

The City of Galena Park

City Commission Meeting

Date: January 6, 2015

A regular meeting of the City Commission of the City of Galena Park was held at City Hall in the Council Chambers, Tuesday evening at 6:00 P.M. on January 6, 2015.

Present were:	Esmeralda Moya	Mayor
	Danny Simms	Commissioner
	Lois Killough	Commissioner
	Maricela Serna	Commissioner
	Juan Flores	Commissioner
	Mayra Gonzales	City Secretary
	Robert Pruett	City Administrator
	Jim DeFoyd	City Attorney

Mayor Moya called the meeting to order.

Mayor Moya called on Reverend Bailey for the invocation.

Mayor called for comments from the audience.

Ms. Taggy Hall, a citizen, stated that there had been 8 people that have passed away in Galena Manor since the later part of November. Ms. Hall announced the Senior Luncheon and the Civic Club meeting every month at the Churchill Building in Galena Manor.

Mr. Robert Clowers, a citizen, stated that he heard that the city gave a \$100.00 Christmas bonus to all the full time city employees and asked if it was true. Mr. Robert Pruett, City Administrator, stated that it was correct. Mr. Clowers asked when it was approved. Mr. Pruett stated that the city had been giving it to the employees for the last 20-30 years. Mr. Clowers stated that his understanding of the charter is that before money can be spent like that it must be approved first by the commission and this was not. Mr. Clowers stated he wanted to point out that it is a violation of the city charter and if they go back and see what they did do or never been done they have never gone by the charter. Mr. Clowers stated that he is not opposed to giving a bonus to the city employees, but it needs to be done correctly.

Shelby Simms, a citizen, stated that she is Commissioner Danny Simms daughter and she just wanted it to be known that he does have a daughter not only a wife and son.

Mr. Arnaldo Mendoza, Mr. Francisco Macias, and Mr. Carlos Bazaldua stated to the council that they would like to organize a kid's soccer league in Galena Park for the kids. Mayor Moya stated that it is a great idea and not only going to be beneficial to the kids that are going to be playing, but also for the families. Commissioner Serna stated that they have started planning for a soccer league. Commissioner Serna stated that the city is designating a soccer field for the league, it just need to be repaved and leveled. Commissioner Serna thanked them for taking the initiative and stated that a lot of kids are going to befit from the soccer league. Mr. Macias stated that he would like to thank all of them for their support. Mr. Macias stated that Galena Park has been his home for a long time and Galena Park is important to him. Mr. Macias also stated that what he does, he does for the kids. Mayor Moya stated that she is very proud to have citizens like him; that is what our city needs to move forward.

Ms. Lucy Delatorre, a citizen, stated that there is no meat in the food pantry to serve the people. Ms. Delatorre stated that there are over 200 families that they need to serve and they served 102 families over the Christmas holidays. Ms. Delatorre stated that there had been talk about the building being torn down. Ms. Delatorre stated there is a need for the food pantry and she knows that it can be transferred to another location, but the building was the first city hall, first fire station, and one of the first public libraries in Galena Park. Ms. Delatorre stated that she has talked to several people and they are all very upset about the building coming down because of the history there. She asked if there was any way they could save the building and put some kind of history in the building for future generations to come look at. She stated she understands that it needs a lot of work, but there has been a lot of pressure to tear the building down. Ms. Delatorre stated that in one week they had three different visitors one was the person who is going to demolish the building, another was an inspector, and the third was some kind of uniform officer taking pictures. Ms. Delatorre stated that the building itself is a sentimental thing because it is about the history in Galena Park and they don't have anywhere in Galena Park for the kids to know about the history and she would like the council to consider that. Mr. Pruett stated that he has supported the food pantry from day one and he agrees that we need a food pantry in the city to help people. Mr. Pruett stated that the inspectors are out there to see how much it would cost to renovate or demolish the building. Mr. Pruett stated that the inspectors are also out there to check for asbestos and for lead base paint. He stated there are federal state requirements that they must meet, but if they have to demolish the building they will find another location for the food pantry. Mr. Pruett stated that the building does have historical value, but the city needs new facilities and we are land locked. Mr. Pruett stated that the electrical and the plumbing are bad in the building along with it being a flat roof. Commissioner Serna stated that the food bank goes to Galena Park every month for the past 6 months it has been steady. Commissioner Serna asked Ms. Delatorre if they were a nonprofit organization. Ms. Delatorre stated that they are in the process of getting all of that information. Mr. Pruett stated that he and the water and sewer superintendent have ordered an asbestos inspection. Ms. Cooper stated that she was getting her final quote from one. Mayor Moya asked how many quotes she had taken. Ms. Cooper stated three quotes. Mr. Pruett stated the quotes were just to see if they had asbestos in the building. A citizen stated that they can't just ignore that the majority of the citizens in the city live below the poverty level and need assistance. Commissioner Serna stated that she has had people ask her; why are city tax dollars being used to have city trucks pick up and deliver food from the food pantry. She has also had people tell her that they were in line for a long time to get something they were promised and then never receive it. Mayor Moya stated she had a meeting with the food bank manager to discuss what needs to take place. Mayor Moya stated that they are derailing from the problem, it is not that they don't want to see the food bank go away, but they do not want to see the building come down. Mayor Moya stated that when they get the reports back they will see if there is a possibility of restoring the building or making it a land mark. Mayor Moya stated that she will get with the City Administrator and Ms. Cooper in regards to the building.

