

Village of Salado
Salado Municipal Building
301 North Stagecoach Road
Salado, Texas
Minutes of Regular Meeting of Board of Aldermen
March 15, 2018 at 6:30 p.m.

The Board of Aldermen meeting was called to order at 6:33 p.m. by Mayor Skip Blancett.

Mayor Blancett 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, Mayor Pro-tem Fred Brown, Aldermen Andy Jackson, Amber Dankert, Frank Coachman, and Michael McDougal.

Staff Present: Village Administrator Don Ferguson and City Secretary Cara McPartland

Citizens Communications

Larry Nathanson spoke in favor of two modifications to the Village's golf cart ordinance relating to the definition of the term "operator" and the requirement that operators of golf carts on public streets must have a driver's license.

1. Consent Agenda

- A. Approval of minutes of the Regular Board of Aldermen meeting of March 1, 2018.
- B. Approval of the February 2018 Financial Statements for the Village of Salado.

Alderman Coachman moved to approve the Consent Agenda, as presented. Alderman McDougal seconded. Motion carried on a 5-0 vote.

2. Village Administrator's Report

- Status report on wastewater issues

Village Administrator Ferguson reported that construction continues and anticipated a one-day concrete pour for the treatment plant in the coming week. He provided the timeframe and locations of upcoming boring work, any associated road closure(s), and environmental monitoring. He advised that the Wastewater Impact Fee Advisory Committee's next meeting will be delayed until next week, with the exact date to be finalized tomorrow. He advised the contractor's initial pay applications have been processed and paid.

- Status report on preparations for the May 5, 2018 General Election in the Village of Salado

Village Administrator Ferguson reported that Salado Library District has cancelled its election, that the Village will be holding a joint election for contested mayor/alderman races and Salado

ISD will be holding a bond election. He noted election-related documents are available for viewing on the Village's website, which is undergoing improvements. He reported on ballot preparation, equipment availability/testing, and early voting dates.

- Status report on sales tax collections for the Village of Salado

Village Administrator Ferguson reported the March check, representing January collections, totaled almost \$31,000, which is three percent higher than the same period last year, and is the largest March check in the Village's history. Fiscal year to date collections totaled about \$237,000, up twelve percent from same period last year, and running well ahead of budget. He cautioned against comparisons with other cities as a means of gauging the strength of Salado's economy.

- Status report on development of a community garden

Village Administrator Ferguson reported the Salado ISD has approved the garden's site at the northeast corner of the Civic Center property. He noted that Jerry Herrick has made a generous private donation for equipment and materials. He reported on water line installation for irrigation and associated costs and reminded that the Board's upcoming agenda will include items to appoint members to the Community Garden and Tourism Advisory Boards. Alderman McDougal spoke highly of Dr. Herrick's generous contribution of \$21,000 toward the community garden. Village Administrator Ferguson stressed this garden is for the community's benefit and encouraged participation.

There was brief discussion of recent positive meetings with west side property owners relating to extension of wastewater service, which would be at the property owners' expense. It was noted that similar meetings will be held with east side property owners, as well as community meetings on system construction. Village Administrator Ferguson suggested that the Board schedule a meeting to tour the treatment plant/construction site(s) and advised there will be project information available soon on the Village's website.

3. Ordinance

Consider approval of an ordinance of the Village of Salado, Texas, repealing Ordinance 2018-02 prohibiting the parking of vehicles or trailers in front yards and requiring recreational vehicles, boats and trailers to be parked in the rear yard behind a fence; providing for severability, providing a penalty and providing an effective date. (*Village Administrator*)

Village Administrator Ferguson reviewed past Board direction to repeal the ordinance.

Alderman Coachman moved to repeal the ordinance, as presented. Alderman McDougal seconded. Discussion included reasoning for repealing the recently approved ordinance, which would have imposed restrictions on the entire Village intended to address issues encountered in the Mill Creek neighborhood. Discussion included property rights issues, effect on property values, and the Village's ability to impose regulations applicable to certain parts of the Village. Alderwoman Dankert felt that the initial approval and quick repeal of the ordinance were knee-jerk reactions and noted that the screening requirement helps to address safety issues and protect

property values. She favored further discussion and felt segregating certain parts of the Village is not the right path. Discussion continued on difficulties associated with deed restriction enforcement by Mill Creek and other property owners associations in general, as well as the need for neighbors to listen to each other's concerns.

Mayor Blancett called for a vote. Motion carried on a vote of 3-2, with Mayor Pro-tem Brown and Alderwoman Dankert voting against.

4. Discussion and Possible Action

- A. Discuss and consider possible action regarding a proposal for the Village of Salado to co-sponsor *Make a Difference in Salado* on April 14, 2018. (*Village Administrator*)

Keep Salado Beautiful President Susan Terry spoke on three identified projects as part of the expanded spring clean-up and asked that the Village co-sponsor the project as a demonstration of support. She advised letters will be sent to area non-profits inviting them to participate in the event. Village Administrator Ferguson noted the Board's approval would not involve any financial commitment from the Village.

