

**City of West Orange
Monday, December 11, 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
Christopher Leavins

OTHERS PRESENT:

Gail Langton
Blake Breaux

Douglas Denman
Wayne Wiggins

Jane Branch

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 November 13, 2023 and November 16, 2023 Council Meetings - The minutes of these meetings were approved by vote following a motion from Council Member Brown with a second by Mayor Pro-Tem Kennedy.

Staff Reports

Public Works – Jon Sherwin

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

- **Construction Projects**
 - WWTP – Two bids were received; both over grant amount. Reviewing plans again.
 - City Hall Generator Project – still waiting on delivery of generator
 - Drainage improvement project – construction work on Bowie Street is on-schedule
 - Acquisition grant – near completion with only demolition of structure remaining
- **Building Official**
 - 24 permits issued; 38 permits completed
- **Sanitation**
 - 3 loads (8 tons) of green waste collected
 - 0 loads (0 tons) of C & D to landfill
 - Grapple truck out of service due to onboard computer failure
- **Animal Control**
 - 57 calls
 - 15 intakes
 - 3 claimed/7 adopted/0 rescued
 - 0 court filings
- **Street**
 - Installation of lights in park and on MacArthur Drive
 - Patching
- **Parks**
 - Litter pickup and cutting grass
- **Shop**
 - Two full-services performed
 - 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 November, 2023:

- Traffic contacts: 58
- Crashes reported: 6
- Arrests: 36
- Reports: 50
- Calls for service: 360
- Miles driven: 10,198

Code Enforcement

Violations Investigated: 76

Violations filed w/court: 38

General Administration – Theresa Van Meter

Mrs. Van Meter reported that, since opening accounts in TexPool back in mid-July, the City has earned over \$100,871 in interest. Council Member Brown commended Chief Stelly on his recommendation to move funds to TexPool.

Volunteer Fire Department – Simmie Gibson

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

- Building/Structure fires: 1
- Grass/Brush/Trash fires: 4
- Gas leak: 1
- Medical assist calls: 6
- Smoke Investigation: 1
- Mutual Aid given: 1
- Service calls: 1
- “Good intent” calls: 1
- Cancelled en route: 6

Regular Session

Discussion and Possible Action on a request from William Douglas Denman pertaining to property located at 2210 Bradford – Mr. Denman addressed Council asking that they consider waiving the interest that has accrued on the lien on his property. He has a potential buyer for the property, but the large amount of interest on this lien is more than the property is worth. Mayor Branch stated that he would like to make a recommendation that Council forgive the demolition expense (as it was reimbursed by grant) and the interest on Mr. Denman’s lien, but require that he pay the remaining \$500 shown on the lien as well as the back taxes owed. Mayor Pro-Tem Kennedy then made a motion that the \$2,700 demolition expense that was reimbursed by grant, as well as the accrued interest, be waived and that Mr. Denman be required to pay the City the remaining \$500 shown on the lien. Further, she moved that her motion would be contingent on his providing proof that he has paid the back taxes (\$334.34) on said property. Council Member Brown seconded her motion. Discussion followed, in order to clarify the motion for everyone present, after which the mayor called for a vote. The motion was then unanimously approved.

Discussion and Possible Action on acceptance and approval of the 2023 Delinquent Tax Roll as submitted by Orange County Tax Assessor-Collector Karen Fisher – A motion was made by Mayor Pro-Tem Kennedy to accept the 2023 Delinquent Tax Roll (in the amount of \$141,927.95) as submitted by Orange County Tax Assessor-Collector Karen Fisher. Council Member Brown seconded this motion. Mayor Branch called for a vote on the motion, which passed unanimously.

Discussion and Possible Action on acceptance and approval of the 2023 Current Tax Roll as submitted by Orange County Tax Assessor-Collector Karen Fisher – A motion was made by Council Member Odom to accept the 2023 Current Tax Roll (in the amount of \$214,182,542.00) as submitted by Orange County Tax Assessor-Collector Karen Fisher. Mayor Pro-Tem Kennedy seconded this motion. Mayor Branch called for a vote on the motion, which passed unanimously.

