

**State of Texas
County of Bexar
City of San Antonio**



**FINAL
Meeting Minutes
City Council B Session**

City Hall Complex
105 Main Plaza
San Antonio, Texas 78205

Wednesday, April 13, 2016

2:00 PM

Municipal Plaza Building

The City Council of San Antonio convened in the “B” Room of the Municipal Plaza Building. City Clerk Leticia Vacek took the Roll Call with the following Councilmembers present:

PRESENT: 11 - Mayor Taylor, Treviño, Warrick, Viagran, Saldaña, Gonzales, Lopez, Medina, Nirenberg, Krier, and Gallagher

1. A Briefing on the implementation and early success of the 18-month Vacant Building Registration Program. [Lori Houston, Assistant City Manager; Shanon Miller, Director, Office of Historic Preservation]

Shanon Miller presented a Power Point regarding the Vacant Building Registration Pilot Program. She outlined the Program Goals: 1) Spur rehabilitation and re-use vacant/blighted buildings to encourage economic development; 2) Create a higher level of accountability for property owners; and 3) Create a safer environment. She spoke of the negative economic impact of vacant buildings to nearby property owners and highlighted the causes of residential vacancy. She reported that they had hired and trained staff for the Pilot Program from November 2014 through March 2015. She stated that procurement and system development occurred during the 1st and 3rd quarters of 2015, while an Advisory Committee was convened in the 3rd quarter.

Mrs. Miller outlined the Registration Process and noted the program fees were \$250 for Single Family Homes and \$750 for all other buildings. She highlighted program successes and presented photos of same. She provided 2015 and 2016 results and reported that the number of exempt buildings decreased from 45 in 2015 to 20 in 2016. She stated that 2016 would be the start of a future baseline measure for the Total Vacancy Rates in Pilot Areas.

Mrs. Miller recognized the Advisory Committee and provided an overview of the Council Endorsed Recommendations to include establishing a Historic Preservation Incentive Fund, Establishing a Wills, Trust & Probate Clinic, and Posting an Inventory of Buildings Online. She highlighted recommendations of the Advisory Committee to include waiving fees for well maintained commercial properties, providing a 90-day grace period for new owners, and establishing Early and Late Registration Fees. She mentioned that amendments to the San Antonio Property Maintenance Code would include prohibiting plywood as a securing device and applying the Property Maintenance Code to the entire exterior of a partially occupied building.

Mayor Taylor thanked staff for the presentation and stated that she was pleased with the initial report and recommendations. She thanked the Advisory Committee for their work and expressed support for the Wills, Trust & Probate Clinic. She asked how long the program would last. Mrs. Miller replied that the Pilot Program was implemented for 18 months and they would bring back final recommendations in June. She stated that the program was successful and would be recommending that it become a permanent program. Mayor Taylor suggested that they utilize the Council Committee Structure as a venue for discussion prior to bringing the recommendation to the full Council. Mrs. Miller stated that they would work with the Neighborhoods and Livability Council Committee.

Councilmember Warrick asked if the Committee had discussed Historically Significant Homes that may not be in Historic Neighborhoods. Mrs. Miller stated that they had not dealt with that issue to date but would consider it in the future. She noted that they had worked with the City Attorney's Office to identify boundaries that were legally defensible but felt there were opportunities for expansion. Councilmember Warrick requested a list of Commercial and Residential Properties for the program and asked how to increase the number of registrations. Mrs. Miller replied that the reason properties were vacant varied and they would work them on a case by case basis.

Councilmember Gallagher stated that there was a great number of vacant properties in District 10 and hoped that the program would be expanded. He noted that they utilized volunteers to inform them of vacant properties and work with the property owners to take action.

Councilmember Saldaña asked why there was a need for legal defensibility. Mrs. Miller stated that there was a need to treat equally situated properties consistently. Joe Niño of the City Attorney's Office stated that there was no legal impediment regarding general expansion of the program but they need to look at the process for identifying particular areas. Councilmember Saldaña stated that there would not be any issues of targeting a specific area if the program was implemented city-wide. Mr. Niño confirmed same. Mrs. Sculley noted that they would have to increase resources if the program was expanded.

Councilmember Treviño stated that they should be mindful of property rights and take a compassionate approach moving forward. He asked that staff consider including a representative from the Bexar Appraisal District on the Advisory Committee.

Councilmember Warrick asked if staff was communicating with Police and Fire when they encounter a vacant property. Mrs. Miller stated that they communicate with them when properties are registered and they communicate with staff when they identify properties that may not be registered. Councilmember Warrick asked of vacant lots. Mrs. Miller replied that this program only applied to structures but would discuss same with the Advisory Committee.

Councilmember Medina stated that he was pleased with some of the early successes along the Deco District. He noted that he would like to reduce the number of vacant homes in neighborhoods and empower neighborhood associations to address same.

