

COUNCIL MEETING, THURSDAY, DECEMBER 12, 2013, 6:00 P.M.

The Mayor and City Council met in regular session on Thursday, December 12, 2013 at 6:00 p.m. with the following members present: Mayor Pro Tem Lee, Council Members Rivas, Robinson and Gonzales; City Manager Maner, City Attorney DeFoyd and City Secretary Raines. Mayor Diaz absent and Council Member Garcia arrived after roll call.

The meeting was opened with Prayer and the Pledge of Allegiance.

A motion was made by Council Member Robinson and Seconded by Council Member Rivas to approve the minutes as presented. Vote: 3 For 0 Against

DEPARTMENT HEAD REPORTS:

Chief Squyres advised there was not a lot to report, it was actually pretty quiet and with the cold and the Fire Department that was a very good thing. He stated that they were seeing a lot of flu like symptoms.

Public Works Director, Kyle Reed reported on the pipe bursting job in the 10100 blocks of Palestine through Fairfax. He stated this was not a good time to be pipe bursting and hooking services up but the contractor was doing the best that he could, it had gotten a little messy but they would clean up before being paid for the job and they were not half through and hopefully we would get some better weather but if anyone has a problem to give him a call. He stated that as far as he knew from a public works standpoint, the parade and lights were in good shape but again if anyone knows of a problem to let him know.

Chief Ayala stated that he just wanted to wish everybody a Merry Christmas and Happy Holidays and cautioned everyone to be aware of their surroundings, that people were walking the streets and knocking on doors so if they saw anything suspicious to please give them a call, that it was better to be safe than sorry, he also cautioned them about suspicious vehicles and what to do if they see someone driving up and down the streets and know that they don't belong there.

Ivan Rojas, Parks and Recreation, stated that he had nothing to report at this time, they were staying busy and he would like to thank everyone who came out to the parade and tree lighting, that we had a good crowd.

Cindy Miller, Heritage Hall Director, stated that all was going fine, they got through a busy night and she was good.

Mayor Pro Tem Lee stated that by way of the Mayor's Report, he was sure that she would tell them all how appreciative of them she was and all the hard work they were doing. He stated that he could tell them that she did a fine job reading to the children at the Library last week and they had a good time over there so support your Mayor.

City Manager Maner advise that everything was going well as they could hear from these reports. He stated that no one had mentioned it and it was not really part of his report but to just remember that this Saturday was Santa on the Fire Truck and they started at 8:00 a.m. making the rounds in the city so have the children ready, you would hear them coming and as he always says, if you know of any problems please let us know.

Mayor Pro Tem Lee advised that we would have one more meeting before Christmas on Monday, December 23<sup>rd</sup>, so we would have another opportunity to wish them a Merry Christmas but they did wish them a happy and safe holiday season.

There was no Unfinished Business.

There was no New Business.

#### COMMENTS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC:

Mr. Charles Rice, Navasota, Texas, thanked everyone for the trophy that he won in the Christmas Parade. He stated that his best friend was Roger Matheny and he wanted to show him his truck that he had spent eight months putting together and he had personalized plates. He stated that the time it was sitting in the body shop, his renewal tags came up and one of our police officers here in town brought it to his attention and he ask him would he please give him a warning since he had only had it out of the shop two

hours but the police officer's words were "I don't write warnings tickets, I write tickets and tickets only and he told Roger's wife and kids to go back in the house, he was standing in front of Roger's house. He explained who he worked for and that if that was his employee, he would have given him a letter in his file and sent him to some type of class to learn him how to deal with the public. He stated that to him, this police officer was not professional at all. He stated that he went to court with the other 1000 people and the Judge told him that he couldn't do anything for him because he didn't get that little piece of paper and no one ever told him that he had to get that piece of paper saying that he got a ticket during the time he got the plates renewed and he paid the fine. He stated that he was here to discuss the conduct of the police officer which was totally unprofessional and if they wanted to get a second opinion, to go ask Ms. Matheny. He stated there were some really nice people in this town but he thought the police officers had gone over board writing tickets.

City Manager Maner ask Mr. Rice if he had reported this to the Chief and he advised that he had not but if he wanted to talk with him he would.

Mr. Rice was advised that Chief Ayala would certainly look into the matter.

There was general discussion regarding the incident.

