building Official
	Jesus Rodriguez	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

Commissioner Martinez said the invocation.

4. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Commissioner Howell led in the pledge of allegiance.

5. OPEN FORUM

There were no public comments.

6. PRESENTATIONS:

a. Project Update on 10th Street by SDI Engineering

Mr. Isael Posada from SDI Engineering provided an update on the 10th Street project, which covers the segment from FM 491 to Florida and then from Florida to Maryland. Urban County will be responsible for the overlay work from Ohio Ave. to Maryland. All necessary documents have been sent to Urban County for bidding on the project. Any remaining work required from the City will also go out for bid.

The overlay from FM 491 to Florida was completed on August 14. Urban County's portion of the project costs \$250,875, while the City's portion amounts to \$1,267,319.69, putting us over the initial cost estimate by \$48,000 for the entire project. Materials testing has been completed, with no failures reported. Mr. Posada explained the material testing process and indicated that core testing will also be requested. The asphalt is mixed with caliche and compacted before the overlay is applied.

There was some discussion about the quality of the overlay, particularly concerning bumpiness in certain areas. Mr. Posada confirmed that the base was tested and met compaction and depth requirements. He noted that city dumpster trucks could potentially impact the road over time. He suggested that the City should consider placing signs to warn of heavy load traffic on streets intended for local use rather than commercial vehicles.

Additionally, the recent rain showed that the road did not have significant puddling issues. No further action is required at this time.

b. Public Hearing regarding the Voluntary Annexation of Las Cabanas Subdivision

Mayor Montoya opened the public hearing at 7:04 p.m. Mr. Juan Alonzo, Project Engineer and Mr. Raul Guerra, Developer informed the Commission about the property for Las Cabanas. Mr. Alonzo stated 10 Acres is already inside city limits and the other 14 acres are voluntarily being annexed. Mr. Guerra stated the subdivision will be a gated community with 70 single family residential lots all in one phase. The homes are about 2,000 sq ft. and the home costs are at \$250k to \$380K. Mayor Montoya closed the public hearing at 7:08 p.m.

c. Presentation update on lighting by Arredondo

Mr. Arredondo addressed the commission regarding lighting concerns. Commissioner Martinez inquired about the lighting situation on Texas Ave., where the City currently has 100 lamp posts. Mr. Arredondo suggested that new lighting be installed in the parking area near the State Farm and KC Hall, with each light costing \$137. He provided a map indicating where he plans to request AEP to install flood lights that would shine backwards into the park. He also mentioned that if additional lighting is needed, it would involve digging to install electrical lines and adding more light poles.

Commissioner Howell raised concerns about the need for lighting at the basketball courts, on 10th Street, and under the bridge. He also suggested exploring solar-powered lighting options. He emphasized the importance of focusing on intersections and high-traffic areas. There was continued discussion regarding lighting needs at HEB Park, Las Flores Del Valle Park, and Texas Street. No further action is required at this time.

7. Consent Agenda:

a. Approval of Minutes for Meeting(s) held August 19, 2024, August 26, 2024 and August 29, 2024

b. Approval of 3rd Quarterly Financial Report

Commissioner Howell motioned to approve item 7A and 7B. Commissioner Martinez seconded. Upon a called vote, the motion passed unanimously.

8. Management Items: *Present, discuss, consider and possibly take action regarding:*

a. **Official Ballot for Election of the Region 12 Director of the TML Board of Directors**

Mayor Montoya informed that TML has 15 board members to the board of directors. Directors serve a 2-year term and this will be a representative for Region 12. The Candidates are Mr. Victor Sebastian Haddad and Mr. Brian Martinez. Commissioner Martinez motioned to select Mr. Victor Haddad. Commissioner Garcia seconded. Upon a called vote, the motion passed unanimously.

b. **Approval of the Conversion of the 300 Block of 3rd Street from Ohio Ave. to Texas Ave. to a One-Way Street**

Lt. Rodriguez addressed the Commission regarding monitoring traffic and pedestrians in the area. The traffic on Texas Ave. impedes traffic view heading into Texas Ave. Commissioner Howell motioned to approve. Mayor Pro-Tem Saldana seconded. At a question, Lt. Rodriguez clarified that the flow of traffic will be from west to east (Texas to Ohio). Lt. Rodriguez stated they can educate the people first. As far as parking, he stated the city would probably gain parking in the area. Mayor Montoya informed about how the parking issue began, they spoke about striping the street, and parking spaces designated for 15 minutes. Upon a called vote, the motion passed unanimously.

c. **Approval of the Development Corporation of Mercedes Budget for FY 24-25**

Ms. Ramirez informed the Commission the EDC will be funding Little Nashville, Outlet mall funds??, DCM will be funding projects. Ms. Ramirez stated the outlet mall is projecting a 3% increase in sales tax revenue and the DCM budget accounted for that. \$350K in reserves, the budget is balanced and next year will have \$350K to carry over to the next fiscal year. In the following Fiscal year would have the outlet mall debt, two other debts that will be paid off. \$708K carry over, Ms. Ramirez stated the reserve is the amount of funds that are not obligated to any specific line item but is accessible to the EDC for projects. Any expenditure over \$50K come to commission for approval. The budget may be adjusted once or twice a year. Mayor Montoya wanted to make sure that the City and EDC need to be working together on projects. Commissioner Howell motioned to approve. Commissioner Garcia seconded. Upon a called vote, the motion passed unanimously.

9. Ordinances/Resolutions:

a. **Approval of Resolution 2024-26 authorizing signatories for requesting funds pertaining to the 2019 Flood HUD Most Impacted and Distressed (HMID) Competition CDBG-DR**

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

b. **Approval of Ordinance 2024-11 amending Zoning Ordinance No. 26 to include New Zoning: Class "R-TH" Town House Residence District**

Commissioner Martinez motioned to approve and forego the reading. Commissioner Garcia seconded. Upon a called vote, the motion passed unanimously.

10. Bids/Contracts:

a. **Approval of Interlocal Agreement between the City of Mercedes and the City of Weslaco for Animal Control Operations and Impoundment**

Commissioner Martinez motioned to approve. Mercedes Legal recommended to include a hold harmless the city of Mercedes. Commissioner Martinez amended his motion to approve on the condition that the hold harmless on the city of Mercedes. Commissioner Garcia seconded. At a question, Mr. Perez stated the city can put a plan together to inform the commission the costs to have our own animal shelter with staffing and equipment and food. Mayor Montoya would like to have an event for spay and neutering animals. Upon a called vote, the motion passed unanimously.

b. **Approval of Memorandum**

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

Commissioner Howell motioned to go into executive session. Mayor Pro-Tem Saldana seconded. Upon a called vote, the motion passed unanimously. The meeting went into executive session at 8:10 p.m.

11. Executive Session: *Chapter 551, Texas Government Code, Section 551.071 (Consultation with Attorney), Section 551.072 (Deliberation regarding Real Property), Section 551.074 (Personnel Matters) and Section 551.087 (Economic Development)*

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

b. Consultation with Attorney regarding update on litigation -Section 551.071

c. Consultation with Attorney regarding contracts – Section 551.071

12. Open Session: Mayor Montoya called the meeting back to order at 9:16 p.m.

a. Possible Action pertaining to executive session item a

b. Possible Action pertaining to executive session item b

c. Possible Action pertaining to executive session item c

No Action was taken on the items discussed in executive session.

13. Adjournment

Commissioner Martinez motioned to adjourn. Commissioner Garcia seconded. Upon a called vote, the motion passed unanimously at 9:16 p.m.