

**RICHLAND HILLS CITY COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING
JANUARY 10, 2023
MINUTES**

Roll Call:

Council present

Edward Lopez, Mayor
Curtis A. Bergthold, Mayor Pro Tem
Douglas Knowlton, Place 1
Travis Malone, Place 2
Javier Alvarez, Place 4
G.W. Estep, Place 5

Council absent

Staff present

Candice Edmondson, City Manager
Lindsay Rawlinson, City Secretary

CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION – 6:30 PM

1. **Executive Session:** Pursuant to the Open Meetings Act, Chapter 551, Texas Government Code, Sections 551.071, 551.072, 551.073, 551.074, 551.076, 551.087, 418.183(f) and 418.106(d) & (e). Executive Session may be held, under these exceptions, at any time during the meeting that a need arises for the City Council to seek advice from the City Attorney as to the posted subject matter of this City Council meeting.

None.

2. **Discuss items listed on tonight's City Council agenda. No action will be taken and each item will be considered during the Regular Session.**

- 5A. ***Approved amendment to agreement with Allied Waste Services of Fort Worth, LLC dba Republic Services for Citywide Solid Waste Collection and Recycling Services***

Director of Neighborhood Services Scott Mitchell advised that the City of Richland Hills currently has a contract with Allied Waste Services of Fort Worth (dba Republic Services) for the pick-up and disposal of solid waste and recyclable materials. The current contract has been in place since 2017 and expired December 31, 2022. However, the contract does allow for an additional five-year extension with an expiration date of December 31, 2028.

Republic Services has submitted an amendment to the existing contract for solid waste collection and recycling services with the following adjustments:

- 1) Contract term allows for an additional five year extension upon the mutual agreement of the parties.
- 2) Recognizes the following holidays: Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Day, New Year's Day.
- 3) After 2023, the annual rate increases from three percent in the previous contract to four percent.
- 4) Increases franchise fee to 12 percent of the gross billing from commercial, institutional, and multi-family customers. Republic was already paying the City a 12 percent fee instead of the 8 percent fee that is included in the current contract.
- 5) Understanding that the provider will be converting to automated cart collection during the term of this franchise agreement. During the conversion there is the possibility of a rate change, which both parties agree to negotiate in good faith. If an agreement cannot be reached, either party may terminate the agreement at the end of the then current term of the agreement.

In addition to the amendments listed above, Republic Services has proposed an average increase of seven percent in residential rates and 8.5 percent in commercial rates for 2023 as a result of recent inflationary increases.

Mr. Mitchell introduced Republic Services Municipal Services Manager Jeri Harwell to provide any additional information. Discussion ensued regarding the age senior citizens begin receiving a senior discount and the plan for automated carts.

Ms. Harwell stated that once a customer reaches the age of 65 they are eligible for senior discounts and will need to notify the City's utility billing department to activate that discount.

Additionally, she advised that the timeline for implementing automated carts is contingent upon when Republic Services can get new suitable trucks for this new technology.

4C. *Approved Resolution 570-23 establishing a Building Improvement Grant Program*

Assistant to the City Manager Logan Thatcher presented the item and advised that the City Council approved funding for a Building Improvement Grant Program to encourage the development, retention, and/or expansion of business enterprises in Richland Hills. The program would allow eligible businesses to receive up to a 50 percent match (maximum \$5,000) of the total proposed property/building enhancements. Enhancements that are eligible for grant consideration include:

- Façade
- Landscaping
- Lighting
- Parking/Driveways
- Pedestrian Amenities
- Signage
- Demolition
- Public Art

The FY 2023 Budget includes \$30,000 in the Baker Boulevard Tax Increment Reinvestment Zone (TIRZ) Fund and \$30,000 in the Richland Hills Development Corporation (RHDC) Fund for Business Improvement Grants.

Mayor Lopez advised that RHDC previously had a similar program that was not very utilized at the time. This new grant program is much more inclusive. Council responded favorably to the grant program.

Mayor Lopez adjourned the work session at 6:52 p.m.

REGULAR SESSION – Mayor Lopez Called to Order – Time 7:00 p.m.

