

# The City of Galena Park

## City Commission Meeting

Date: September 1, 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 September 1, 2015.

Present were:	Esmeralda Moya	Mayor
	Danny Simms	Commissioner
	Cruz R. Hinojosa, Jr.	Commissioner
	Maricela Serna	Commissioner
	Juan Flores	Commissioner
	Mayra Gonzales	City Secretary
	Robert Pruett	City Administrator
Absent:	Jim Defoyd	City Attorney

Item # 1- Mayor Moya called the meeting to order at 6:48 p.m.

Item # 2- Commissioner Simms gave the invocation.

Item # 3- Comments from the audience.

Mr. Jack Brown, a citizen, stated that he had accolades for the fire department. Mr. Brown stated that Friday morning the fire department was rebuilding the fire hydrant by his house and on Saturday he hears a noise coming from the parks and he sees them testing the fire hydrant. Mr. Brown stated that he appreciates them very much. Paul Gregory, Fire Chief, stated that the repairs were not them, they were Ms. Cooper. Mr. Brown stated that he was hoping that the two Commissioners could get together and set a plan for them to check them every 6 months or yearly. Mr. Brown stated that unfortunately they lost another house or three over in Woodland Acres, and he hears it was due to the same problem, no water. Mayor Moya thanked Ms. Cooper. Ms. Cooper stated that the fire department test them and the water department repairs them. A citizen stated that they all appreciate that.

Mr. Francisco, president of the soccer league, stated that he had asked everyone to help him fix and clean up the fields in Galena Manor for them to be able to play and they will start playing on Saturday. Mr. Francisco stated that the kids and all the people are very happy that they helped them with the fields. Mayor Moya asked when their first game was. MR. Francisco stated that they were going to have a practice game against Katy. Mr. Francisco stated that everyone worked very hard and they are happy with the City of Galena Park. Mayor Moya thanked them for keeping the kids busy.

Mr. John Huff, a citizen, stated that two weeks ago he invited everyone out to the Center Street races. Mr. Huff stated that he would like to thank Commissioner Flores for getting the speed limit signs up right away. Mr. Huff stated that unfortunate that has not stopped the young jerks from running up and down there. Mr. Huff stated that what he did one day just to see what would happen was he took his blow dryer and put on some sun glasses and a fishing shirt to look official. Mr. Huff stated that he walked out by the street and when the cars would go by zooming down the street he would point the blow dryer at them, and it is amazing how they slowed down. Mr. Huff stated that he would like to see more police presence and he knows that is not the only street in Galena Park with the problem, but if one person with a blow dryer can make them slow down, imagine what

police presence can do. Mr. Huff stated that he would also like to see something else done about all the potholes the city has. Mr. Huff stated that he knows Commissioner Flores has talked about a plan to fix the streets, but it is not rocket science. Mr. Huff stated that Galena Park is not that big and that they could ride around with a load of asphalt and when they see a hole in a ground put some asphalt in it. Commissioner Flores stated that the problem with that is when they just patch with asphalt and not doing it the proper way, it will just open back up. Commissioner Flores stated that they are trying to come up with a more permanent solution. Commissioner Flores stated that he gets complaints all the time and he goes out and talks to them to see what they can do to fix it. Commissioner Flores stated that once they get the study, whether it takes 7-10 million dollars, hopefully they can have the study done and that will be the grand scheme to fix all the roads. Mr. Huff asked when the study was going to happen. Commissioner Flores stated that hopefully they will have the study there soon. Commissioner Flores stated that they will have to either raise the money for it or work with the county to get some money. Commissioner Flores stated that he did not want to raise the taxes in the community, so he is trying to find the best answer he can find working with the county or getting grants. Mr. Huff stated that there was a lot of money floating around during the budget meeting. Commissioner Flores stated that he is fighting with the other commissioners, because they also want money for their departments, and it is a push and pull type thing. Mr. Huff stated that we have only one grocery store and it looks like an a palm hill side. Mr. Huff stated that a lot of the holes are on the city easement and they are not being filled. Mr. Huff stated that you drive by there and it about throws you into the next county. Mr. Huff stated that there are a lot of holes on the road that are not being filed. David Binning, Public Works Director, stated that they do ride around a fill pot holes and when they get request they go and address those. Mr. Binning stated that is how they spend a lot of their time, addressing request. Mr. Binning stated that the issue with Middleton's is that the shoulder is the end of city responsibility, and from the parking lot up, just because it is city easement does not mean that the city is responsible for it. Mr. Binning stated that it was the business owners responsibility. Mr. Huff stated that he is talking about the sidewalk up to the street. Mr. Huff stated that across from the new restaurant on Center street there are giant holes. Mr. Binning stated that the easement is not city responsibility, the easement gives the city the right of way if they should need to repair waterlines and whatever they tear up they fix. Mr. Binning stated that the city's responsibility ends at the curve line on Center. Commissioner Flores stated that he was going to set up a meeting with the owner of the business and if he would like to give him his phone number he would call him after the meeting and give him an update. A citizen asked if there is a protocol or something saying that the owner should fix it without the city telling him to do it. Mr. Binning stated that they have a list that they go by, but they only have four people that do this, and they are not only responsible for potholes but for the maintenance of the storm drains and curves, repair of driveways from water leaks. A citizen asked if there was something the city can do to enforce the businesses to get on it faster. Commissioner Flores stated that he has been talking to businesses and he is in the process of revitalizing the city to make it look nice. Commissioner Flores stated that he has meet with the business owners on Stewart and 1<sup>st</sup> St. and Clinton to make suggestions and get input on their properties. Commissioner Flores stated that if anyone had any suggestions or if they wanted an update get with him. Mr. Brown, a citizen stated that it was private property and it is there responsibility. Mr. Brown stated that something they can do is talk to the business owner and tell them that if they do not get it fixed, they are not driving in their parking lot, therefore not shopping at their store. Mr. Brown stated that maybe if they see people are not shopping there or a group of people go in and talk to the owner about it, it will get fixed. Mr. Brown stated while they are on the topic of streets, the sign over on 16<sup>th</sup> street and Woolfe that he has been talking about for months is still missing. Mr. Brown stated it was the no cell phone sign on 16<sup>th</sup> St. Commissioner Flores asked Mr. Binning if they had ordered the sign. Mr. Binning asked if he was talking about the speed limit sign. Mr. Brown stated it was the no cell phone sign. Mr. Binning stated that he misunderstood him and they can replace that. Mr. Binning stated that they have repainted all the street signs to make it safer for the kids. Commissioner Flores stated that they will replace it.