Mayor Taylor thanked staff for the presentation and stated that she looked forward to the continuing evolution of the program.

2. A Briefing on the World Heritage Work Plan. [Lori Houston, Assistant City Manager; Colleen Swain, World Heritage Director]

Colleen Swain presented a Power Point regarding the World Heritage Work Plan. She recognized the many partners and spoke of the great amount of public input that they had solicited. She stated that Councilmember Viagran had hosted three Symposia and an Open House, and that as the World Heritage Director; she had met with six Stakeholder Groups. She played a video regarding Cultural Mapping, an effort to collect stories on the Missions, created by the Office of Historic Preservation (OHP) and the Communications and Public Affairs Department. She noted that OHP had partnered with the San Antonio Conservation Society to survey the commercial corridors from Downtown to the Missions and identify Historic Structures.

Ms. Swain reported that \$16 Million had been allocated in the 2012 Bond Program for Infrastructure Work in the area. She stated that work would be completed within the next year and that staff was working on projects to include in the 2017 Bond Program. She noted that they were working to improve Wayfinding and would look at renaming some of the streets that were disconnected. She indicated that they would not move forward without support from the public. She spoke of their work on a Bike Route, VIA Bus Routes, and Branding Effort. She highlighted their work to beautify the area with landscaping, lighting, Code Enforcement, and addressing the Stray and Roaming Dog Population. She reported that 41 vacant structures were identified within the Mission Historic District and they were working to improve them. She stated that volunteer groups as the Students Together Achieving Revitalization (STAR) and Rehabber Club were working to rehabilitate homes in the area. She noted that the Economic Development Department and UTSA's Institute of Economic Development were conducting a Market Assessment focused on the areas around Missions San Jose and San Juan.

Ms. Swain highlighted the Marketing Efforts by the Convention and Visitor's Bureau which have resulted in 1,400 stories throughout 11 countries with an advertising value of \$12.8 Million. She referenced the Mobile Website and noted the need to improve cellular coverage. She stated that they would work with the Neighborhood Associations on the Neighborhood Plan and were working with the Alamo Endowment Foundation and General Land Office on the Alamo Master Planning Effort. She stated that it would be coordinated with the World Heritage Work Plan and Downtown Neighborhood Plan, with all woven into the S.A Tomorrow Effort. She added that they would continue to work on gathering community input and ensuring that growth surrounding the Missions is authentic to the character and respectful of the surrounding area.

Mayor Taylor thanked staff for the presentation and commended Councilmember Viagran for her leadership. She stated that she was supportive of the investments being made and that she was pleased with the cultural mapping. She noted that she hoped they could figure out how to replicate the model in other neighborhoods. She asked of the \$14.8 Million and \$8.2 Million noted in the Power Point. Ms. Swain replied that \$14.8 Million was needed for Street Maintenance, while \$8.2 Million was for Utility Burial.

Councilmember Viagran thanked Mayor Taylor and the City Council for their support and city staff for their work. She stated that she was pleased with all of the work accomplished thus far but that there was still much more work to be done. She spoke of the importance of storytelling to include the acequias, as well as cultural mapping in order to capture the authenticity and respect of the area. She noted that they were working with Stinson Airport on connectivity. She mentioned the need to assist the local church parishes and to address Public Art.

Councilmember Gonzales expressed her support and asked if there were other similar World Heritage Sites in the country. Ms. Swain stated that San Antonio was unique in that there were five sites within one designation. Councilmember Viagran stated that they should look at other locations outside of the United States that may resonate more with San Antonio. Councilmember Gonzales spoke of the need to maintain the bridges, improve streets & sidewalks, and façade improvements.

Mayor Taylor thanked everyone for their work and stated that she looked forward to future updates.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Mayor Taylor recessed the meeting into Executive Session at 3:48 pm to discuss the following:

- A. Deliberations regarding economic development negotiations and discuss related legal issues pursuant to Texas Government Code Sections 551.087 (economic development) and 551.071 (consultation with attorney).
- B. Deliberate the purchase, exchange, lease or value of real property and discuss related legal issues pursuant to Texas Government Code Sections 551.072 (real property) and 551.071 (consultation with attorney).
- C. Discuss legal issues related to collective bargaining pursuant to Texas Government Code Section 551.071 (consultation with attorney).

RECONVENED

Mayor Taylor reconvened the meeting at 5:15 pm and announced that no action was taken in Executive Session. She addressed the Ceremonial Items.

CEREMONIALS

Mayor Taylor presented a Proclamation in recognition of the 125th Anniversary of Fiesta San Antonio, to be held April 14-24, 2016. It was noted that the event takes place every April to honor the memory of the Heroes of the Alamo and Battle of San Jacinto. It was also noted that the success of Fiesta is dependent on the hard work and dedication of the Commission which organizes the Texas-sized festival of over 100 events, with more than 75,000 volunteers, to accommodate 3.5 million party goers.

