

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



**Meeting Minutes
City Council B Session**

City Hall Complex
105 Main Plaza
San Antonio, Texas 78205

Wednesday, September 4, 2019

2:00 PM

Municipal Plaza Building

The City Council of San Antonio convened in the City Council Chambers of the Municipal Plaza Building. City Clerk Leticia Vacek took the Roll Call noting a quorum with the following Councilmembers present:

PRESENT: Mayor Nirenberg, Treviño, Andrews-Sullivan, Viagran, Rocha Garcia, Gonzales, Cabello Havrda, Sandoval, Pelaez, Courage, and Perry.

1. Staff presentation and possible action on Potential Amendments to the FY 2020 Proposed Operating and Capital Budget. [Erik Walsh, City Manager; Justina Tate, Director, Management and Budget]

Mayor Nirenberg stated that the purpose of the meeting was to discuss potential budget amendments before the budget adoption on September 12, 2019.

City Manager Walsh noted that a second budget amendment discussion would be held on Wednesday, September 11, 2019. He asked Councilmembers to identify their proposed budget amendments and rank them in order. He listed the City Council areas of priorities as Affordable Housing, Strong Families & Children, Streets, Infrastructure, Sidewalks, Property Tax Relief, Police, Fire, and Public Safety.

City Manager Walsh explained that he provided a list of Potential Amendments to the FY 2020 Budget which includes FY 2021 Budget Impact. He stressed that the Budget was balanced over a two-year period and noted Items 1-26 were General Operating Fund Items, 4 Items are Restricted Funds, and 4

were Capital Fund items. He noted that two Items have an asterisk denoting they were CCR derived items which will be discussed at the Governance Committee Meeting soon.

City Manager Walsh explained that he had a conversation with CPS before the meeting and the CPS Revenue was approximately \$3 million over and above the projected budget. He stressed that the goal for the outcome of the meeting was to determine a prioritized list of budget amendments.

Councilmember Viagran spoke of her priorities of a Police Substation in District 3. She offered support of Councilmember Rocha Garcia Girls Summit in Council District 4. Councilmember Viagran identified the Maestro Business Incubator as a priority. She also advocated for an Animal Control Officer for District 6 and requested an additional Animal Control Officer for District 3. She requested a weekend Animal Control Officer and Code Enforcement for all City Council Districts to include a weekend hotline for same. Councilmember Viagran advocated for an enhanced SWEEP Team which was identified as two Code Officers. She noted her advocacy for Our Viva San Antonio Healthy Corner Store Initiative to bring fresh fruits and produce to neighborhoods. Councilmember Viagran also requested flashers on Pleasanton Road for School Zones.

City Manager Walsh asked Councilmember Viagran to rank her priorities. Councilmember Viagran ranked her priorities as follows:

1. Police Substation
2. Healthy Corner Store Initiative
3. Code Officers
4. Animal Care Officer
5. SWEEP Team
6. VIVA San Antonio
7. Pleasanton Road School Zone Flashers

Councilmember Andrews-Sullivan expressed support for a second chance program dedicated to cutting down on recidivism by supporting people that are released from State, County, or local Prison and Jails. She explained that the Proposed Second Chance Initiative Pilot would provide resources to secure employment and obtain documentation such as a Birth Certificate, ID Card, and Social Security Card. Councilmember Andrews-Sullivan requested \$100,000 for the MLK Jr. March. She also requested funding for Neighborhood Housing Services to help owner-occupied homes in despair with repair and painting. Councilmember Andrews-Sullivan requested funding for a feasibility study to create a Senior Center in District 2.

City Manager Walsh asked Councilmember Andrews-Sullivan to rank her priorities. Councilmember Andrews-Sullivan prioritized the following:

1. Second Chance Initiative Pilot to provide resources to individuals to secure employment and obtain documentation such as an ID, Birth Certificate, and Social Security Card
2. MLK Jr. March Funding for marketing, facility rental, production, and facility use
3. Feasibility Study for the development of a Senior Center in the Lakeside

HWY 87 area in District 2

Ms. Lori Houston stated that \$34.4 million has been allocated within the existing Affordable Housing Plan. Of that amount \$275,000 was identified for owner occupied minor repairs and an additional \$450,000 would be utilized for Districts 1 through District 5. Ms. Houston stated that the goal was to assist 10 homes in each of the five districts.

