

**MINUTES OF THE  
CITY COUNCIL MEETING – VIA VIDEOCONFERENCING  
Monday, April 26, 2021  
REGULAR MEETING  
6:00 p.m.**

**PRESENT:** Mayor Mike McQuiston, Council members, Eddie Allen, Ben Bennington, Jake Hayes, Darlene Hilton, Melinda Reeves, and Will Carpenter (arrived at 6:23 p.m.).

**ABSENT:**

**OTHERS PRESENT:** City Manager Brett Shannon, IT Director J.B. McKenzie, Fire Chief Nate Mara, Assistant Fire Chief Deroy Bennett, Police Chief Delvon Campbell, Public Works/Airport Director Greg Hall, Building Official Wayne Smith, Main Street Manager Frieda Lasater, Library Director Dawn Wilbert, Conference Center Operations Manager Johnny Cohoon, Conference Center Business Manager Tim Hightshoe, Finance Director Ana Cañada, Human Resource Manager Mary Ann Henline, Deputy City Secretary Asucena Garcia, City Secretary Diane Cockrell, City Attorney Andy Messer and Kristen Tribe representing the Wise County Messenger. Connected via videoconferencing: Planning Director Dedra Ragland, and City Engineer Earl Smith.

**This meeting will be held using videoconferencing/teleconferencing technology with public access via:**

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**MEETING/WEBINAR ID: 817 5047 6447 PASSCODE: 823992**

**This videoconferencing meeting is being used to allow Council, staff and public participants to join the meeting in the following manner:**

**Anyone may join the meeting via videoconferencing at [www.zoom.us/join](http://www.zoom.us/join) or via telephone by calling US: +1 346 248 7799 You may email your comments to be read at the meeting to: [dcockrell@decaturtx.org](mailto:dcockrell@decaturtx.org) before 3:00 p.m. on Monday, April 26th give your name, address phone number and agenda item number, limiting comments to 3 minutes.**

**If you have questions you can call 940-393-0204 before noon on the date of the meeting.**

*If you join the meeting via Videoconferencing and want to address the Council on an agenda item, you will need to have your camera on and hold up your hand when the Mayor calls for public comment and you will be recognized by the Mayor to address the Council and will be allowed 3 minutes to complete your comments.*

*Anyone wishing to speak on a posted agenda item must complete a speaker card with his/her name and address and must identify the agenda item number for which he/she would like to speak. A card must be submitted to Diane Cockrell, City Secretary, so that the speaker may be recognized by the Chair at the appropriate time. Speakers will each be allowed a total of three (3) minute time period to provide comments regarding the posted agenda item for which the request to speak was submitted and may speak during this item or during the Commission's consideration of individual items in accordance with City Council Rules of Procedure. The three (3) minute time period will be extended to six (6) minutes if a translator is required for a non-English speaker to communicate his/her comments regarding the posted agenda item for which the request to speak was filed.*

**REGULAR MEETING  
6:00 p.m.**

**CALL TO ORDER**

Mayor McQuiston called meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

MOMENT OF SILENCE

Mayor McQuiston declared a moment of silence.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Council member Bennington led the pledge.

**PLANNING AND ZONING REPORT:**

**1. DISCUSS BUILDING CODE AMENDMENTS AND GIVE DIRECTION TO STAFF REGARDING CHANGES.**

Building Official Smith explained that he had talked in past about keeping the ISO audit we had been through. We are planning to adopt new codes in November 2021. The 2018 codes will serve as a “place holder” to keep our rating with ISO in the meantime.

Deputy Fire Chief/Fire Marshal Bennett shared that we were moving forward with the 2018 Codes in 2019, but Covid got in the way. We plan to bring the 2021 model to Council after the Council of Government (COG) amendments are completed. The COG amendments are important because the 2021 model is put together for the United States, the COG amendments make the code fit our region in Texas. If we get the 2018 Building Code in place, we can keep the current building department ISO rating. We need to keep up the code to not confuse the contractors.

We are planning to adopt the 2018 codes and hold the first reading at the May 10<sup>th</sup> meeting.

**2. HEAR AND TAKE ACTION ON DR. SARITHA DODLA’S REQUEST FOR A 6-MONTH EXTENSION ON PRELIMINARY PLAT APPLICATION 2019-02 AND FINAL PLAT APPLICATION 2019-02—A PRELIMINARY AND FINAL PLAT OF LOT 1, BLOCK 1, 380 MEDICAL PARK, APPROVED ON MAY 13, 2019. PER SECTION 508 OF THE SUBDIVISION REGULATIONS, THE PRELIMINARY PLAT EXPIRES TWELVE (12) MONTHS AFTER CITY COUNCIL APPROVAL UNLESS A FINAL PLAT FOR THE PROPERTY, CONSISTENT IN ALL RESPECTS WITH THE APPROVED PRELIMINARY PLAT, HAS BEEN SUBMITTED FOR APPROVAL, AND PER SECTION 612.2 OF THE SUBDIVISION REGULATIONS, THE FINAL PLAT EXPIRES TWO YEARS AFTER CITY COUNCIL APPROVAL, UNLESS CONSTRUCTION HAS COMMENCED AND ALL THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE SUBDIVISION ORDINANCE, PRIOR TO CONSTRUCTION, HAVE BEEN MET. THE PRELIMINARY PLAT AND FINAL PLAT MAY ALSO BE EXTENDED ONCE FOR A LENGTH OF TIME NOT TO EXCEED 6 MONTHS WITH CITY COUNCIL APPROVAL BY FILING A WRITTEN REQUEST PRIOR TO THE PLAT’S EXPIRATION.**

