

**Village of Salado
Salado Municipal Building
301 North Stagecoach Road
Salado, Texas
Minutes of Regular Meeting of Board of Aldermen
October 15, 2020 at 6:30 p.m.**

The Board of Aldermen meeting was called to order at 6:35 p.m. by Mayor Pro-tem Michael Coggin.

Mayor Pro-tem Michael Coggin gave the Invocation and the Board of Aldermen led the Pledge of Allegiance to the United States and Texas flags.

Board Members Present: Mayor Skip Blancett (arrived at 7:30 p.m.), Mayor Pro-tem Michael Coggin, Aldermen Rodney Bell, Amber Preston Dankert (via videoconference), and John Cole. Alderman Frank Coachman was absent.

Staff Present: Village Administrator Don Ferguson

1. Citizens Communications

Chelsea Ervi of 1426 Old Mill Road spoke in opposition to installing video security cameras (Agenda Item 7C), citing concerns relating to privacy rights, statistics on the effectiveness of cameras in decreasing crime, flawed reading of license plates, and reasoning for use of cameras in a low crime community.

2. Consent Agenda

- A. Approval of minutes of the Regular Board of Aldermen meeting of October 1, 2020.
- B. Approval of the September 2020 Financial Statements for the Village of Salado.

Alderman Bell moved to approve the Consent Agenda, as presented. Alderman Cole seconded. Motion carried on a vote of 4-0.

3. Village Administrator Status Report

This item was heard after Agenda Item 4.

- Wastewater Project Update

Village Administrator Ferguson reported that letters were sent out last week to approximately 12 property owners not yet connected to the system. He advised that the letters specify a connection deadline of November 9, 2020, with the Village to proceed with action to connect if the owner does not comply. He said the Village is in the process of lining up contractors to connect properties, if necessary. He reported several property owners have responded to the letter inquiring about contractors and moving forward with connection.

- Main Street Improvement Project

Village Administrator Ferguson reported the contractor is in the process of re-planting dead sections of grass. He said the lighting contractor will be coming back to correct flickering issues discovered during testing and expected the contractor to finish by the end of this month. He spoke of plans for a street light ribbon-cutting on Main Street at Rock Creek with Village and TxDOT officials and advised that the public is welcome to attend. He reported that railings are being fabricated and will be black, rather than standard silver metal. He said that the contractor is awaiting delivery of the Thomas Arnold bridge railings, which are also being fabricated.

- 2020 General Election

Village Administrator Ferguson reported that early voting continues through October 30th and noted voters may vote at any of six early voting locations in Bell County. He listed the dates and times for each remaining day of early voting. He said there are 41 locations available for voting on November 3rd from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. He noted that applications for ballot by mail must be received no later than the close of business on October 23, 2020.

- Future Annexations

Village Administrator Ferguson reported preparations are underway for annexations of areas south of the Village on IH-35 toward the rest area, FM 2268 toward Holland, and the Carothers tract on Williams Road. He anticipated the annexation process to be complete by the end of 2020.

- Sales Tax Collection

Village Administrator Ferguson reported that the October 2020 sales tax check, representing August sales, totaled \$41,703.41, which was up about 12 percent from the same period last year. He advised that fiscal year-to-date collections total about 7 percent of budgeted revenue.

- Salado Stroll

Village Administrator Ferguson reported that Stroll will take place with COVID precautions such as face coverings and distancing, but the parade will not be held.

In addition, Village Administrator Ferguson reported that there have been coyote sightings and said the Village is working with State trappers, who are strongly encouraging against feeding. He provided advice on deterring coyote attacks and cautioned pet owners to keep their pets safe.

Salado Police Chief Pat Boone presented newly hired officer Steven Hall and reported on Sergeant Andrew Pence's departure, as he is relocating out of state. Mayor Pro-tem Coggin, on behalf of the Board, wished Sergeant Pence well and welcomed Officer Hall.

Alderman Cole said he has been approached by citizens interested in placing a blind corner mirror at the bend just past the low water crossing. Village Administrator Ferguson replied that options to improve safety can be explored, including replacement of the formerly used mirror. Alderman

Bell asked about crosswalks that were not part of the original scope of the TxDOT project. There was brief discussion of the annexation south on IH-35, the search for a new tourism director, and timeframe for installation of the wastewater odor control system. In response to Salado resident Darlene Walsh, Village Administrator Ferguson stated that there are no annexations planned north of Salado due to existing boundaries with Belton and confirmed that wastewater service extensions are currently in the design process.

4. Presentation

Presentation by representatives with the Salado Museum and College Park relating to the upcoming Salado Pioneer Classic-The Society of Hickory Golfers. (*David Swarthout, Director of the Salado Museum and College Park*)

This item was heard after Agenda Item 2.