Mr. Sanchez, a citizen, stated that he worked for American Paint and he is a supervisor and he has something that may be able to help them. Mr. Sanchez stated that he is in charge of several stores and when they see something that needs fixed they fix it. He stated that the City of Baytown and the City of Houston sends letters to the companies telling them that they have to fix certain things and they will fix it in 72 hours. Mayor Moya stated that they will look into it, but they cannot force the businesses owners to do anything all they can do is talk to them.

Item #4- Consider approving the minutes of regular meeting on August 18, 2015 and Special/Executive meeting on August 20, 2015. Commissioner Hinojosa moved to approve the minutes of regular meeting on August 18, 2015 and Special/Executive meeting on August 20, 2015. Commissioner Flores, 2<sup>nd</sup>...Vote: 5 Ayes...Motion Carried.

Item # 5- Consider ratifying accounts payable from August 14, 2015 through August 31, 2015. Commissioner Hinojosa stated that he had a few questions and he would like to thank Nanette for answering all the questions and explaining it to him. Commissioner Flores moved to approve ratifying accounts payable from August 14, 2015 through August 31, 2015. Commissioner Hinojosa, 2<sup>nd</sup>...Vote: 5 Ayes...Motion Carried.

Item # 6- Consider approving Estimate No. 6 in the amount of \$30,799.00 for the month of July. Commissioner Simms moved to approve Estimate No. 6 in the amount of \$30,799.00 for the month of July. Commissioner Flores, 2<sup>nd</sup>...Vote: 5 Ayes...Motion Carried.

Item # 7- Consider approving the contract for consulting services between the City of Galena Park and Grant Aid Consulting, LLC. Commissioner Hinojosa moved to approve the contract for consulting services between the City of Galena Park and Grant Aid Consulting, LLC. Commissioner Flores, 2<sup>nd</sup>... Mayor Moya asked if they could tell her a little bit about this contract. Commissioner Hinojosa stated that he could tell her a little about them, since he met with them. Commissioner Hinojosa stated that the city did not have a full time grant writer, nor can they afford a full time grant writer. Commissioner Hinojosa stated that he found this grant aid consultant that was working with Goodwill and they were familiar with working on federal grants and Community Development Building Grants. Commissioner Hinojosa stated that they were young and eager, they met with all the department heads and the department heads were able to ask them questions. Commissioner Hinojosa stated that they have never worked for a municipality before, but they are familiar with the grants that are out there and the wording that needs to be on them. Commissioner Hinojosa stated that one of them does all the research and the other writes the grants. Commissioner Hinojosa stated that they did not feel comfortable at that meeting, neither them or us, signing a full blown contract for a year right then, so they agreed to hire them for \$100.00. Commissioner Serna stated \$300.00 for one month. Commissioner Hinojosa stated that they were going to research to see what is out there, especially the \$10 million that we need for the water department to replace all the failing infrastructure. Commissioner Hinojosa stated that they were going to research all kinds of grants and bring it back to us and say this is what is out there and this is what we pretty sure can get for you, or come back and say that there is nothing out there and they cannot do anything for us. Mayor Moya asked if what he is telling her is that they need \$300.00 to tell us what grants are out there, and there are no guarantees that we are going to get a grant. Commissioner Serna stated that they want to risk those \$300.00 hoping that they are going to get more revenue out of that, and it is only a one month contract, a trial. Mayor Moya stated that she thought we already had a grant writer, Squyres. Mr. Pruett stated that Mr. Squyres and his wife are finishing up a project together. Mr. Pruett stated that Mr. Squyres became city manager in Jacinto City and his wife took over to finish up the water rehab project in Galena Manor. Mr. Pruett stated that this project gives the city a chance to look and see how good they are, and they will get back with Mayor and Council for potential funding sources. Mr. Pruett stated that he thought it was a good gamble before we enter into any contract with the company. Mayor Moya asked if the city had a contract with Mr. Squyres. Mr. Pruett stated no he was a grant writer for several years. Ms. Gonzales stated that there was no contract, but Ms. Squyres was voted by council to be the grant writer. Mayor Moya stated that there