Councilmember Courage noted his supports for the Council Aide Compensation initiative championed by Councilmember Treviño. He also expressed support for the implementation of a future City Gun Policy and looked forward to the discussion but did not support a direct impact on the budget. He expressed support for the Council District 3 Police Substation and also requested a Substation for District 9. Councilmember Courage expressed support for VIVA SA Healthy Corner Store Initiative and noted that the Bio-Med SA and SA Education Partnership items were underfunded.

Councilmember Courage provided a list of his priorities for District 9. He stated that State Law allows for municipalities to increase the annual fee for Small Cell Node Towers by ½ the Consumer Price Index. He suggested the City consider adding the annual fee as part of the budget process especially since the Cable and Telecom Companies successfully reduced their right-of-way fees paid to municipalities. Councilmember Courage expressed his support for Trauma Informed Care, Domestic Violence School Based Prevention however; he suggested using Pre-K Sales Tax instead of the General Fund. Councilmember Courage expressed support for funding to design Sonterra/Gold Canyon to Loop 1604 and funding to design Huebner to HWY 281 and funding for restrooms at Blossom Park and Restrooms at Walker Ranch Park. Mr. Hosseini noted that the cost to add restrooms was approximately \$100,000 for the building and \$100,000 to bring in water and electricity for a total of \$200,000.

Councilmember Rocha Garcia requested funding for the Southwest ISD After-School Program to be extended from 3 days to 5. She expressed support for establishing a Girl's Summit Kickoff in District 4 during the Spring Break timeframe to allow for possible leveraging/partnership with the San Antonio Fire Department's Camp Hero Program. She stated that the program would be geared toward empowering and challenging girls. Councilmember Rocha Garcia expressed support for the Maestro Business Incubator.

Councilmember Rocha Garcia stated that her priority was the Alamo Operation Center called the RSAC that would work directly with District 4. She stated that this program would enhance the security and resiliency of the fiscal and public infrastructure regarding cybersecurity threats. City Manager Walsh stated that \$2.5 million was set aside in the Capital Budget for the Security Operations Center.

Councilmember Gonzales also expressed support for the Girl's Summit Kickoff (D4) and looked forward to being part of the program. She also expressed support to enhance the SWEEP Team which included two Code Enforcement Officers. Councilmember Gonzales requested cost estimates for cleaning up Homeless Encampments under bridges and other areas. She acknowledged that many different departments were involved in the heavy lifting of the cleanup but would like a list of resources and cost.

Councilmember Gonzales advocated for the addition of an Animal Care Officer. She also expressed support for the Maestro Center, Mexican Civil Rights Institute, Westside Development Corporation for District 5, Guadalupe Plaza Master Plan, and the Dorsey Drainage Project.

Councilmember Perry expressed support for School Zone Flashers on Judson Road which supports Vision Zero encouraging children to walk to school. He also expressed support for Thousand Oaks and Jones Maltsberger traffic safety improvements to protect turning lanes around a blind curve.

Councilmember Perry expressed support for the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) Marker on Nacogdoches and Higgins. He also expressed support for Kenilworth from Cave to Burnside Street Project. Lastly, Councilmember Perry expressed support for Council Aide Compensation and funding to design Sonterra/Gold Canyon to Loop 1604 and funding to design Huebner to HWY 281.

Councilmember Sandoval stated that her first priority was to expand the City's civilian training resources to City Council Staff and stressed the importance of professional development. She noted her second priority was funding for a contractor to facilitate Citizens Committee for advancing public participation. Councilmember Sandoval expressed support for the Mexican Civil Rights Institute and Maintenance of Non Service Alleys. She explained that entails about 17 alleys in District 7 that are eligible for the program. Councilmember Sandoval expressed support for the Dorsey Drainage Project, the Neighborhood Tree Program and future City Council Policy discussion on Guns, pending CCR on the Governance Committee Forecast. She also expressed support for weekend and evening Code Enforcement Officers, VIVA SA Healthy Corner Store Initiative, and City Council Aide Compensation.

Councilmember Treviño noted his first priority of Council Aide Compensation and expanding the City's Civilian Training Resources for City Council Staff. He also expressed support for earmarking \$100,000 from NHSD Risk Mitigation Fund for the Right to Council Pilot Program. Councilmember Treviño expressed support for earmarking \$300,000 of the \$1 million Capital Fund allocated to each District Discretionary Infrastructure Projects towards Sidewalk Squad. He also requested support for the Mexican Civil Rights Institute, and the Guadalupe Plaza Master Plan.