Director David Swarthout spoke of Salado's opportunity to promote Salado and be part of this event's annual circuit. He said this event is a fundraiser for the Salado Museum and College Park and will benefit Salado by bringing in visitors. He spoke of this event as a cooperative effort among Mill Creek Golf Course and local businesses. Discussion addressed anticipated participation, press releases, incentives such as reduced rates at Stagecoach Inn, possible ways the Village may assist in welcoming event goers, and entry fees.

5. Ordinance

Consider approval of an ordinance authorizing and ordering the issuance of Village of Salado, Texas, permanent improvement refunding bonds; establishing parameters with respect to the sale of the bonds and authorizing the pricing officer to approve the amount, interest rates, price and terms thereof; and enacting other provisions incident and related thereto. (*Village Administrator*)

Village Administrator Ferguson explained the proposed "parameters" ordinance establishes parameters for potential refunding of the Village's wastewater bonds which would result in substantial savings to the Village. The previous ordinance expired in September 2020 and Board action is needed to extend the established parameters for another 6-month period.

Financial Advisor Chris Lane explained fees, lowered interest rates, bank bidding process, and preparations for taking advantage of savings opportunities when market conditions are optimal. Discussion addressed projections on interested banks, economic climate/financial market generally, statutory maximum extension of 6 months, and anticipated savings to Village of around \$500,000 to \$600,000.

Alderman Bell moved to approve the "parameters" ordinance, as presented. Alderman Cole seconded. Motion carried on a vote of 4-0.

6. Public Hearing

Hold a public hearing relating to the proposed development of an all abilities playground at Pace Park in Salado and the impact, if any, the development may have on the existing floodplain/wetland area in the park. (*Village Administrator*)

Mayor Pro-tem Coggin recognized Tim Fleischer, who signed up to speak on this item.

Tim Fleischer of 912 Cedar Park Circle spoke on the history of Pace Park, which was donated by the Pace Family and almost completely funded by private donations and hoped to preserve that history. His chief concerns related to preserving the large rock fence around the playground, the small obelisk, and ceramic tiles depicting children's drawings. He hoped the obelisk can remain after the park is redeveloped. He said that 26 years ago he was responsible for the placement of picnic tables and chairs when he was president of the Chamber of Commerce. He asked that the Board consider leaving some of these things in place to keep the spirit of Salado. Village Administrator Ferguson felt that all of Mr. Fleischer's suggestions could be worked into the park's design.

Mayor Pro-tem Coggin opened the public hearing at 7:24 p.m.

Village Administrator Ferguson provided background information on the efforts to update the park to include an all abilities playground, redesign of the park to improve safety and accommodate all abilities features, fundraising history, and grant funding opportunities. He advised that grant requirements include the need to hold a public hearing as part of the application process. Discussion addressed re-purposing the items mentioned in Mr. Fleischer's remarks to incorporate them into the proposed design; restroom/pavilion facilities; safety concerns regarding existing playground equipment and lack of compliance with current safety standards; incorporating the Rotary Club-donated awning into the all abilities park's design; and receipt of sizeable in-kind donations/services.

Continuing with the public hearing, Mayor Pro-tem Coggin invited additional speakers to offer public comments. No further comments were heard. Mayor Pro-tem Coggin closed the public hearing at 7:37 p.m.

7. Discussion and Possible Action

- A. Discuss and consider possible action approving a resolution authorizing the submission of an application for a Texas Parks and Wildlife Department grant for the development of an all abilities playground at Pace Park in Salado. (*Village Administrator*)

This item was heard after Agenda Item 7D.

Village Administrator Ferguson recommended approval of the resolution to authorize submission of the grant application to Texas Parks and Wildlife Department. Discussion addressed the application submission date (early next week); the timeframe for approval of the 50-50 matching grant to fund the park's construction; and timeframe for total project completion.

Alderman Cole moved to approve the resolution, as presented. Mayor Pro-tem Coggin seconded. Motion carried on a vote of 4-0.

- B. Discuss and consider possible action approving a resolution relating to mining and drilling activities in Pace Park in Salado. (*Village Administrator*)

Village Administrator Ferguson recommended approval of the resolution, which is required by Texas Parks and Wildlife as part of grant application process.

Alderman Cole moved to approve the resolution, as presented. Alderman Bell seconded. Motion carried on a vote of 4-0.

- C. Discuss and consider possible action regarding a proposed pilot program relating to the installation of video security cameras at certain locations within the corporate limits of Salado to assist the Salado Police Department. (*Village Administrator & Police Chief*)

Village Administrator Ferguson explained how the camera system would work, including effective placement, license plate reader capability, type of data gathered; retention of data, and usefulness of data in criminal investigations. He stressed the cameras would not be hidden and would not be used for traffic enforcement. He said the Salado Police Department is recommending entering into an agreement with a vendor to install, operate, and maintain 5 solar powered cameras to monitor traffic for 30 days. At the end of the 30-day period, there would be an option to enter into a one-year service agreement with the vendor at a cost of \$2,500 per camera.

