



City of West Orange

City Hall
2700 Western Avenue
West Orange, TX 77630

City Council Regular Session Meeting Minutes

Monday, February 10, 2025

5:00 p.m.

Council Chambers

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT:

Mayor Randy Branch
Meritta Kennedy

Jay Odom
Brent Dearing

Michael Shugart, Sr.
Lanie Brown

APPOINTED OFFICIALS PRESENT:

Theresa Van Meter
Christopher Leavins

Jon Sherwin
David Roberts

Mike Stelly
Simmie Gibson

OTHERS PRESENT:

Gail Langton
Claude Webb
Tremaine Wilson, Sr.

Keri Michutka
Mark Cook

James Fisette
Jim Wimberley

Call to Order

Mayor Branch called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m. Council Member Shugart gave the invocation followed by the mayor leading the Pledges of Allegiance to both the United States and Texas flags.

Consent Agenda

Discussion and Possible Action on approval of the minutes of the January 13, 2025 Council Meeting - These minutes were unanimously approved by vote after a motion was made by 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 January, 2025:

- **Construction Projects**
 - Waste Water Treatment Plant construction is on schedule.
 - Drainage improvement project – scheduled to begin concrete from MacArthur to South Street next month
 - Water District – two tower restoration and installation of new water lines throughout the city; Tower 3 complete with 60-90 days to complete Tower 2
- **Building Official**
 - 20 permits issued
 - 24 permits completed
- **Sanitation**
 - 14 loads of green waste collected
 - 0 loads (0 tons) of C & D to landfill
- **Animal Control**
 - 91 calls
 - 7 intakes
 - 0 claimed / 1 adopted / 0 rescued
 - 1 court filing
- **Street**
 - Patching utility cuts and potholes throughout city
- **Parks**
 - Litter pickup continues
- **Shop**
 - Normal repairs of city assets
 - Monthly 30-for-30 – All police and fire vehicles in good working condition

Police Department – Mike Stelly

Chief Stelly gave the following statistics for the month of January, 2025:

- Traffic contacts: 234
- Crashes reported: 3
- Arrests: 41
- Reports: 39
- Calls for service: 484
- Miles driven: 11,936

Code Enforcement

Violations Investigated: 25

Violations filed w/Court: 1

WOVFD – Simmie Gibson

Asst. Chief Gibson reported the following activities for the month of January, 2025:

Structure fires – 3
EMS incidents – 4
Cancelled en route – 2
Natural gas leak – 2
Electrical wiring issues – 2
Service calls – 1
Smoke calls – 1
Sprinkler malfunction – 1
Extinguishing system malfunction – 1
Outside rubbish fire - 1

Regular Session

Discussion and Possible Action on a request from Mark Cook for a variance to Ordinance No. 358-A, limiting the number of RV parks to one within the city - Mr. Cook addressed Council, explaining that his father had purchased the property back in 1978. At that time, there were four campers and one mobile home sitting on the land. There are still concrete pads on the land. He has a developer interested in purchasing the property with the intent of putting in an RV park.

Council Member Brown questioned the size of the property. Mr. Cook responded, "three acres." She then questioned Mr. Leavins regarding whether Mr. Cook, or the developer, should be the person requesting the variance. Mr. Leavins responded that it should come from the developer.

Mr. Cook stated that the developer was supposed to be in attendance at this meeting, but did not make it. He added that he did not see him purchasing the property with the chance that the variance may not go through.

Mayor Branch asked Council Members if anyone had a motion to make on this item. No one did, therefore the request died for lack of a motion. The mayor then explained that Council originally passed this ordinance because they did not want a "bunch of RV parks sprouting up in West Orange."

Mayor Branch then stated that, as there were no motions made, he was going to let this item "die" until such time as there is an owner requesting the variance. He added that "the City passed an ordinance limiting RV parks to one...and there was a reason for that."

Discussion and Possible Action on acceptance of audit of fiscal year ending September 30, 2024 as prepared and presented by Keri Michutka, CPA – Council Member Brown moved that the audit be accepted as presented. Her motion received a second from Mayor Pro-Tem Kennedy. Mrs. Michutka then presented her report, stating that it was a "clean" audit. She also explained the Single Audit, as it pertained to federal grants received by the City. There were no questions asked of her, therefore the mayor called for a vote on the motion, which passed unanimously.

Discussion and Possible Action on an application to the WOVFD submitted by Brennen Harris – Council Member Odom made a motion, followed by a second from Council Member Shugart, to approve Mr. Harris' application to the WOVFD. A vote was cast; motion passed unanimously.

Discussion and Possible Action on placing before the voters a City Charter amendment extending Mayor and Aldermen terms of office from two years to four years – Council Member Odom moved that a City Charter amendment extending Mayor and Aldermen terms of office from two years to four years be placed on the May ballot. Mayor Pro-Tem Kennedy seconded his motion.

After some discussion, it was decided that there was not sufficient time to get it on the May ballot. Mr. Leavins is to look into the possibility of placing it on the November ballot. Council Member Odom then rescinded his original motion and Mayor Pro-Tem Kennedy rescinded her second.

Council verbally agreed to bring this matter up for a vote at a later date if it is determined that the election could be held in November.

Discussion and Possible Action on authorizing the City Secretary to enter into a Joint Election Agreement Services Contract with the Orange County Elections Administration Office for the May 3, 2025 Election

Discusión y posible acción sobre la autorización al Secretario de la Ciudad para celebrar un Contrato de Servicios de Acuerdo Electoral Conjunto con la Oficina de Administración de Elecciones del Condado de Orange para las Elecciones del 3 de mayo de 2025

Council Member Brown made a motion that the City Secretary be authorized to enter into a Joint Election Agreement Services Contract with the Orange County Elections Administration Office for the May 3, 2025 Election. Her motion received a second from Council Member Odom. With there being no discussion, the mayor called for a vote, with the motion passing unanimously.

La concejal Brown hizo una moción para que se autorice al Secretario de la Ciudad a celebrar un Contrato de Servicios de Acuerdo Electoral Conjunto con la Oficina de Administración Electoral del Condado de Orange para las elecciones del 3 de mayo de 2025. Su moción recibió el apoyo del concejal Odom. Al no haber discusión, el alcalde pidió una votación y la moción se aprobó por unanimidad.

Discussion and Possible action on accepting into record the Quarterly Investment Report for Oct. – Dec., 2024 – Mayor Pro-Tem Kennedy moved that the Quarterly Investment Report for Oct. – Dec., 2024 be accepted into record as presented. Her motion was seconded by Council Member Brown. With there being no discussion, the mayor called for a vote, with the motion passing unanimously.

Announcements

Mayor Branch then made note of the following dates:

- Period for filing application for place on May 7, 2025 General Election Ballot – Jan. 15, 2025 thru February 14, 2025

(Período para presentar solicitudes de participación en las elecciones generales del 7 de mayo de 2025: del 15 de enero de 2025 al 14 de febrero de 2025)

- Next Council Meeting – Monday, March 10, 2025; 5:00 p.m.

Executive Session

Council entered into Executive Session pursuant to Section 551.071 of the Texas Government Code at 5:39p.m. to consult with Attorney regarding pending or contemplated litigation.

Return to Open Session

Discussion and Possible Action, if necessary, as a result of Executive Session under Item G – Council returned to Open Session at 5:58 p.m. Mayor Branch reported that there was no action to be taken at that time as a result of the Executive Session.

Adjournment

With there being no further business before Council, Mayor Branch adjourned the meeting at 5:59 p.m.

R R Branch
Randy Branch, Mayor

ATTEST:

Theresa Van Meter
Theresa Van Meter, City Secretary