Councilmember Cabello Havrda stated that she would convey her order of importance which starts with adding one new Animal Care Officer dedicated to District 6. She expressed support for Community Engagement and Design Work for a Pocket Park in the Cable Westwood Neighborhood between Pinn Road and Leon Creek. Councilmember Cabello Havrda noted her support for the designated weekend Code Officer, Proposed Substation in District 3, Council Aide Compensation, and the Mexican Civil Rights Institute.

Councilmember Pelaez noted his support of the Mexican Civil Rights Institute and a Cultural Arts Component. He stated that the budget did not include funding for Indian, Hindu, Southeast Asian, Pakistani, or Middle Eastern Population. He stressed that the onus was upon the City to inform all cultures of potential resources or funding that was available. He noted that the City Staff needed to do a better job to convey opportunities to all segments of the community.

Councilmember Pelaez stated that museums were important cultural assets in San Antonio. He

described the enormous damage and flooding that occurred during 2016-2017 storms. He noted that the insurance companies did not cover all of the damage which was approximately \$1.5 million of the most important Latin American Art Collections. Councilmember Pelaez expressed support for Council Aide Compensation.

Councilmember Viagran expressed support for the Dorsey Drainage Project and clarified points that were raised including beginning with Phase I and continuing additional Phases during future Bond Projects. She requested funding for the SAPD Hope Team and noted the Hope Team was not included despite her request for the budget amendment inclusion.

Councilmember Rocha Garcia expressed support for the Mexican American Civil Rights Institute. She noted her support for Council Aide Compensation and ensuring Council Aides are paid a market rate salary. Councilmember Rocha Garcia supported the Proposed Police Substation in Council District 3.

Councilmember Andrews-Sullivan noted that her request for funding the MLK Jr. March was on an annual basis and not just one-time funding. She advocated for Council Aide Compensation and noted the importance of the work they do and the long hours worked. Councilmember Andrews-Sullivan expressed her support for the Implementation of future City Council Policy Discussion on Guns. Councilmember Andrews-Sullivan expressed support for the Police Substation in District 3 and stressed that unity was crucial in ending crime.

Mayor Nirenberg stated that in the past the contingency fund was established to address damage caused by weather events such as flooding, wind, and hail damage. He asked if the contingency funding was continuing in FY 2020. Mrs. Villagómez stated that the original funding amount was \$1 million and the use of \$333,000 was allocated to the Migrant Resource Center to continue that operation for the first quarter of the Fiscal Year pending reimbursement; so the Contingency Fund balance remaining was \$666,000. Mayor Nirenberg requested that the Contingency Fund be made whole for FY 2020 and high priority. He noted that he was supportive of most of the requests discussed that address the basic needs and services.

Mayor Nirenberg stated that the Pleasanton Road Traffic Safety School Flashers were extremely important. He expressed support for the VIVA SA Healthy Corner Store Initiative was relatively low cost but urgently needed. Mayor Nirenberg advocated for the Maestro Business Incubator Program.

Mayor Nirenberg also expressed support for the Mexican American Civil Rights Institute and stated that San Antonio was the perfect birthplace for the Proposed Institute to further Mexican American Studies.

Mayor Nirenberg noted the need to end Gun Violence and expressed support for the implementation of future City Council Policy Discussion on Guns and a potential gun buy-back program. He stressed that the initiative would not stop gun violence but that was an additional tool to reduce the number of unnecessary guns in circulation. He noted that he was committed to doing everything necessary to keep the community safe.

Mayor Nirenberg noted his support for adding Animal Care Officers. He also supported Council Aide

Compensation and looked forward to continuing the conversation with the Governance Committee.

City Manager Walsh summarized the budget process next steps to include a memo that will be sent to all City Councilmembers by the end of the week. He stated that additional budget discussions will be considered Wednesday, September 11th with the budget adoption scheduled Thursday, September 12, 2019.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Mayor Nirenberg recessed the meeting at 3:56 p.m. to discuss the following items:

- A. Economic development negotiations pursuant to Texas Government Code Section 551.087 (economic development).
- B. The purchase, exchange, lease or value of real property pursuant to Texas Government Code Section 551.072 (real property).
- C. Legal issues related to collective bargaining pursuant to Texas Government Code Section 551.071 (consultation with attorney).
- D. Deliberate the deployment of security personnel, critical infrastructure, or security devices and related legal issues pursuant to Texas Government Code Section 551.076 (security devices), Section 551.089 (security devices and audits) and Section 551.071 (consultation with attorney).

Mayor Nirenberg reconvened the meeting at 6:07 pm and announced that no action was taken.