Mr. Mark Groba, a citizen, asked why they couldn't move the water department over to the city barn and fix it up instead of having it with the windows boarded up. Mr. Groba stated that the city gets on to the citizens about the grass being high or what not. Mr. Groba stated that the city works for the citizens of the town not for themselves and they are supposed to keep the citizens informed. Mr. Pruett stated that is what the meetings are for and that is why they are all there to ask questions to the council and himself during the comment section. Mr. Groba stated that the food pantry building could be used as a museum, food pantry, or a housing facility for the citizens. Mr. Groba stated that towns smaller than us have housing facilities, little league, or soccer leagues and the city has nothing. Mr. Groba stated that the city has a 10 million dollar budget and asked where all the money is being spent. Mr. Groba stated that the city employees are just riding around and should be working. Mr. Pruett stated to give him facts and he will address it. Mr. Groba stated that the city expects him and the citizens to pay their taxes, but the citizens expect for the streets to be paved and the gutters to be cleaned.

Ms. Carol Simms, a citizen, stated that the Harris County Food Pantry started serving meals to the Century 21 Kids, about 120 kids are getting a hot meal.

Item # 4- Consider approving the minutes of December 16, 2014. Commissioner Killough moved to approve the minutes. Commissioner Serna, 2nd ...Vote: 5 Ayes... Motion Carried.

Item # 5- Consider ratifying accounts payables from December 12, 2014 through January 2, 2015. Commissioner Serna moved to approve ratifying the payables from December 12, 2014 through January 2, 2015. Commissioner Flores, 2ndVote: 5 Ayes... Motion Carried.

Item # 6- Presentation of the audit fiscal year ending September 30, 2014- Belt, Harris, Pechacek. Mr. Robert Belt gave the audit presentation. Mr. Belt stated that the purpose of the audit is to make sure that the general purpose financial statements for the city are maturely correct and that all the disclosures required have been included. Mr. Belt read the statement of revenues, expenditures, and changes in fund balances. Mr. Belt stated in the general fund the total revenues for the year were \$7,746,599.00, total expenditures were \$6,668,963.00, a net increase in fund balances of \$1,077,636.00, a beginning balance of \$3,790,420.00. with an ending balance of \$4,868,056.00 in the general fund. The debt service fund reported an increase of approximately \$30,000 taking it from a fund balance of \$425,000 to a fund balance of \$455,000. Mr. Belt stated that on the Water and Sewer fund the total revenues for the year were \$2,697,000, operating expenses were \$2,615,000, and non-operating revenues were \$267,000. Mr. Belt stated there was a transfer out of \$346,000 into the general fund giving the water and sewer fund a net increase for the year of \$3,651.00. Mr. Belt stated that the last thing he wanted to point out was the budget comparison for the general fund. Mr. Belt stated revenues came in \$356,000 greater than anticipated and expenditures were \$516,000 less than anticipated. Mr. Belt stated that if the city accomplished all the programs that they were set out for at the beginning of the budget then that is an excellent budget variance to have. Mayor Moya stated that she might have some questions and she would like to set up a meeting with Mr. Belt at a later date. Mr. Pruettt asked Mr. Belt to repeat the expenditures on how great the city was. Mr. Belt repeated the expenditures. Mayor Moya asked Mr. Belt to explain the difference in deficiency in internal control and significant deficiency. Mr. Belt stated that the worst offence that they can have is material deficiency and the second would be significant deficiency. Mayor Moya stated that the auditors did find something and it was part of management. Mr. Belt stated that within management there was an issue with timely deposits and it was something that was discovered prior to the audit. Mr. Belt stated that the overages and shortages were also being adjusted and he believes that employee was terminated. Mayor Moya stated that no one was terminated and she wanted to make sure that she understood it correctly in terms of the deficiency. Mr. Belt stated that the third item had to do with the pension plans. There are new state laws that will change in accordance with pension plans and the city offers the Texas Municipal Retirement System (TMRS). Commissioner Killough asked if TMRS would let the city know what the amount is that the city would have to pay to keep it actuality sound. Mr. Pruettt stated that in reference to an employee being terminated, it is a personnel matter, but it was brought to the auditor's attention before the audit. Commissioner Killough asked Ms. Gonzales that it was her understanding that Ms. Gonzales had sent a letter out to everyone that handled money to correct the things that were found in the audit. Ms. Gonzales stated yes. Mayor Moya asked what was sent out. Ms. Gonzales stated it was a memo that was sent out to city hall employees. Mayor Moya asked if it was the memo that she and Ms. Gonzales and the auditor discussed. Ms. Gonzales stated yes.