INVOCATION AND PLEDGES OF ALLEGIANCE – Council Member Malone

PRESENTATIONS

1A. Employee Service Awards

City Manager Candice Edmondson announced the employee service awards and expressed congratulations to the following employees on reaching an employment milestone with the City of Richland Hills:

5 Years of Service

Administrative Services Manager Jennifer Hilburn
Fire Engineer Cody Corder

15 Years of Service

Municipal Court Judge Stewart Bass

1B. Citizen Appearances/Public Comments

David White, 7008 Hovenkamp, Richland Hills, expressed concern regarding the lack of a hand rail along a drainage area near his home.

CONSENT AGENDA

2A. Approve minutes from the December 12, 2022 City Council Regular Meeting.

Motion: Motion was made by Councilmember Knowlton and seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Bergthold to approve the consent agenda.

Motion carried by a vote of 5-0.

PUBLIC HEARINGS, MEETINGS, AND OTHER RELATED ITEMS

3. None.

ORDINANCES & RESOLUTIONS AND OTHER RELATED ITEMS**4A. Approved Resolution 568-23 calling the May 6, 2023 General Election for Council Member Place 1, Place 3, and Place 5**

City Secretary Lindsay Rawlinson presented the item to the City Council and advised that filing for a place on the ballot for Council Member Place 1, Place 3, and Place 5 begins at 8:00 a.m. on Wednesday, January 18, 2023.

Motion: Motion was made by Councilmember Malone and seconded by Councilmember Knowlton to approve Resolution 568-23 calling the May 6, 2023 General Election for Council Member Place 1, Place 3, and Place 5.

Motion carried by a vote of 5-0.

4B. Approved Resolution 569-23 participating in the National Wildlife Federation's Mayor's Monarch Pledge

Director of Parks and Recreation Jason Brown advised that the monarch butterfly is considered a critical species for the continued proliferation of flowering plants, including some food plants. In North America, the monarch's population has dramatically declined in the previous couple of decades and they are currently on the threatened and endangered species list.

Mr. Brown stated that by approving Resolution 569-23, the Richland Hills City Council pledges to use its resources, park areas, staff expertise and educational opportunities to increase monarch habitat while decreasing negatively impactful concerns that affect monarch migratory success. In 2023, the City will commit to increase public communication and education, offer programs and more wildflower areas, and integrate monarch conservancy in the City's park plans.

Motion: Motion was made by Councilmember Knowlton and seconded by Councilmember Estep to approve Resolution 569-23 participating in the National Wildlife Federation's Mayor's Monarch Pledge.

Motion carried by a vote of 5-0.

4C. Approved Resolution 570-23 establishing a Building Improvement Grant Program

This item was discussed during worksession.

Motion: Motion was made by Councilmember Estep and seconded by Councilmember Malone to approve Resolution 570-23 establishing a Building Improvement Grant Program.

Motion carried by a vote of 5-0.

CONTRACTS, AGREEMENTS, BID AWARDS AND OTHER RELATED ITEMS**5A. Approved amendment to agreement with Allied Waste Services of Fort Worth, LLC dba Republic Services for Citywide Solid Waste Collection and Recycling Services**

This item was discussed during worksession.

Republic Services Municipal Services Manager Jeri Harwell provided additional information related to questions received by the City Council. She advised that the contract would most likely be renegotiated at the end of the next five-year term and once automated carts are implemented, there would be a monthly fee to pay for this service but no additional cost to residents for the carts.

Motion: Motion was made by Mayor Pro Tem Bergthold and seconded by Councilmember Knowlton to approve an amendment to agreement with Allied Waste Services of Fort Worth, LLC dba Republic Services for Citywide Solid Waste Collection and Recycling Services.

Motion carried by a vote of 5-0.

5B. Approved renewal of contract with Axon Enterprise, Inc. for the purchase of fleet camera, body worn camera, and less-lethal Taser (CEW) systems and associated digital media evidence storage systems

Police Chief Kimberly Sylvester presented the item to the City Council and advised that in May 2018, City Council approved a five-year contract with Axon Enterprise for the purchase of in-car and body worn cameras as well as all related installation costs for the new system. Axon cameras were also added to the new interview rooms during the renovation of the law enforcement center so that all evidence would be stored in one system.