PUBLIC HEARING

- 2. Second Public Hearings on the City's 2019 Ad Valorem Tax Rate for the FY 2020 Proposed Budget. [Erik Walsh, City Manager; Justina Tate, Director, Management & Budget]

Mrs. Villagómez provided highlights of the Proposed FY 2020 Budget and City Property Tax Rate. She noted the proposed City Budget for FY 2020 was \$2.9 billion Operating and \$715 million Capital Budget. She described the community priorities and City Council priorities of Strong Families and Children, Police, Affordable Housing, Streets and Sidewalks, and Property Tax Relief. She stated that the proposed budget did not include a City Property Tax increase and noted the Property Tax Rate for FY 2019 was 55.287 cents per \$100 in value and remains the same for FY 2020. Mrs. Villagómez explained that the majority of property taxes were dedicated to Public School Districts. She added that 30% of property taxes went to Bexar County, Community Colleges, San Antonio River Authority, and other Tax Entities. She stated that the Property Tax Relief includes the City's Homestead Exemption recently approved by City Council in June 2019 and includes the Senior and Disabled Exemption and the frozen City Tax Payments that combined was close to \$61 million annually.

Mayor Nirenberg called upon the individuals registered to speak:

Dominic De La Cruz representative of AFSCME and Teaching Assistant at Pre-K noted that the 3% across the board pay raise for Step Employees sounded amazing however; the increase was merely a replacement of the scheduled step-increase and not in addition to a cost of living increase. He stated that the freeze of the step-program was unprecedented and was a move against workers.

Victoria Garcia representing AFSCME and employed with the Department of Arts and Culture for 15 years spoke on behalf of City employees she felt were left out of the process. She noted that hourly employees received 3% across the board increase October 2019 however; salaried employees were treated differently and had to compete for a possible raise in January 2020 through Performance Pay which was unacceptable to her. She noted that Performance Pay was a competitive process and inadequate substitute for a Cost of Living increase which was not included in the proposed budget.

Jennifer Ramirez stated that she was a GIS Analysis for COSA. She asked the Council to consider a 3% Cost of Living Increase for all employees and not to eliminate the January 2020 step increase that was proposed to be eliminated.

Sarah Mehmedali representative with the American Heart Association spoke in support of the Proposed Budget which includes funding for sidewalks, bike lanes, and pedestrian safety. She explained that safe healthy communities included walking and biking projects which make the neighborhood livable.

Antonio Diaz spoke in opposition of raising taxes and noted that public utility costs were increasing. He explained that he did not agree with tax abatements given to developers and said affordable housing was not really affordable.

Mayor Nirenberg exited the meeting; Mayor Pro-Tem Gonzales presided over the meeting.

Diana Uriegas spoke in opposition of the Proposed Budget and raising taxes. She stated that cars speed down Roosevelt Drive even though the speed limit was 35 mph. She noted that signs were needed to slow down traffic.

John Bachman spoke in opposition of the Proposed Budget. He stated that animals needed to be a priority. He mentioned that Animal Care Services proposed a new position called an Illustrator which did not make sense to him. He stressed that Animal Care Services needed additional staff and funding to help spay and neuter animals.

Mayor Pro-Tem Gonzales declared the Public Hearing closed and announced that the City Council will vote on the City of San Antonio Property Tax Rate for Tax Year 2019 at its meeting on Thursday, September 12, 2019.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Nazarite Ruben Flores Perez spoke in support of pay raise for City employees. He stated that City employees needed a Cost of Living increase in addition to performance pay.

Hon. Rosie Speedlin Gonzalez thanked the Council for meeting with her and for supporting HB 3529. She noted her commitment to make San Antonio a better place for all. She expressed a unique opportunity to reduce intimate partner and domestic violence in San Antonio. Judge Gonzalez requested funding for the program to break the cycle of domestic violence through treatment. She read “What Will Matter” by Michael Josephson and urged the Council to think of the piece she read as they make funding decisions.

Antonio Diaz asked the Council to remove Columbus Statue and stated that he had witnessed progress and thanked the Council. He stated that the people must continue to stand against colonialism and expressed the rights to land were not given to the Indigenous People.

Fidel Belmarez Sr. expressed the need to end abortion and questioned when someone was considered a human being. He spoke of being “pro-choice” or “pro-life” and noted that life was important to humanity.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further discussion, Mayor Pro-Tem Gonzales adjourned the meeting at 6:50 pm.

APPROVED

RON NIRENBERG
MAYOR

Attest:

LETICIA M. VACEK TRMC/CMC/MMC
City Clerk