

**STATE OF TEXAS §**  
**COUNTY OF CAMERON §**  
**TOWN OF LAGUNA VISTA §**

MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE LAGUNA VISTA TOWN COUNCIL

DATE: March 8, 2016  
TIME: 6:00 p.m.  
PLACE: City Hall Building

MEMBERS PRESENT: Susie Houston, Mayor  
Michael Carter, Councilmember Place 1  
Wanda Reyes-Rice, Mayor Pro-Tem  
Frank Davalos, Jr., Councilmember Place 3  
Leti Keplinger, Councilmember Place 4  
Gary Meschi, Councilmember Place 5  
Nadine Smith, Councilmember Place 6  
  
Rolando Vela, City Manager  
Ricardo Morado, City Attorney  
Tony David, Police Chief  
Alma Deckard, City Secretary

MEMBERS ABSENT: All Present

ALSO PRESENT: Veronica Rodgers, Boys & Girls Club  
David Garza, Cameron County Commissioner  
Joe Vega, Port Isabel Mayor  
Victor Worrell, Citizen  
Carol Schierenbeck, Citizen  
Owen Schierenbeck, Citizen  
Cheryl Owen, Citizen  
Russell Owen, Citizen  
Richard Lane, Citizen  
Silke De Gobeo, Citizen  
Leanne Shaw, Citizen  
Gabby Muschenheim, Citizen  
Elizabeth Etheridge, Citizen  
Taylor Houston, Citizen  
Henry Etheridge, Citizen

ORDER OF BUSINESS

**1. Call to Order**

Mayor Houston called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm.

2. **Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance** was led by Council Member Meschi.
3. **Roll Call/Excused Absences** – All present.
4. **OPEN FORUM:**

Veronica Rodgers introduced herself, she is the newly appointed Boys and Girls Club CPO. She expressed thanks and gratitude to the council for past and future financial support. This week they are celebrating Boys & Girls Club and will have events going on throughout the week. Saturday, March 12, 2016 everyone is invited for an open house from 12 – 4 pm.

Silke De Gobeo addressed the Council and reported real estate numbers for February 2016. She stated that there were 595 listings for the month. South Padre Island had a decrease of 12%, where Laguna Vista had an increase of 30%. The average home in Laguna Vista is valued at \$242,000. A single family home had an increase of 233% from February 2015.

5. **NEW BUSINESS:** Discussion, consideration and possible action on each of the following items:
  - A. **BAHIA GRANDE VISITORS CENTER** – Presentation and possible action on designating the Town-owned 23 acres part of the Bahia Grande Visitors Center project. (City Manager)

David Garza informed the Council that Cameron County is in process of filing an application through the TransOcean, Restore Act Funding Priorities for a visitor's center. The application deadline is April 15, 2016. The goal is to build a Bahia Grande Visitors Center that will include a gift shop, and restaurant. The center will also accommodate areas for classes, workshops, activities for kids, etc. Cameron County is requesting an easement from Laguna Vista in the town-owned 23 acres, which backs up to the Bahia Grande wetlands. Cameron County in turn will conduct a survey of the entire 23 acres and complete an environmental study. It will take approximately 12-18 months for results for the grant application.

**Council Member Carter made a motion to proceed and to allow Cameron County to survey the town-owned 23 acres and designate an easement for the Bahia Grande Project, Council Member Rice seconded the motion. All voted "aye" to approve, motion carried.**

- B. **MINUTES** – Consideration and action to approve the minutes from the February 9, 2016 Regular Meeting.

**Council Member Davalos made a motion to approve the minutes from the February 9, 2016 regular council meeting, Council Member Meschi seconded the motion. All voted “aye” to approve, motion carried.**

**C. RACIAL PROFILE REPORT** – Consideration and action to accept the Laguna Vista Police Department 2015 Racial Profile Report.

**Mayor Houston made a motion to approve the 2015 Police Racial Profile Report as presented, Council Member Keplinger seconded the motion. All voted “aye” to approve, motion carried.**

**D. FIREWORKS DISPLAY** – Discussion and possible action on a fireworks display show for the Town’s 4<sup>th</sup> of July celebration. (City Manager)

**Mayor Houston made a motion to appoint Council Members Rice, Keplinger and Smith to work on sponsorship packets for the July 2, 2016 event and bring back to the Council at the April 2016 meeting, Council Member Davalos seconded the motion. All voted “aye” to approve, motion carried.**

**E. C.D.C. PROJECT FUNDING** – Consideration and action to accept the recommendation of the CDC Board to fund the following project: (City Manager)

- i. Hiring of a consultant to prepare plans for an Irrigation system and sodding at the library for \$4,500.

**Council Member Davalos made a motion to approve the Community Development Corporation funding to hire a consultant to prepare plans for an Irrigation system and sodding at the library for \$4,500, Council Member Keplinger seconded the motion. All voted “aye” to approve, motion carries.**

- ii. Development Study for Town-owned 23 acres for \$3,000.