Alderman McDougal moved to approve the proposal for the Village of Salado to co-sponsor *Make a Difference in Salado* on April 14, 2018, as presented. Mayor Pro-tem Brown seconded. Motion carried on a vote of 5-0.

Mayor Blancett noted his contact with a unit at Fort Hood interested in helping the Village of Salado.

- B. Discuss and consider possible action approving plans for the 2nd Annual *Earth Day 5K Troll Trot* on April 14, 2018. (*Village Administrator*)

Keep Salado Beautiful President Susan Terry spoke on last year's event and asked for Main Street to be closed for this year's event. Alderman McDougal moved to approve plans for the 2nd Annual *Earth Day 5K Troll Trot* on April 14, 2018, as presented. Alderman Coachman seconded. Motion carried on a vote of 5-0.

5. Workshop

- A. Discuss and consider issues relating to the possible issuance of the remaining bonds previously approved by voters to help fund development of the Salado Wastewater System. (*Village Administrator*)

Village Administrator Ferguson reviewed certain projected costs and need to issue remaining bonds to meet those costs. He noted the importance of timing of bond issuance, favorable current market conditions, and timeframe for receiving EDA reimbursement grant proceeds. He advised that \$2,000,000 in bonds remain to be issued and recommended that retirement be structured to match the initial \$8,000,000 issue. Discussion addressed the importance of flexibility, such as bond refund opportunities and callability, as well as cost savings, customer incentives, and

reducing burdens on taxpayers while not overburdening customers. It was stressed that when the bond issue is retired that collection of the debt service tax goes away, as required by law.

Mayor Blancett spoke on workshop procedures and asked Village Administrator Ferguson to clear up any questions about the Village's EDA grant and it was stressed that the Village was awarded a \$1,000,000 grant (*not* \$1,500,000) from EDA to be used for the collection system, which is a commonly approved amount, and subject to significant recordkeeping requirements.

Mayor Pro-tem Brown asked if the Village could set aside part of the second call of the bond issue and make it callable within a year. Village Administrator Ferguson replied affirmatively.

- B. Discuss and consider issues relating to a proposal to fund a portion of the cost for a new wayfinding sign on Interstate 35. (*Village Administrator*)

Village Administrator Ferguson reviewed the history of the I-35 signs said noted that project organizers have requested that the Village consider funding the remaining approximately \$12,000 needed to complete the southbound wayfinding sign from available Hotel Occupancy Tax (HOT) funds.

Former Mayor Merle Stalcup spoke on historic fundraising efforts, amount raised to date, the Village's prior contributions, and input from merchants on possible contributions. Discussion addressed electrical power for the sign (as opposed to the I-35 northbound solar-powered sign); correcting problems with the northbound solar-powered sign; the Village's payment of electric bill for the subject sign; power accessibility; this request as a deviation from original proposal to fund signs exclusively through private donations; and HOT as a tax on guests, rather than citizens. Alderman Jackson brought up statements made to him by members of certain service organization(s) that indicated the Village had made funding commitments. Concerns were expressed regarding the individuals alleged to have made false statements and whether those statements should be divulged without identifying said individuals.

- C. Discuss and consider the results of the Village of Salado Citizen Survey relating to the Village's deer population. (*Village Administrator*)

Village Administrator Ferguson reviewed the following results of the survey questions:

1. Do you believe the Village of Salado has an overpopulation of deer?
Responses: *Yes - 383; No - 112.*
2. Do you believe that the Village of Salado should attempt to control the population of deer?
Responses: *Yes - 348; No - 139.*
3. (If yes to Question #2) What do you think is the best method of control?
Responses: *Sharpshooting - 126; Trap and euthanize - 157; Private landowner control - 155; Other - 142.*

4. Are you aware feeding deer within the corporate limits of the Village of Salado is prohibited by ordinance and that there is a fine of up to \$125 for feeding deer?
Responses: *Yes – 414; No – 84.*
5. Would you be willing to pay more on your annual property taxes to control the deer population in Salado?
Responses: *Yes – 195; No – 281.*
6. (If yes to Question #5) With the understanding that one (1) cent in the Village of Salado's Ad Valorem Tax Rate generates approximately \$17,000, what amount would you be willing to increase the property tax rate to control the deer population in Salado?
Responses: *One (1) cent – 108; Two (2) cents – 65; Other – 24.*

Village Administrator Ferguson stated that among the most common comments was the need to look at trap and relocate programs. Other comments on deer control included allowing private property owners to harvest deer as they see fit, use of bow hunting, need for strict enforcement of deer feeding prohibition, and contacting Texas Parks & Wildlife to help develop a deer control program.

