

**MERCEDES CITY COMMISSION  
REGULAR MEETING  
JULY 2, 2024 – 6:30 P.M.  
MERCEDES CITY HALL – COMMISSION CHAMBERS**

<b>MEMBERS PRESENT:</b>	Oscar D. Montoya Sr. Dr. Ruben J. Saldana Dr. Jacob C. Howell Joe Martinez Armando Garcia	Mayor Mayor Pro-Tem Commissioner Commissioner Commissioner
<b>STAFF PRESENT:</b>	Alberto Perez Martie Garcia-Vela Joselynn Castillo Javier Ramirez Francisco Sanchez Javier Campos Tom Villagomez Juan Vasquez	City Manager City Attorney (Virtual) City Secretary Asst. City Manager Police Chief Fire Chief/EMC Public Works Director I.T Specialist

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Cavazos, Jessica Zuniga, Mr. Isael Posada (SDI)

**1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER**

Mayor Montoya welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

**2. ESTABLISH QUORUM**

Four members of the Commissioner were present which constitutes a quorum.  
Commissioner Garcia arrived during executive session.

**3. INVOCATION**

Mayor Pro-Tem Saldana said the invocation.

**4. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Commissioner Howell led in the pledge of allegiance.

**5. OPEN FORUM:**

- Ms. Jessica Zuniga addressed the commission about the increased traffic near her home due to the construction work being done on International Blvd. She stated they have excessive noise coming from a nearby manhole and the 18-wheelers cause vibrations which are affecting her residence. Mayor Montoya advised her to speak with Police Chief Sanchez, who was present at the meeting and took her contact information for further assistance.

**6. PRESENTATIONS:**

**a. Capisallo Terrace Update**

Mr. Ramirez reported that the project was finalized on June 18, 2024. However, heavy rainfall the following day caused the trench to cave in. The contractor was promptly contacted and completed the excavation and compaction work by July 1, 2024. The contractor's work is under a one-year warranty.

The asphalt paving is scheduled to begin in mid-July and may take up to one month to complete. Hidalgo County Precinct 1 will be responsible for paving the street.

**b. 10 Street Project Update**

Construction on the 10th Street project began last week on June 25, 2024. The first section, spanning from FM 491 to Florida Ave., is nearly complete, with only 300 feet remaining. The next phase involves connecting services and tying into the adjacent streets, followed by crossing the canal to start work on the other side of 10th Street.

In the next two weeks, a new 12-inch waterline will be installed, reconnecting the 19 services and decommissioning the old line. Paving and resurfacing will then commence, led by Isael Posada from SDI Engineering. SDI Engineering, a firm with 15 years of experience in public utilities, has structured the project into two major phases, funded by Urban County and the City of Mercedes.

The project includes reclaiming and recycling caliche and asphalt materials. Hazardous and non-ADA compliant curbs and sidewalks will be repaired. The section from Ohio Ave. to Maryland St. is funded by the City of Mercedes, while Urban County is financing the portion from FM 491 to Florida Ave., with an alternate section from Florida Ave. to Ohio Ave.

The street repairs, including reclaiming, repurposing, and repaving, are expected to take approximately two months. Mr. Ramirez mentioned that areas in need of sidewalks for school routes have been identified. Additionally, thermal striping will be applied in school zones as part of the project budget.

**c. City Hall Project Update**

Mr. Isael Posada presented the Commission with an update on the City Hall roof renovation project, which has been divided into three phases. Phase 1 Roof Repairs – The roof spans 10,000 sq. ft., Mr. Posada’s recommended solution is a polyurethane foam system due to the lack of positive drainage on the roof. Phase 2 HVAC Repairs and Ceiling Adjustments – There are issues with cold air escaping and condensation forming on the ceiling tiles due to hot air. Some ducts are not properly connected, and the building is not sealed from the elements. The interior ceiling height in the hallways is recommended to be raised to 9 ft., estimated to cost \$60,000. Phase 3 Interior and Floor Finishing – The recommendation includes installing LVT flooring and painting the walls at a cost of \$100,000.

The total estimated cost for the renovation project is \$550,000. However, Mr. Posada noted that a comprehensive renovation of the building is estimated to cost \$708,050. Commissioner Howell inquired about the cost of constructing a new building, to which Mr. Posada responded that the current building and foundation are structurally sound.

Additionally, Mr. Perez outlined some proposed changes to the workspace for the Planning and Utility Billing areas to improve functionality and efficiency.

**d. Grants Update**

Mr. Ramirez announced that the City has been awarded \$1 million in GLO grant funding for two projects, achieved through close collaboration with Urban County and Hidalgo County. Projects Funded by GLO are the South Mercedes Lateral Expansion to improve drainage and the FEMA Dome to expand detention capacity south of 14<sup>th</sup> Street.

Mr. Ramirez will be meeting with city grant writers tomorrow to discuss available grants for parks. Urban County has bid out the lighting project for the Dome Park area, and Commissioner Howell expressed interest in pursuing green energy lighting grants. Additionally, the City has secured an EPA grant with a 20% cost share requirement. They submitted a request for a cost share waiver, which has been approved. Other Funded Projects include the Water Well Project to enhance the city's water infrastructure and Storm Sewer for Pacific Railroad Area which is a \$1.2 million project to improve stormwater management. Mr. Ramirez also provided an update on the water flow and pumping into the floodway, ensuring effective flood management in the area.