Mayor Taylor presented a Proclamation to El Rey Feo LXVIII (68), who will represent the LULAC Scholarship Committee during Fiesta 2016. It was stated that the mission of the Committee is to financially support the aspirations of deserving High School Seniors to obtain a college education regardless of race, color, or religion. "The Ugly King" presented his Official Fiesta Medal to Mayor Taylor and the City Council.

Mayor Taylor recognized the Centro San Antonio Amigos who presented their 2016 Fiesta Medal. It was noted that the Amigos help accommodate the growing residential population through the efforts of the Public Improvement District to position Downtown as a premier visitor's destination. It was also noted that the Amigos serve as goodwill ambassadors by assisting downtown users and giving extra attention to the overall appearance of Downtown.

Mayor Taylor presented a Proclamation in recognition of the 125th Anniversary Battle of Flowers Parade that will be held on Friday, April 22, 2016. It was stated that the theme this year is "Texas Traditions...125 Years" and the Grand Marshal was Rosemary Kowalski. It was also noted that the Battle of Flowers Parade holds the distinction of being the first celebration to be held in Alamo Plaza.

Mayor Taylor presented a Proclamation in recognition of the 68th Annual Fiesta Flambeau Parade that will be held on Saturday, April 23, 2016. It was noted that the theme this year is "Long Live Texas," and the Grand Marshal was Patsy Torres. The Flambeau is one of the premier events of Fiesta and has been called America's Largest Illuminated Night Parade.

Mayor Taylor presented a Proclamation to the San Antonio Conservation Society who will host "A Night in Old San Antonio" (NIOA) April 19-22, 2016. The four-night event is held in the La Villita National Historic District and celebrates San Antonio's diverse cultural heritage. NIOA showcases 15 ethnic-themed areas, more than 250 food and drink booths, and over 20 regional bands and dance troops, to provide entertainment to nearly 85,000 revelers.

RECESSED

Mayor Taylor recessed the meeting at 5:45 pm and announced that the meeting would resume at 6:00 pm for Citizens to be Heard.

RECONVENED

Mayor Taylor reconvened the meeting at 6:00 pm and addressed Citizens to be Heard. Deputy City Clerk Leticia Saenz announced that Councilmember Nirenberg was attending a Homeowners Association Annual Meeting and Mayor's Book Club Event at Igo Branch

Library.

CITIZENS TO BE HEARD

Mayor Taylor called upon the citizens registered to speak.

Mark Perez addressed the City Council and expressed concern with businesses operating without the proper permits. He spoke of concerns with hazardous chemicals and their link to premature birth rates.

Nazirite Ruben Flores Perez addressed the City Council and referenced various passages in The Bible.

Donald Gonzales of Estrada Hinojosa addressed the City Council regarding Items 24A and 24B on the Regular Council Agenda. He expressed concern that they had held the Financial Advisor Contract for 22 years and were not being selected for the new contract. He stated that they had experienced great success and asked the City Council to reconsider.

Bob Estrada and Noe Hinojosa addressed the City Council regarding Items 24A and 24B on the Regular Council Agenda. Mr. Estrada spoke of the history of their firm and stated that they had great success over the past 22 years. Mr. Hinojosa stated that they were more than prepared to enter into a new contract and that they were a Minority-Owned Firm. They asked the City Council to reconsider the selection.

Jim Cisneros stated that his brother had been awarded the Texas Legislative Medal of Honor by Governor Rick Perry in 2011 and wanted him honored at the Tobin Center Medal of Honor Walk. He asked if the City or Bexar County was responsible for coordinating same.

Juan Macias addressed the City Council and expressed concern with drugs and violent activity occurring in his neighborhood. He stated that he had been attacked by one of his neighbors and had to be taken to the hospital.

Artman Bland addressed the City Council and stated that he needed assistance with his property.

Stephanie Salas expressed concern with stray and roaming in animals in San Antonio. She stated that it was a public health and safety issue and asked city staff to continue to educate and reach out to the community.

Faris Hodge, Jr. submitted written testimony and highlighted Walmart's pledge to hire

Veterans. He wrote of the Federal Aid provided to residents of Flint, Michigan. He also wrote of the \$200,000 paid by Bexar County regarding the death of a jail inmate. He highlighted the San Antonio Police Department Annual Blue Mass held at San Fernando Cathedral.

RECESSED

Mayor Taylor announced at 6:38 pm that the Executive Session would reconvene on April 14 after the Business Portion of the City Council Meeting.

APPROVED

IVY R. TAYLOR
MAYOR

ATTEST:

LETICIA M. VACEK, TRMC/CMC/MMC
CITY CLERK