**Rolando Vela request that the Council not approve the \$3,000 for the development Study for the town-owned 23 acres. He is currently working with the Laguna Madre Water District on the development study. No action was taken.**

**F. ADVISORY BOARD APPOINTMENTS** – Potential action to appoint residents to the following board: (City Manager)

- i. Board of Adjustments (4 vacancies)

**Council Member Meschi made a motion to appoint Rafael Salazar for a two year term to the Board of Adjustments, Council Member Davalos seconded the motion. All voted “aye” to approve, motion carried.**

**Council Member Davalos made a motion to appoint Weldon Owen for a two year term to the Board of Adjustments, Council Member Rice seconded the motion. All voted “aye” to approve, motion carried.**

**Mayor Houston made a motion to appoint Leanne Shaw for a two year term to the Board of Adjustments, Council Member Keplinger seconded the motion. All voted “aye” to approve, motion carried.**

**Council Member Smith made a motion to appoint Norris Fletcher for a two year term to the Board of Adjustments, Council Member Meschi seconded the motion. All voted “aye” to approve, motion carried.**

ii. Board of Ethics (1 vacancy)

**Council Member Keplinger made a motion to appoint Silke De Gobeo for a two year term to the Board of Ethics, Council Member Smith seconded the motion. All voted “aye” to approve, motion carried.**

iii. Library Board (2 vacancies)

**Council Member Davalos made a motion to appoint Anna Backues for a two year term to the Library Board, Council Member Meschi seconded the motion. All voted “aye” to approve, motion carried.**

**Council Member Smith made a motion to appoint Barbara Paterson for a two year term to the Library Board, Council Member Rice seconded the motion. All voted “aye” to approve, motion carried.**

iv. Parks Board (6 vacancies)

**Council Member Davalos made a motion to appoint Taylor Houston for a two year term to the Parks Board, Council Member Keplinger seconded the motion. All voted “aye” to approve, motion carried.**

**Council Member Keplinger made a motion to appoint Bud Sherman for a two year term to the Parks Board, Council Member Davalos seconded the motion. All voted “aye” to approve, motion carried.**

**Council Member Davalos made a motion to appoint Gabby Muschenheim for a two year term to the Parks Board, Council Member Carter seconded the motion. All voted “aye” to approve, motion carried.**

**Council Member Smith made a motion to appoint Kristin Sipple for a two year term to the Parks Board, Council Member Davalos seconded the motion. All voted “aye” to approve, motion carried.**

**Council Member Meschi made a motion to appoint Rona Hamlinck for a two year term to the Parks Board, Council Member Rice seconded the motion. All voted “aye” to approve, motion carried.**

**Council Member Rice made a motion to appoint Cheryl Owen for a two year term to the Parks Board, Council Member Davalos seconded the motion. All voted “aye” to approve, motion carried.**

**G. 2011 CERTIFICATES OF OBLIGATION** – Update on the 2011 Certificates of Obligation. (City Manager)

**Rolando Vela informed the Council that the Certificates of Obligation account has an available balance of \$47,170.34. There was no activity for the month.**

**H. CITY MANAGER’S REPORT**

i. Easter Egg Hunt by the Bay, March 26, 2016

**Rolando Vela stated that the Easter Egg hunt will be on Saturday, March 26, 2016 from 10 am to 12 noon. There will be an Easter bunny for the event.**

ii. Laguna Vista Live: Music by the Bay, April 16, 2016

**Rolando Vela informed the Council that the Music by the Bay will be on Saturday, April 16 2016 from 5 – 9:00 pm. The group The Agency will be playing, this is a band composed of local musicians.**

iii. Memorial Day Ceremony, May 30, 2016

**Rolando Vela stated that the Memorial Day Parade and Ceremony will be Monday, May 30, 2016. The parade will begin at 4:30 and the ceremony at 5:30 pm. World War II Veterans from Brownsville will be the honorary speaker. He joined the Army when he lied about his age, he was actually 15 years old.**

**I. EXECUTIVE SESSION** – There will be an Executive Session in accordance with the Open Meetings Act, as authorized by the Texas Government Code, pursuant to Section §551.071; consultation with Town Attorney regarding:

**✚ Potential Lease Agreement - Town Marina and LVRA**

**✚ Potential litigation**

**Council Member Davalos made a motion to go into executive session at 7:17 pm, in accordance with the Open Meetings Act, as authorized by the Texas Government Code, pursuant to Section §551.071; consultation with Town Attorney regarding, Potential lease agreement – Town Marina and L.V.R.A. and Potential litigation regarding short term rental ordinance, Council Member Keplinger seconded the motion. All voted “aye” to approve, motion carried.**

**Town Council came out of executive session at 8:19 pm.**

**J. OPEN SESSION** – Action, if any, on the items discussed in Executive Session.

**Mayor Houston made a motion to instruct the Town Attorney as directed in executive session, and make the revisions to short term rental litigation,**

**Council Member Smith seconded the motion. All voted “aye” to approve, motion carried.**

**Council Member Carter made a motion to direct the Town Attorney as directed in executive session, and make the revisions to the marina lease agreement between the Town and the Laguna Vista Recreational Association (LVRA), Council Member Davalos seconded the motion. All voted “aye” to approve, motion carried.**

## **7. ADJOURNMENT**

**Council Member Davalos made a motion to adjourn meeting at 8:21 pm, Council Member Keplinger seconded the motion. All voted “aye” to approve, motion carried.**

---

Susie Houston, Mayor

Attest:

---

Alma Deckard, City Secretary