Discussion acknowledged that the public has identified and understands that deer overpopulation is a problem that needs to be solved as a community. Other points of discussion addressed feeding of deer as a major contributing factor that is detrimental to deer health and public safety, as evidenced by the number of vehicles involved in deer-related accidents. It was agreed that the Board needs to explore solutions with the community's input that includes contacting Texas Parks & Wildlife and the USDA Animal and Plant Health and Inspection Service (APHIS) for assistance in developing an effective deer control program.

D. Discuss and consider issues relating to the development of an ordinance regulating mobile food vendors. (*Alderman Michael McDougal*)

Alderman McDougal stated he did not oppose mobile food vendors, but wished to ensure adequate health precautions were in place. He cited personal research on other area cities' mobile food vendor ordinances that require provision of certain basic items such as the proper health department/food handler certificate, Texas sales tax permit, property owner permission, background checks, scheduled operations, vendor parking plans, and vendor utility costs. Alderman Coachman compared his research on several area cities' fee schedules/bond requirements with the Village's mobile food vendor requirements. He recommended that mobile food vendors be regulated under an ordinance separate from itinerant vendors, pay a \$100 annual fee (to be in effect January through December, with a 7-day grace period for renewal), provide the proper health/food handler permits, restroom facilities, and provide proof that sales taxes are being remitted to the State comptroller. Discussion generally favored lowering the annual fee from \$250 to \$100 as being more aligned with other area cities. Village Administrator Ferguson noted the importance of food handler certification and compliance with parking requirements, but expressed some reservations on possible background checks and inclusion of utility costs. Alderman Coachman suggested that the annual fee could be cut in half for applications submitted after June 1st in the interest of fairness. Alderwoman Dankert expressed concerns about vendors meeting

restroom requirements. Consensus favored drafting of an ordinance to be placed on a future agenda and possible holding of a workshop meeting prior to Board action.

- E. Discuss and consider proposed revisions to the Village of Salado Sign Ordinance. *(Alderman Frank Coachman)*

Alderman Coachman presented possible concepts to consider, including universal signage requirements for standalone businesses, historic district properties, and I-35 frontage properties. He stated the need to look at regulations related to pole signs, monument signs, pennants, banners, event/real estate signs, and digital signage, as well as when or where such signs should be allowed. Discussion also addressed development of specific overlay district regulations, enforcement of the sign ordinance, and conflicting language in the existing sign ordinance. Village Administrator Ferguson stated he could circulate a draft ordinance to the Board for consideration at a future workshop. He stressed the importance of drafting the ordinance to be clearer for the public to understand.

- F. Discuss and consider policies, procedures and other requirements relating to the placement of items on the agenda for Board of Aldermen meetings. *(Alderman Michael McDougal)*

Alderman McDougal said there needs to be adequate back-up information on an agenda item before it is placed on an agenda for discussion. Village Administrator Ferguson added that normally these types of policies and procedures are usually handled through governance policies, rather than ordinances. He expressed concerns regarding an existing ordinance requirement that the mayor shall include any item requested by at least two aldermen and provided scenarios that could lead to a so-called “walking quorum.” He suggested allowing an alderman to submit an agenda item with adequate background information to be placed on a workshop meeting agenda prior to any action being taken, provided the item requested is not deemed an emergency. He stated adoption of a governance policy as a living document will allow the Board to easily set and amend procedures on items such as agendas, speakers, and meeting decorum.

- G. Discuss and consider issues relating to the Village of Salado website. *(Alderman Michael McDougal)*

Alderman McDougal stated the extreme importance of the Village’s website for public information purposes and requested the status of the updates to the website. Village Administrator Ferguson advised that due to demands on limited staff and prioritization of duties, website updates were temporarily slowed, but recent developments have allowed staff time for uploading of several years of Board of Aldermen minutes. He advised that the process is well underway with an initial focus on permanent records, to be followed by ordinances, financial statements, annual audit reports, and other types of records.

- H. Discuss and consider issues relating to a proposal to live stream meetings of the Board of Aldermen. *(Alderswoman Amber Dankert)*

Village Administrator Ferguson spoke of unfair criticism saying the Board “pushed aside” this issue at its last meeting, as the decision was made to place it on tonight’s workshop agenda. He

stated that it is up to the Board to weigh the pros and cons of live streaming and cited potential issues that need to be managed. He said technical issues relating to quality, storage, manpower, and associated costs need to be explored, as there are many options to consider. He stated that posting of audio might be an appropriate starting point, before initiating efforts to record or live stream video. He recommended adopting a policy prior to implementation. Alderwoman Dankert said this issue has been brought up on social media and was amenable to starting with audio that is posted to the Village’s website within one business day of the meeting. It was agreed to pursue pricing the audio recording option.

Adjournment

Hearing no further business, Mayor Blancett called the meeting adjourned at 8:34 p.m.

Recorded by:

Cara McPartland

These minutes approved on the 5th of April, 2018.

APPROVED:


Skip Blancett, Mayor

ATTEST:


Cara McPartland, City Secretary