Mayor Pro Tem Lee stated that he was sure that if Mayor Diaz had been here she would not have forgotten to announce the winners in the Christmas Parade and the most beautiful float was The Polar Express, the most original entry was The Texan Truck and the best walking or marching group was the Galena Park High School Jacketeers and the Mayor's choice was Capital Bank's Candy Land. He congratulated all of them and thanked everyone who participated in the parade and braved the cold weather.

LaGloria Sephus, 9701 Market Street Rd., advised that she was having a voter registration holiday drive which would be Wednesday the 18<sup>th</sup> from 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. and they were welcome, it would be at Big Bass Resort, 9701 Market St. and they were welcome to bring presents for the residents.

James Berry Jr., 11009 Flaxman, stated that he wanted to say that he was appreciative of

all the well wishes that were extended to him at the passing of his dad, that some of them here knew him and his heart was here.

**COMMENTS FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL:**

Council Member Rivas stated there were a lot of things to like and dislike about Jacinto City, that we strive hard to do our best and he knows the Chief will look into the situation. He stated that he hated to hear that something like that went down but there were two sides to the story and ask the Chief to please look into this, that he knew the Matheny's and to tell the truth, he thinks it would be a challenge to get them to go back into the house.

City Manager Maner advised that there was a good chance that it was on camera.

Mr. Rivas cautioned everyone to be safe and told of an incident that happened on a friend's street. He ask if they saw someone walking the streets at 11:00 or 12:00 at night should they call them for that.

Chief Ayala advised that they should call and let them check it out.

Council Member Robinson stated that he and his wife Mary were going to donate a bicycle to Toys for Tots and he was going to put the challenge out there to the rest of the Council, City Manager, Department Heads to get out their pocket books for a bicycle or whatever they wanted to donate and it would be appreciated. Mr. Robinson wished everyone a good holiday season.

Council Member Lee stated that he received a few traffic tickets in his life and he was not happy about any of them.

Council Member Gonzales stated that he knew the Chief hit on being aware of your surroundings and it applies when you go out shopping, he knew this was a joyous season but it also brought out the thugs and thieves as well so if you had to do shopping, be careful and use the buddy system and be aware of your surroundings.

Council Member Garcia stated that her comment was going to be a little windy but not too long, that she wrote it up because she wanted to make sure that she said everything

that was in her thoughts, that when she works with kids or adults she always say just tell me what you feel.

Council Member Garcia stated that first of all, we always start a council meeting with Prayer, which was very appropriate because we should always put him first so she would like to begin by thanking God for allowing her to experience sitting on the Council. She stated it was not about the position or the seat that matter most, it was about the people and relationships she formed while serving the community and in the time she had served on Council, she could honestly say that she was grateful to have met the people she now knows, that through service to others, they grew and she grew.

Council Member Garcia stated that she was thankful for the staff we have in the City of Jacinto City, from the Parks and Recreation Director and his staff to our Public Works Director and his staff, that she was thinking all the way from JJ to this end, she was referring to everyone of them and what she could say about our Administration, anytime we need anything, just like JJ said, I won't inconvenience you and like Jack is always available and responds to our texts and so forth and Joyce has always been there for us too, you see her working late and writing these minutes, she closes her door and she is away and Kathy who is one of the longest employees in the city and as a matter of fact, she thought she wasn't here tonight but she was, she was in the back working on Christmas bags but they were just as important as every director and their department so everyone goes the extra mile, some more than others, but if we look back at some of the events held in Jacinto City, like the Pumpkin Fest, the Senior Citizens Thanksgiving lunch, the Christmas Parade and Tuesday night's Senior Citizen Dinner, our staff goes above and beyond. She Thanked everyone that was present, Jack, Joyce, Kathy, the Council and she was glad that we were all there to celebrate with our senior citizens and our city directors for the heart they put into our city. She stated that she noticed that Chief Ayala was there but she or others could not be at every event and she was also thankful to our citizens, especially our senior citizens, whom each year work , behind the scenes, to see joy in others. Ms. Garcia thanked each of them, present and non-present, that the senior citizens contributed so much to the city, the residents out there don't see that but we know as a council and staff members that they are behind it.

Council Member Garcia advised Cindy that she would like to take this moment to thank her from the bottom of her heart for extending an invitation to the council to the annual Senior Citizen Dinner. She thanked her for working closely with our Senior citizens and for valuing their ideas and input and for allowing them to decide annually what the Christmas theme would be and what their menu should be, that every year had been a different theme and she knew from experience that much thought and planning goes into each event because that was exactly what she coordinated in her place of work.