Discussion addressed privacy concerns; funding to come from General Fund; legal opinion on use of cameras; usefulness of cameras in investigating crimes, such as vehicle burglaries in Salado; camera placement; delaying action until after newly elected Board members are sworn in; cameras as a crime deterrent; use of license plate reader cameras in surrounding cities; Judge Cliff Coleman's comments favoring cameras as very helpful in criminal investigations; Chief Boone's recommendation in support of a pilot period of 30 days; citizen comments during this meeting and emailed comments from a citizen expressing privacy/surveillance concerns and effect cameras may have on tourism. Alderman Dankert expressed concerns about delaying action due to the upcoming holiday tourist season.

Alderman Bell moved to continue this item to allow for the Board to conduct a workshop in mid-November and obtain a legal opinion. Alderman Cole seconded. Motion carried on a 3-2 vote, with Alderman Dankert and Mayor Pro-tem Coggin voting against. Mayor Blancett broke the tie with a vote in favor.

- D. Discuss and consider possible action regarding the Salado Municipal Building Flagpole Project. (*Village Administrator*)

This item was heard after Agenda Item 6.

Village Administrator Ferguson spoke on previous Board action approving the project, which was delayed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. He said the Village has discussed a possible change in

scope with the Eagle Scout who was authorized to acquire and install a flagpole outside the Municipal Building. To help expedite the project, Village staff has approached the Scout about modifying the project's scope to allow the Village to acquire and install the flagpole, at Village cost, and the Scout would be responsible for funding and construction of a memorial garden at the base of the flagpole. He advised that the Scout is open to the change in scope, but he is also agreeable to keeping the original scope in place, if that is the Board's desire.

Discussion addressed cost of the flag and pole (approximately \$2,500); flagpole/garden designs; and timeframe for installation of flagpole and garden.

Alderman Bell moved to approve the flagpole project in accordance with the modified scope, as detailed by Village Administrator Ferguson. Alderman Cole seconded. Motion carried on a vote of 4-0.

- E. Discuss and consider possible action regarding a request from the Salado ISD for a portion of the COVID-19 relief funds awarded to the Village of Salado. (*Village Administrator*)

This item was heard after Agenda Item 7C.

Village Administrator Ferguson said the Village has received an allocation of \$23,000 in COVID-19 relief funds from the State to go toward pandemic-related costs. He noted additional technology costs incurred by schools and stated that TEA has advised school districts to approach cities for a portion of funding received. He stated that the Salado ISD has requested \$4,462.50 of the grant allocation to cover a portion of the costs incurred by the District for purchase of Chromebooks and internet hot spots for online learning. Village Administrator Ferguson felt this is an appropriate expenditure and recommended approval. Brief discussion addressed possible request for itemization of SISD costs already incurred.

Alderman Bell moved to approve the allocation of \$4,462.50 in grant funding received by the Village of Salado to Salado ISD. Mayor Pro-tem Coggin seconded. Motion carried on a vote of 4-0.

- F. Discuss and consider issues relating to the potential development of regulations regarding to the placement of portable storage containers within the corporate limits of Salado. (*No action will be taken on this item; Village Administrator*)

Village Administrator Ferguson spoke of recent calls from citizens regarding storage pods sitting in driveways for several months. He advised the Village's current ordinances do not regulate such containers. He cited how other cities are dealing with these types of storage containers.

Discussion addressed development of an ordinance dealing with storage containers; length of time to allow containers to remain in place; and special circumstances such as flooding that might require an exemption from regulations. Consensus was reached to direct staff to draft an ordinance for future consideration and possible action by the Board.

- G. Discuss and consider issues relating to the fiscal impact of the coronavirus (COVID-19) on the Village of Salado. (*Village Administrator; this is not an action item*)

As there are no new developments to report, Mayor Pro-tem Coggin requested to remove this recurring item from future agendas.

Adjournment

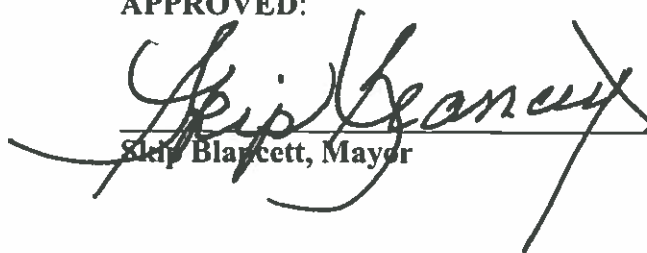
Alderman Bell moved to adjourn. Alderman Cole seconded. Mayor Pro-tem Coggin called the meeting adjourned at 8:25 p.m.

Recorded by:

Don Ferguson

These minutes approved on the 5th of November, 2020.

APPROVED:


Skip Blawett, Mayor

ATTEST:


Cara McPartland, City Secretary