Item # 7- Consider approving the audit engagement letter from Belt, Harris, and Pechacek for the year ending September 30, 2015. Commissioner Killough moved to approve the audit engagement letter from Belt, Harris, and Pechacek for the year ending September 30, 2015. Commissioner Flores, 2nd ... Vote: 5 Ayes... Motion Carried.

Item # 8- Consider approving the 2015 holidays. Commissioner Flores moved to approve the 2015 holidays. Commissioner Simms, 2nd...Vote: 5 Ayes... Motion Carried.

Item # 9- Consider approving the full time employment of Jepsey Kimble- Grounds Maintenance. Commissioner Flores moved to approve the full time employment of Jepsey Kimble. Commissioner Serna, 2nd... Vote: 5 Ayes... Motion Carried.

Item # 10- Consider approving the recommendation of the Parks and Recreation Board to add Ivan Rojas to the Parks and Recreation Board. Commissioner Simms asked if someone had resigned from the board. Mayor Moya stated that the letter was from Ms. Dorothy Harding. Ms. Harding stated that she had done things backwards and she has submitted another letter for the next agenda. The letter was to make Mr. Avington an honorary member and to add Mr. Ivan Rojas to the board. Commissioner Simms made a motion to table the item until they have all the information that they need to appoint a new member. Commissioner Serna asked if the next council meeting will be after the next board meeting. Ms. Harding stated yes. Mr. Pruett stated that under the charter the Mayor and Council cannot fill a vacancy until they have approved a resignation from another member. Mr. Pruett stated that he recommends that they wait until March until they are all up for reappointment and reappoint them as to whomever Mayor and Council wishes to appoint. Commissioner Simms moved to table the recommendation of the board to add Ivan Rojas to the Parks and Recreation Board. Commissioner Serna, 2nd ...Vote: 5 Ayes... Motion Carried.

Mayor Moya called for announcements.

Commissioner Flores announced that during the Christmas holidays they had a decorating contest. He stated that he had people call in and nominate homes as well as himself going from home to home. There were 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place winners. 3rd place was 507 Holland Maria and Jose, 2nd place was 1209 4th St Mr. Richard Alvarez, and 1st place winner was 1601 Bank Dr. Mr. Wilbert and Emily Payne. Commissioner Flores stated that the next movie night will be on February 7th at the basketball court on Keene St. The movie that will be featured is Frozen and they will have a BBQ on the menu and small costume contest. Commissioner Flores stated that he will be picking out 4 days within the next months and taking the department heads out to the community to hear the complaints and their ideas. Commissioner Flores stated that he has been going out with Mr. David Binning and taking notes on what pot holes need to be fixed.

Commissioner Killough asked for a report from Chief Rader on the officer that was beat up. Chief Rader stated he is doing well and announced the benefit that is going to be held to help him with medical expenses on Sunday at 10:30 a.m. under the basketball pavilion. Plates will be \$10.00 each and tickets can be picked up at the police station. Mayor Moya stated she would like to thank Vanessa and Mayra for getting some of the resources together for the officers to help with the benefit.

Commissioner Serna announced that there will be a Car Seat Drive at Our Lady of Fatima on January 17th and you must register by the 11th. Commissioner Serna stated that if you have an old car seat that is no longer good they will give a new one. It is a great class that many can benefit from.

Commissioner Flores stated that he is very much into the history of Galena Park and would like to get together with the community to make a committee to document the history of Galena Park. Mayor Moya stated that maybe they can make the food pantry a museum.

Commissioner Killough called for and made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Simms, 2nd.... Vote: 5 Ayes... Motion Carried.

Meeting adjourned: 7:05 P.M.

Mayra Gonzales
MAYRA GONZALES

Esmaraldo Noya
APPROVED