Council member Hayes moved to approve a six month extension on the preliminary and final plat as requested. Council member Reeves seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

**3. CONSIDER AND TAKE ACTION AUTHORIZING CITY MANAGER TO EXECUTE AN ESCROW AGREEMENT FOR LANDSCAPE IMPROVEMENTS BETWEEN CITY OF DECATUR, A HOME RULE MUNICIPAL CORPORATION, AND CARDINAL PAINT AND POWDER INC., A TEXAS FOREIGN FOR-PROFIT CORPORATION ON A TRACT DESCRIBED AS AN APPROXIMATE 10.2871 ACRE PARCEL OF LAND, PLATTED AS LOT 7, BLOCK 1, EAGLES LANDING BUSINESS PARK ADDITION.**

Council member Hilton moved to approve the escrow agreement and authorize City Manager to execute. Council member Hayes seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

**END OF PLANNING AND ZONING REPORT:**

4. CONSIDER AND TAKE APPROPRIATE ACTION REGARDING A RESOLUTION DECLARING DECATUR TEXAS A SANCTUARY CITY FOR THE UNBORN.

Connie Swaim made a presentation to Council and read the Resolution.

Council member Hayes moved to approve the Resolution as presented. Council member Bennington seconded the motion. The motion passed 5-1-0 with Council member Hilton voting against.

5. CONSIDER AND GIVE STAFF DIRECTION REGARDING A PROPOSAL/AGREEMENT TO PROVIDE POLICE DEPARTMENT AND MUNICIPAL BUILDING ARCHITECTURAL FACILITY NEEDS ASSESSMENT SERVICES FROM RANDALL SCOTT ARCHITECTS AND AUTHORIZE THE CITY MANAGER TO EXECUTE.

Council member Allen moved to approve the agreement with Randall Scott Architects in the amount of \$47,500. and authorized City manager to execute. Council member Hayes seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

6. HEAR AND DISCUSS A PRESENTATION BY FIRE CHIEF AND EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT COORDINATOR MARA REGARDING A RECOVERY PLAN WITH OPERATIONAL BENCHMARKS FOR CITY FACILITIES, SERVICES AND EMPLOYEES.

Fire Chief and Emergency Management Coordinator (EMC) Mara addressed the Council in response to the Council's request regarding a Recovery Plan. He stated that since Christmas after the last big spike of Covid. We have been recovering. The natural pieces of Emergency Management are: Mitigate hazards before they occur – prepare for those hazards – respond to and then we recover from. My hope is to provide guidance and vision for where we need to be headed as a city/ a group of employees. I don't need to tell you where we came from, March 11, 2020 this thing became a global pandemic. We are on day 406 of "30 days to Slow the Spread" and that is not a joke at Mr. President or at the pandemic by any means. The "Slow the Spread" campaign facts all still work today: if you would like to wear a mask, please do so, if you would like to socially distance, we encourage that, if you don't feel good, stay home. Now we have the added security of a vaccine that is available to us in mass. Before we get too much further on a plan to open back up, I want to talk about a "Gating Criteria". We follow Federal health benchmarks that trickle down to fit us. We want to keep an eye on *symptoms as they relate to our staff and our families, cases as they relate to the regional hospital system as a whole and in those cases we want to watch out for the hospital capacity. As EMC, if I see those data trends (watching hospital capacity) I would speak to staff about reeling back our approach about how we are dealing with Covid.*

Office of Emergency Management is actively monitoring local health and operational conditions along with regional, state and local guidelines related to "Gating Criteria".

What does all this actually mean?  $Illness + Cases > Capacity$

A plan for moving through a phased return to normal operation is fully dependent on our community maintaining a positive "Gating Criteria".

Phased Reopening

Phase 1 > Ensure a Safe Workplace > Prepare buildings to receive personnel

Phase 2 > Protect the Vulnerable > Restore Critical Onsite Functions

This is where I feel we are now: Phase 3 > Encourage Vaccination > Normal Operations

I feel like the city wants us at normal operations, and I feel like it decreases the confusion if we get there quickly. My take on it is: we get back to pre-Covid conditions as soon as possible.

I also sent out a Pandemic Recovery Survey to staff and the majority of those responses are: to return to pre-Covid working conditions as a group of employees.

We have been able to stay ahead of the curve as a city and as a county and I feel very comfortable in moving you through this final phase as we return to what I'm calling pre-Covid working conditions or pre-Covid operations.

