

**City of West Orange
Monday, October 9, 2023
Regular Session**

**City Council Chambers
2700 Western Avenue (rear entrance)
West Orange, Texas
5:00 P.M.**

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT:

Mayor Randy Branch
Lanie Brown

Jay Odom
Meritta Kennedy

Michael Shugart, Sr.

COUNCIL MEMBER ABSENT:

Brent Dearing

APPOINTED OFFICIALS PRESENT:

Theresa Van Meter
David Roberts

Jon Sherwin
Simmie Gibson

Mike Stelly

LEGAL COUNSEL:

Gary Coker

OTHERS PRESENT:

Michael Corbett
Angela Hudson
Caci Groom
Gerald Thomas
Richard Jones

Gail Langton
Gangavarapu Vishnu
Charles Winter
Sharon Thomas

Tremaine Wilson
Sumontin Thalle
James Fisette
Clayton Baker

Call to Order

Mayor Branch called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m. Council Member Shugart gave the invocation. The mayor then led in the Pledges of Allegiance to the American and Texas flags.

Consent Agenda

Discussion and Possible Action on approval of the minutes of the following meetings:

- **September 5, 2023 Special Session**
- **September 7, 2023 Public Hearing on Proposed Budget**
- **September 11, 2023 Council Meeting**
- **September 21, 2023 Public Hearing on Proposed Tax Rate**
- **September 21, 2023 Special Session**

The minutes of each of these meetings was approved by vote following a motion from Mayor Pro-Tem Kennedy with a second by Council Member Odom.

Discussion and Possible Action on proclaiming Saturday, November 4, 2023 as “Stars of Gate City #57 / Gate City Guild #42 Day” in the City of West Orange, Texas – Council Member Brown made a motion that this document, proclaiming Saturday, November 4, 2023 as “Stars of Gate City #57 / Gate City Guild #42 Day” in the City of West Orange, Texas be passed as written. Her motion received a second from Mayor Pro-Tem Kennedy. Mayor Branch read the proclamation aloud. Council Member Brown also commended the organizations, as they are very community-service oriented, providing prom dresses, coats and shoes for the underprivileged. Mayor Branch added that the Stars of Gate City #57 have also adopted a street in West Orange and work to keep it clean. He is most appreciative of their efforts.

The mayor then called for a vote on the motion to proclaim Saturday, November 4, 2023 as “Stars of Gate City #57 / Gate City Guild #42 Day” in the City of West Orange, Texas. A unanimous vote was cast to do so.

Staff Reports

Public Works – Jon Sherwin

Mr. Sherwin reported the following activities for the month of September, 2023:

- **Construction Projects**
 - WWTP – Bid opening scheduled for November 1st
 - City Hall Generator Project – ATS received; expecting delivery of generator in October
 - Drainage improvement project to begin week of October 23rd
- **Building Official**
 - 26 permits issued; 39 permits completed; 7 structures demolished
- **Sanitation**
 - 22 loads (59 tons) of green waste collected
 - 2 loads (4 tons) of C & D to landfill
- **Animal Control**
 - 51 calls
 - 22 intakes (8 surrendered)
 - 1 claimed/ 1 adopted/ 26 rescued
 - 2 court filings
- **Street**
 - Trimmed limbs in parks and on streets
 - Repairs to gazebo in park
 - Patching
- **Parks**
 - Litter pickup and cutting grass
- **Shop**
 - 3 full-services performed including generators
 - Normal repairs of city assets
 - Monthly 30-for-30 (All police and fire vehicles in good working order.)

Police Department– Mike Stelly

Chief Stelly gave the following statistics for the month of September, 2023:

- Traffic contacts: 37
- Crashes reported: 1
- Arrests: 50
- Reports: 57
- Calls for service: 453
- Miles driven: 11,091

Code Enforcement

Violations Investigated: 172

Violations filed w/court: 66

General Administration – Theresa Van Meter

Mrs. Van Meter announced that no non-electric booths were available and only a few electric booths were still available for the 2023 Holiday in the Park festival.

Volunteer Fire Department – Simmie Gibson

Assistant Chief Gibson reported the following activity for the department during the month of September, 2023:

- Grass/Brush fires: 4
- Trash fires: 2
- Electrical Issues: 1
- Carbon Monoxide incident: 1
- Medical assist calls: 7
- Smoke Investigation: 1
- Service calls: 2
- Mutual Aid given: 6
- “Good intent” calls: 9
- False Alarms: 5

Regular Session

Discussion and Possible Action on approval of an application for membership into the WOVFD submitted by Clayton B. Baker, Jr. – A motion was made by Council Member Shugart to approve Mr. Baker's membership into the WOVFD. This motion was seconded by Council Member Brown. With there being no discussion on the matter, Mayor Branch called for a vote on the motion, which passed unanimously.

Discussion and Possible Action on approval of Ordinance No. 425-C, an Ordinance repealing Ordinance No. 425-B and any other prior motions, regulations or ordinances pertaining to amusement redemption machines - Council Member Shugart made a motion that Ordinance No. 425-C, an Ordinance repealing Ordinance No. 425-B and any other prior motions, regulations or ordinances pertaining to amusement redemption machines be approved as presented. A second to this motion was presented by Mayor Pro-Tem Kennedy. Mayor Branch explained that the change in 425-B to 425-C dropped the total number of amusement machines allowed in West Orange at any given time from twenty (20) to fifteen (15). He then called for a vote on the motion, which passed unanimously.

Discussion and Possible Action on approval of a Professional Services Agreement with LJA Engineering for continued implementation of the Storm water Management Program – The Professional Services Agreement with LJA Engineering for continued implementation of the Storm water Management Program was unanimously approved by vote following a motion to do so by Council Member Odom, with a second by Council Member Brown.

Discussion and Possible Action on a request submitted by Vishnu Vardhan Gangavarapu for a variance to Ordinance No. 425-B (or C if adopted in #2 above) to allow for additional gaming machines over the current number permitted by said ordinance – Mr. Gangavarapu addressed Council, explaining that he was opening a gift shop on Henrietta Street and wanted to add gaming machines as a way to enhance sales at the shop. They wish to have a total of 14 machines at that location.

Council Member Shugart then made a motion that Council does not agree to a variance to Ordinance No. 425-C. Mayor Pro-Tem Kennedy seconded this motion. Council Member Shugart asked if these were gambling machines. Mr. Gangavarapu responded that they were not. Mayor Branch questioned if they would be “eight-liner” machines. Mr. Gangavarapu responded that they would be. With there being no further discussion, Mayor Branch called for a vote on the motion to deny the variance, which passed unanimously.

Announcements

Mayor Branch then announced the following upcoming meetings/events:

- Registrations being accepted for “Holiday in the Park” (Nov. 4, 2023)
- All non-emergency departments of the City closed on Friday, Nov. 10, 2023 in observance of Veterans’ Day
- Next Council meeting: Monday, November 13, 2023; 5:00 p.m.

Adjournment

With there being no further business before Council, Mayor Branch adjourned the meeting at 5:19 p.m.



Randy Branch, Mayor

ATTEST:



Theresa Van Meter, City Secretary

