

**Village of Salado
Salado Municipal Building
301 North Stagecoach Road
Salado, Texas
Minutes of Special Meeting of Board of Aldermen
April 6, 2020 at 6:00 p.m.**

The Board of Aldermen meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. by Mayor Skip Blancett.

Board Members Present: Mayor Skip Blancett, Mayor Pro-tem Frank Coachman, Aldermen Rodney Bell, Amber Preston Dankert, John Cole, and Michael Coggin. (*The meeting was conducted via videoconference.*)

Mayor Blancett gave the invocation.

Staff Present: Village Administrator Don Ferguson

Ordinance

Consider approval of an ordinance of the Village of Salado, Texas amending Ordinance No. 2020-01 to order the next General Election of the Village, for the purpose of electing the mayor and two (2) aldermen for two (2) year terms each; modifying such order to postpone the election from May 2, 2020 to November 3, 2020 and providing for the following: findings of fact; amendment; repealer; severability; codification; effective date; and proper notice and meeting. (*Village Administrator*)

Village Administrator Ferguson reviewed prior advisories regarding postponement of the election and noted the most recent advisory contains strongly worded language recommending postponement until November 3, 2020.

Alderman Bell asked if the ordinance could be structured to allow consideration of an earlier date for the election if prescribed by the State. Village Administrator Ferguson recommended approval of the ordinance, as presented, but advised that including language in the motion would allow for such consideration. Village Administrator Ferguson noted that the City of Waco has postponed its election until November, however, is submitting a letter to the governor requesting consideration to hold its election in July. Village Administrator Ferguson stated that if the governor does allow cities to hold July elections, the Board can consider amending the election ordinance at that time.

Alderman Cole asked if the additional language would leave the door open for both dates. Village Administrator Ferguson replied that the Board would not be adding additional language to the ordinance, but include wording in the motion that it is understood if an earlier date becomes available, the Board could move the election date, if it so chooses.

Alderman Cole asked about the timeframe for receiving a reply from the governor regarding holding a July election. Village Administrator Ferguson felt that it would have to be very soon to

meet certain election calendar deadlines. He said discussions with Bell County and the Texas Secretary of State stated that the July election is run by political parties, not counties.

Alderman Coggin asked if the public has an opportunity to speak at this meeting. Village Administrator Ferguson said while this item does not require a public hearing, the Board may allow public comment. Alderman Bell spoke of his conversation with a state representative indicating that July elections may be problematic due to issues regarding mixing city elections with party politics, but favored having the opportunity for a July election, if allowed.

Village Administrator Ferguson and Mayor Blancett requested public comments at this time.

Ericka Redic did not have a comment on the proposed ordinance, but said she and her husband, as potential Salado property owners, were interested tonight's meeting to find out about politics in Salado.

Hearing no further speakers, Mayor Blancett closed public comments.

Mayor Blancett inquired about election-related costs incurred as a result of delaying the decision to postpone the May election. Village Administrator Ferguson replied that about \$1,800 in expenses have been incurred to date, with the possibility that some programming costs may be recovered. He said if a July election is allowed there will likely be some additional repetitive costs, depending on what parameters are set by the state. In response to Mayor Blancett's question, Village Administrator Ferguson noted that a November election would be much cheaper than either a May or July election.

Mayor Blancett said enough money has already been spent by delaying the postponement decision and felt it would be a tremendous mistake to put aside the health and welfare of this community for political reasons. Board discussion included direction to staff to send a letter to the governor's office requesting allowance of a July election versus approving the ordinance without the additional instruction to send the aforementioned letter. Alderman Cole said he favored postponing until November 3rd when people feel safe, without the additional motion language. Alderman Coggin stated that he favored adding the motion language regarding the request to the governor's office to hold a July election because there are a lot of people wanting to vote in this election.

Mayor Blancett entertained a motion.

Alderman Bell moved to approve the ordinance, as presented, with the understanding that if the State prescribes an earlier date, the Board will have the opportunity to consider that date moving forward.

Alderman Coggin requested an amendment to the motion that the Board direct Village Administrator Ferguson to write a letter similar to the one sent by the City of Waco requesting the opportunity to move the election to July 14th.

Mayor Pro-tem Coachman asked for a second on the original motion.

Alderman Coggin seconded the original motion and offered the amendment to the motion. Alderman Bell accepted the amendment, as stated by Alderman Coggin.

Village Administrator Ferguson restated the motion and amendment, as follows: The motion has been made to approve the ordinance moving the election from May to November, with the understanding that if an allowance is made for an earlier election date, that the Board would consider that earlier election date at that time. In addition, the Board is directing staff to send a letter to the governor’s office similar to that sent by Waco, asking for the ability to hold its general election in July, as opposed to November.

Mayor Blancett called for the vote. Motion carried on a vote of 4-1, with Alderman Cole voting against.

Adjournment

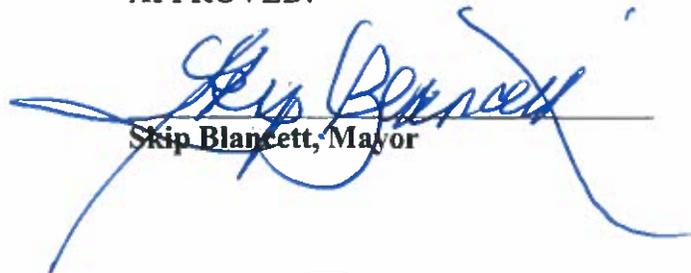
Alderman Bell moved to adjourn. Alderman Coggin seconded. Mayor Blancett called the meeting adjourned at 6:23 p.m.

Recorded by:

Cara McPartland

These minutes approved on the 16th of April, 2020.

APPROVED:


Skip Blancett, Mayor

ATTEST:


Cara McPartland, City Secretary