**e. Street Improvement Update**

Mr. Villagomez provided the Commission with an update on mosquito fumigation efforts, detailing that the city is being treated by quadrants. He also mentioned that the street sweeper is being used to pick up standing water. He distributed a handout listing the potholes repaired last week and included photos of areas needing pothole patching, curb scraping, and street sweeping.

Commissioner Martinez inquired about clearing sidewalks overgrown with dirt and grass. Mr. Villagomez responded that the department has switched to a new herbicide for this task. Additionally, Mr. Perez informed the Commission that public works has a skid steer and recently received a new street sweeper.

Mayor Montoya commended the public works and emergency departments for their visible efforts before and during the recent storm, expressing encouragement at seeing staff actively working across the city. Commissioner Howell also thanked Mr. Villagomez for his leadership and excellent work.

Fire Chief Campos reported that the Police Department has been actively registering businesses for CodeRed and successfully registered 115 businesses in June.

Commissioner Martinez motioned to deviate from the agenda and move into executive session. Mayor Pro-Tem Saldana seconded. Upon a called vote, the motion passed unanimously. The meeting went into executive session at 7:52 p.m.

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

**7. CITY MANAGER COMMENTS:**

**a. Fitch Rating**

Mr. Perez affirmed the A+ rating for the city which is important when the city goes out to borrow funds.

**8. MANAGEMENT ITEMS:** *Present, discuss, consider and possible take action regarding:*

**a. Approval to Authorize Staff to solicit Requests for Proposals (RFP) for Group Voluntary Insurance Products and Section 125 Health and Wellness Programs**

Commissioner Martinez motioned to go out for RFP's. Commissioner Garcia seconded. Upon a called vote, the motion passed unanimously.

**9. BIDS/CONTRACTS**

**a. Approval of Interlocal Agreement between the City of Mercedes and Texas Municipal League Intergovernmental Risk Pool for Cyber Security Insurance**

Mayor Pro-Tem Saldana motioned to approve the ILA with TMLIRP for Cyber Security Insurance. Commissioner Garcia seconded. Upon a called vote, the motion passed unanimously.

**b. Approval to Authorize City Manager to amend the current contracts for Medical, Basic Life/AD&D, Dental and Vision to change date for the new plan year to 10/01/2024**

Commissioner Garcia motioned to approve. Commissioner Howell seconded the motion. Upon a called vote, the motion passed unanimously.

**c. Approval of Memorandum of Agreement between the City of Mercedes and LRGV TPDES Stormwater Task Force #R-RGV-TF-2024-00031**

Commissioner Martinez motioned to discontinue the agreement with Stormwater Task Force. Commissioner Howell seconded. Upon a called vote, the motion passed unanimously.

**d. Approval of a 3-Year Service Agreement for Preventative Maintenance with Stryker ProCare Services**

Mayor Pro-Tem Saldana moved to approve the 3-year agreement. Commissioner Martinez seconded. This is the preventative maintenance agreement for the cardiac monitors and stretchers for 3 years. The cardiac monitors are \$45,000 each and the city has 6 cardiac monitors. The company will come in to fix the equipment for free. At a question, Chief Campos stated the city building do not AED's. Upon a called vote, the motion passed unanimously.

**e. Approval of Interlocal Agreement between City of Weslaco and City of Mercedes for the temporary housing of prisoners**

Commissioner Martinez motioned to approve. Mayor Pro-Tem Saldana seconded. The agreement is until October 31 to allow the city to open up the city jail. The city will only pay if we use Weslaco's services. PD has been arraigning the prisoners at the Mercedes Police Department. Chief Sanchez stated the goal is to open the city jail by October. Upon a called vote, the motion passed unanimously. Mayor Montoya expressed a concern about an outburst that occurred tonight about reporting the City to TCEQ. Commissioner Howell stated this is city business and moving the agenda items around is not intentional.

**10. 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
- d. **Consultation with legal counsel pursuant to Tex. Gov’t Code 551.071 regarding concluding of pending litigation *Mercedes Investments LP vs. City of Mercedes, the Mercedes Industrial Foundation and Henry Hinojosa (Cause No. C-4846-19A)***

**11. OPEN SESSION:**

- a. Possible Action pertaining to executive session item a.  
No action
- b. Possible Action pertaining to executive session item b.  
No action
- c. Possible Action pertaining to executive session item c.  
No action
- d. Discussion and possible action to approve invoice for legal services to Troiani and Sossi, PLLC for legal services in *Mercedes Investments LP vs. City of Mercedes, the Mercedes Industrial Foundation and Henry Hinojosa (Cause No. C-4846-19A)*

Mayor Pro-Tem Saldana moved to approve the invoice for legal services for Troiani & Sossi for the legal services in the Mercedes Investments LP vs. City of Mercedes, the Mercedes Industrial Foundation and Henry Hinojosa (Cause No. C-4846-19A) for the amount stated on the invoice and contingent upon the closing of the property involved. Commissioner Martinez seconded. Upon a called vote, the motion passed unanimously.

**12. ADJOURNMENT**

Commissioner Howell motioned to adjourn. Commissioner Martinez seconded. Upon a called vote, the motion passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 9:27 p.m.