are no guarantees, they will do research to see if they find grants for us. Commissioner Serna stated that parks and recreation had one that they were going to look into. Mayor Moya asked if they met with them. Commissioner Serna stated yes. Mr. Pruett stated that this is a onetime deal. Mayor Moya asked if they do decided to go with this company after the research, what happens then. Mr. Pruett stated that it would have to go before council again. Mayor Moya asked in terms of fees. Mr. Pruett stated yes. Vote: 5 Ayes...Motion Carried.

Item # 8- Consider approving Wilburn "Brad" Taylor as part time Firefighter/Paramedic- Fire Department. Commissioner Flores moved to approve Wilburn "Brad" Taylor as part time Firefighter/Paramedic- Fire Department. Commissioner Simms, 2<sup>nd</sup>...Vote: 5 Ayes...Motion Carried.

Item # 9- Consider approving Jose Reyes as Volunteer Firefighter- Fire Department. Commissioner Flores moved to approve Jose Reyes as Volunteer Firefighter- Fire Department. Commissioner Hinojosa, 2<sup>nd</sup>...Vote: 5 Ayes...Motion Carried.

Mayor Moya asked for Announcement.

Commissioner Hinojosa announced that some of the members of the Galena Park Choir are having a good will donation car wash on Saturday at Lutheran Peace Church on 11<sup>th</sup> and Main, no cost, only donations from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Commissioner Hinojosa stated to go out and help the students raise money for their band conference. Commissioner Hinojosa stated that he talked to the president of the choir and they were so excited that the city was going to help them out by putting on the marquee. Commissioner Simms stated that he has allowed them to use the church, because of the shade and restrooms.

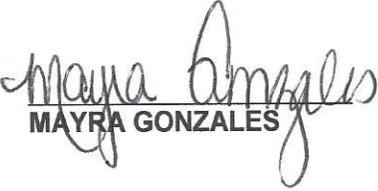
Commissioner Flores announced the 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the city. Commissioner Flores stated that there were going to be several events going on. Commissioner Flores stated that on the 12<sup>th</sup> they were going to have a soccer tournament in Galena Manor in honor of the 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary, and possibly have a fun walk. Commissioner Flores stated that they will be going to the senior luncheons to honor the oldest residents along with cake. Commissioner Flores stated that they are working with Galena Park High School to bury a time capsule at city hall that will be opened in 50 years. Commissioner Flores stated that Ernesto and himself are gathering artifacts to display.

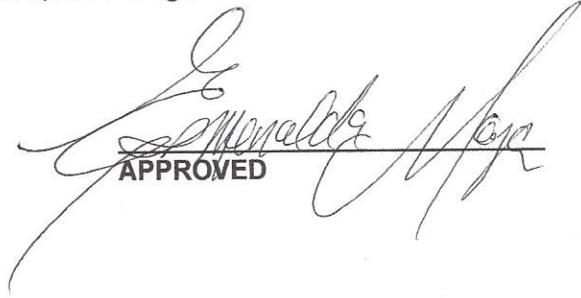
Mayor Moya stated that she is working with Committee for a Better Galena Park to give AED/ CPR training. Mayor Moya stated that the only cost is to bring a nonperishable food item or a toy. Mayor Moya stated that they are working on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual secret Santa to help families. Mayor Moya stated that last year they gave 288 gifts to children, they collaborated with the school district and they sent them names. Mayor Moya stated that they gave out food, toys, and turkeys. Mayor Moya stated that this year they want to boost it up to 500 or 600 more. Mayor Moya stated it will take place September 11, 2015 @ 10:00 a.m. at the Churchill Recreation Center. Mayor Moya invited everyone that was interested to attend.

Commissioner Flores stated that in conjunction with the 80<sup>th</sup> birthday, they are going to have a cook off in early November to celebrate the 80<sup>th</sup> birthday and the benefits will go to help the kids in the community. Commissioner Flores stated that they are still in the planning stages and if anyone would like to help let him know.

Commissioner Simms made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Serna, 2<sup>nd</sup>.... Vote: 5 Ayes... Motion Carried.

Meeting adjourned: 7:21 P.M.

  
MAYRA GONZALES

  
APPROVED