Discussion and Possible Action on accepting the proposal for demolition of structures at 2108 Travis St. under grant 20-066-029-C223 – Council Member Odom moved that the proposal for demolition of structures at 2108 Travis St. under grant 20-066-029-C223 submitted by Ceaser Landscaping LLC (Troy Ceaser) in the amount of \$6,000 be accepted. This motion received a second from Council Member Brown. Mayor Branch called for a vote, with the motion passing unanimously.

Discussion and Possible Action on approval of a Resolution reaffirming civil rights policies for the City's Community Development Block Grant Disaster Recovery and Mitigation programs - Council Member Brown made a motion that this resolution reaffirming civil rights policies for the City's Community Development Block Grant Disaster Recovery and Mitigation programs be passed as presented. Her motion was seconded by Council Member Shugart. A vote was cast; motion carried.

Discussion and Possible Action on approval of a Resolution authorizing signatories for the City's CDBG-DR Contracts #24-067-045-E233 and #24-067-015-E202 – A motion was made by Council Member Brown to approve this Resolution authorizing signatories for the City's CDBG-DR Contracts #24-067-045-E233 and #24-067-015-E202. A second to this motion was given by Council Member Odom. With there being no discussion on the issue, Mayor Branch called for a vote, with the motion passing unanimously.

Discussion and Possible Action to approve the appointment of seven (7) directors to the Board of Directors of the West Orange Economic Development Corporation – Mayor Branch presented the individuals he would like to see appointed as the first directors to serve on the board of the West Orange Economic Development Corporation. They were himself, Mayor Pro-Tem Kennedy, Mike Stelly, Jon Sherwin, Wayne Wiggins, Charlotte Alford and Mike Dixon. With there being no one else brought forth for consideration, Council Member Brown made a motion that the following individuals be appointed to serve as members of the Board of the West Orange Economic Development Corporation:

1. Randy Branch
2. Meritta Kennedy
3. Michael Stelly
4. Jon Sherwin
5. Wayne Wiggins
6. Charlotte Alford
7. Mike Dixon

Council Member Odom seconded her motion. Mr. Leavins explained that these individuals will serve staggered terms. Numbers 1, 3, 5 and 7 will have terms expiring in 2025, while numbers 2, 4 and 6 will have terms expiring in 2026. Their terms will be set to coincide with the City's fiscal year, therefore terms will end as of September 30th of their respective year. These individuals will serve at the discretion of the Council. With there being no further discussion on the issue, Mayor Branch then called for a vote on the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Discussion and Possible Action on a Resolution adopting the Certificate of Formation/Articles of Incorporation of the West Orange Economic Development Corporation – A motion was made by Council Member Odom to pass the Resolution adopting the Certificate of Formation/Articles of Incorporation of the West Orange Economic Development Corporation. Mayor Pro-Tem Kennedy seconded his motion. There were no questions or discussion following the motion, so the mayor called for a vote, which passed unanimously. Mr. Leavins stated that he would file the documentation with the Secretary of State's office.

Discussion and Possible Action on a Resolution adopting the By-Laws of the West Orange Economic Development Corporation - Council Member Odom made a motion that Council pass this Resolution adopting the By-Laws of the West Orange Economic Development Corporation. A second to the motion was given by Council Member Brown. Mayor Pro-Tem Kennedy questioned a sentence in Article III. Section 3.01, stating that "Each director shall be a resident of the city..." After some discussion, Council Member Odom amended his motion to include that this section be changed to mirror State law. Council Member Brown amended her second to the original motion. With there being no further discussion, Mayor Branch called for a vote, with the amended motion passing unanimously.

Announcements

Mayor Branch then announced the following:

1. Non-emergency City departments closed for the following upcoming holidays:
 - Monday & Tuesday, December 25 & 26, 2023 in observance of Christmas Eve & Christmas Day (*Trash will be picked up on Saturday that week.*)
 - Monday & Tuesday, January 1 & 2, 2024 in observance of New Year's Eve & New Year's Day (*Trash will be picked up on Saturday that week.*)
2. Next Council Meeting – Monday, January 8, 2024; 5:00 p.m.

Adjournment

With there being no further business before Council, Mayor Branch adjourned the meeting at 5:33 p.m.

R R Branch

Randy Branch, Mayor

ATTEST:

Theresa Van Meter

Theresa Van Meter, City Secretary