The new contract combines all services and technology with Axon into two separate contracts for a proposed 10-year period with a 10 year warranty on equipment. The first contract consists of body worn cameras and tasers which have been price bundled together resulting in a 23 percent savings per user per month and includes the following services and equipment:

- Professional Evidence.com License
- Weapon Axon Evidence License
- Unlimited Storage
- Axon Signal Sidearm
- Axon Respond for Devices
- Auto-Tagging
- Axon Body Camera (Body 3)
- Included camera hardware upgrade every 2.5 years
- TASER Dock
- Training Cartridges

- Duty Cartridges
- Unlimited Duty Cartridges
- TASER 7 upgraded less-lethal weapon

The contract also includes body worn cameras for Animal Control, Code Enforcement and the Crime Scene Technician that are not included in the bundled package with the taser.

The second contract consists of the Fleet In-Car Camera System and will result in a 16 percent savings over the current contract. The new contract includes the following services and equipment:

- 12 fleet in-car cameras with the upgraded car camera Fleet 3 system
- Gap coverage for the period between the existing technology (Fleet 2) and when Fleet 3 becomes available this year.
- Added Automatic License Plate Reader (ALPR) system on each car that will enhance investigative abilities and solvability of crime.
- Unlimited fleet storage
- Axon Respond+ capabilities
- Installation of new system within the next 10 months

Motion: Motion was made by Councilmember Estep and seconded by Councilmember Knowlton to approve renewal of contract with Axon Enterprise, Inc. for the purchase of fleet camera, body worn camera and less-lethal Taser (CEW) systems and associated digital media evidence storage systems for a 10 year period.

Motion carried by a vote of 5-0.

OTHER ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION

6. None.

REPORTS & DISCUSSIONS

7A. November Department Reports

Library Director Chantele Hancock presented the Library update and advised that staff is working diligently to bring their overall numbers back to pre-Covid numbers and recent reports show that is beginning to happen. She advised that the library has a large poster printer and discussed difficulties with new computers and software.

Fire Chief Russell Shelley presented the Fire Department update and advised that the department is fully staffed, the new ambulance is expected to be delivered in February 2023, and a new Citizens Fire Academy will begin in the spring. Additionally, he stated that the new Medstar partnership has been really successful so far.

Assistant to the City Manager Logan Thatcher presented the Code Compliance and Development update and advised that the Development Review Committee (DRC) is holding several pre-construction meetings for new developments. He advised that 59 courtesy letters were mailed out regarding code compliance issues and he was pleased with the response. Additionally, he and staff have been tracking customer interactions and follow-up and it has been successful.

COMMUNITY INTEREST ITEMS

8. Mayor Pro Tem Bergthold advised of several upcoming events:
- Thursday, January 12, 2023,
 - Charter Review Committee Town Hall to present proposed changes to the public, The Link, 6:00 p.m.
 - Senior Lunch Bunch and Bingo, The Link, 12:00 to 2:00 p.m.;
 - Tarrant County Food Pantry, The Link parking lot, 5:30 to 7:00 p.m.;
 - December 15, 2022 through January 15, 2023, The Link Membership Sale;
 - Monday, January 16, 2023, City offices closed in observance of Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday;
 - Thursday, February 23, 2023, Adult Spelling Bee, El Chico, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.
 - New hours at Animal Services, Monday through Thursday, 7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., appointments outside of those hours are available by appointment;
 - Every Thursday, Coffee Talk, Richland Hills Public Library, 10:00 to 11:30 a.m.;
 - 1st, 3rd, and 5th Thursday of the month, Storytime at the library, 6:30 p.m.;
 - 2nd and 4th Friday of the month, Arts and Crafts, 6:30 p.m.; and
 - Last Thursday of the month, Library Lab, 6:30 p.m.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

9. **Executive Session:** Pursuant to the Open Meetings Act, Chapter 551, Texas Government Code, Sec. 551.071, Sec. 551.072, Sec. 551.073, Sec. 551.074, Sec. 551.076, Sec. 551.087 and Sec. 418.0183 (f) and 418.106 (d) & (e) of the Texas Government Code (Texas Disaster Act).

None.

ADJOURNMENT

10. A motion was made by Councilmember Estep and seconded by Councilmember Malone to adjourn.

Motion carried by a vote of 5-0.

There being no further business to come before the City Council, Mayor Lopez declared the meeting adjourned at 8:15 p.m.

ATTEST:

APPROVED:

Lindsay Rawlinson, City Secretary

Edward Lopez, Mayor