7. CONSIDER A REQUEST OF THE DECATUR POLICE DEPARTMENT FOR THE CLOSURE OF 100 BLOCK OF NORTH STATE AND 100 BLOCK OF WEST MAIN STREET CLOSING ON TUESDAY, APRIL 27<sup>TH</sup>, FROM 5:30 P.M. UNTIL 7:30 P.M. (CLOSURE TO BEGIN AT 4:00 P.M. UNTIL 8:00 P.M.) FOR A "FAMILY FUN NIGHT" SPONSORED BY CHILDREN'S ADVOCACY CENTER AND CASA.

Council member Hilton moved to approve the street closure as presented. Council member Hayes seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

8. DISCUSS AND GIVE DIRECTION TO STAFF REGARDING 18 WHEELERS CROSSING THE SQUARE.

Council member Allen introduced this item, sharing that some of the Main Street Committee members reached out to him about some of the problems the 18-wheelers are causing on the square. (taking out an awning and backing up traffic). There are problems with trying to make our city a destination and keeping the pedestrians on the square safe. Not being sure what kind of plan we will have, but we will still have them on the square making deliveries. We will need to ask for it before TXDOT will move forward. It was stated that TXDOT owns Walnut and Trinity. Police Chief Campbell stated that he and Fire Chief Mara will be meeting with Main Street Director Lasater and her Main Street Board regarding this issue tomorrow. The issue is the roadways are controlled by TXDOT and they control the roadways. TXDOT out of Austin often assigns truck routes. Most of the accidents and issues are the delivery trucks. There was also discussion regarding parking issues impeding traffic moving around the square.

9. DISCUSSION REGARDING FILLING THE UPCOMING VACANCY OF THE BUILDING OFFICIAL AND THE PLAN REGARDING CURRENT PROJECTS.

Council member Hayes had builders, contractors and others contact him about what action will be taken regarding the timeliness of inspections. City Manager Shannon shared the places the job opening is being used to recruit a replacement.

Council member Hayes asked about the schedule of the inspections, will we continue to have a daily inspector or multiple inspectors? I know currently it is a 24 hour lead time, can we keep that lead time?

Planning Director Ragland responded that she and Building Official Smith have an appointment with the consultants SAFEbuilt tomorrow (they have been doing inspections since March). We will be finalizing what they will be able to provide in terms of a resource. It won't be every day for 8 hours, but there will be someone available part of the week for the building inspector to be in the office to respond to questions. The position has been posted at several sites and a Head Hunter's assistance is being sought. Building Official Smith's responsibility is quite a bit more than inspections. SAFEbuilt seems to be open to help us, the objective will be to fill the position. We do need to fill it very quickly, but I do not want to settle.

As far as the Code adoption goes, you made the decision tonight to go with the 2018 with the COG amendments, the OpenGov permitting software, I will be taking that over as the lead staff person, and then the plan reviews and inspections of all other projects will be transitioned over to SAFEbuilt on an interim basis.

10. CONSIDER AND TAKE ACTION ON APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON APRIL 12, 2021.

Council member Allen moved to approve the minutes as presented. Council member Carpenter seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

11. **CONSIDER APPROVAL OF AN UPDATED INVESTMENT POLICY.**

Council member Carpenter moved to approve the investment policy as presented. Council member Hilton seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

12. **ACCEPTANCE OF QUARTERLY INVESTMENT REPORT.**

Quarterly Investment Report provided. No action taken.

13. **COUNCIL TO HEAR PUBLIC INPUT** (please complete a Speaker Registration Form before speaking) each speaker will be limited to 3 minutes, the Open Meeting Act does not allow for discussion in response to the comments, comments should be directed to the Council as a whole rather than to individual members, and no action will be taken by the Council.

Convened into Executive Session at 7:31 p.m.

14. **EXECUTIVE SESSION** – In accordance with Texas Government Code 551, Subchapter D – Subsection 551.074 – Deliberation regarding the appointment, evaluation, reassignment, duties, discipline or dismissal of public officer or employee – semi-annual review of City Manager.

**RECONVENE INTO OPEN SESSION** - In accordance with Texas Government Code, Chapter 551 the City Council will reconvene into Regular Session to consider action, if any, on matters discussed in Executive Session.

Reconvened into Regular Session at 9:20 p.m.

15. **ACTION FROM EXECUTIVE SESSION.**

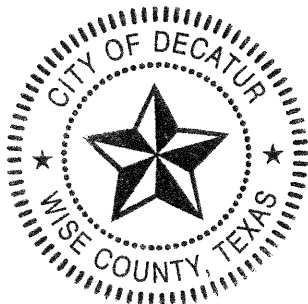
No action taken.


16. **COUNCIL MEMBER REQUESTS FOR FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS.**


None.

**ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, Mayor McQuiston declared the meeting adjourned at 9:21 p.m.



  
Mike McQuiston, Mayor

  
Diane Cockrell, TRMC, CMC, City Secretary