She stated that she just wanted to say that she truly did enjoy herself Tuesday night at the Senior Citizens Dinner, however, this was her 3<sup>rd</sup> year attending this particular event and the Senior Citizen Dinner did not feel like a Senior citizen Dinner which it normally does and she couldn't explain that. She commended our senior citizens for making the decision to hold their annual celebration at a new location, at a restaurant; it is always good to try something new to see what works and what doesn't work and like she says you never know until you try. She stated that just like there are pros and cons to many ideas, the restaurant idea is not an exception.

She stated that celebrating at the restaurant freed up our public works staff who usually set up tables and chairs and help us clean up; it freed up some of our police officers who usually lend a helping hand and help our seniors; it freed up the hands of the Capital Bank Staff, the council and other guest who each year help serve our senior citizens and help in the clean-up and it freed up Heritage Hall staff who help in the set up for the event. This was an event and she specifically bolded this in her speech because she felt this was the most important thing of what she was going to say, that this is meant to be for all senior citizens ( JC residents or not) who attend; it's about them and no one else but them. However, after the dinner she had a moment to reflect on the Christmas dinner and she was feeling a little restless too. She wanted to take this moment to share some of the things she observed that evening that she wish to not see happen again because in all honesty, the Senior Citizen Dinner she attended this Tuesday did not feel at all like the past two Senior Citizen Dinners she had attended.

Guests that were not age 60 or above. This event was for senior citizens age 60 or above, it was not an open door policy for all ages and to her this is taking advantage of the generosity of the restaurant owner who provided the meal.

Guests that were invited by guest. (The invitation that was emailed to the council read we

could invite a guest and “a” is meant to be one person other than yourself. It does not mean a guest and they can invite their friends or spouses and children, which was exactly what took place this Tuesday.

She stated that she also observed that Cindy Miller hardly spoke, as a matter of fact, did not speak at all, that if she recalled well, just simply raised her hand when she heard her name called and even missed the beginning portion of the dinner. She stated that to her, and she spoke for herself, that’s when it hit me that Cindy Miller was not directing this event as she has done in the past, its like the baton was passed so someone else without even communicating to her. She stated that speaking for herself, she found that very disrespectful to Cindy. She apologized to Cindy if she failed to give her the proper recognition she deserved and wanted her to know that she valued and respect her

She stated she observed some of our guest of many years that have always supported our Senior Citizen Program, quiet Tuesday night, that body language says it all.

The stated that the Council, whom Cindy Miller always acknowledges at the events and asks if they would like to say anything, were not even given a change to speak, that the Liaison in Position 2, who represents our Senior Citizens, was never ask if he wanted to share a few words.

She stated she observed that our Jacinto city Police Department was not given priority, that if this event required extra security, she felt the first line should have been our police officers, we may be small, a little over 20 but we are as good as any other branch of the police force and should come first.

She stated that special guests that arrived unplanned should go through the proper channels to be part of the agenda for the planned events.

Council Member Garcia stated that in summary, that she would like to ask that Jack please work closely with Cindy Miller and the seniors to plan their next dinner and please see that only seniors and adult guest attend the event, that she proposed that tickets for attendance be given prior to the event which would alleviate many of the unforeseen events from occurring. Ms. Garcia stated this was merely a suggestion and not her place to impose this

idea, that she looked forward to feeling once again the warmth, love and closeness that is usually present at the senior citizens events. She thanked them for their time and for allowing her to voice her observations and feelings and she didn't want this feeling again, it was not a good feeling; honestly that night she wasn't even aware and maybe this was communication between them but that night she wasn't even aware of what happened to Council Member Lee and texted him after the dinner and told him that we missed him at the Christmas Party and that was when she found out what had taken place, they had a death in the family and she felt bad because she was supposed to know but she just didn't want this to happen again, that she just wanted to have that same feeling that she had always felt, that feeling of community, that she would not be able to sleep tonight but she needed to get it out and she didn't know how the others felt but this was just her.

She thanked everyone for being here tonight and we would be here again before Christmas.

Council Member Rivas advised Carmela that he sympathized with her, that he also saw a little bit of a change from what he experienced his first go around and he was not trying to take anything away from her but it was not about him, it was the seniors and he ask Cindy if they had a good time.

Cindy advised that she had been in school since the event and had not spoken with the seniors.

He ask her to get a report and get back with him, if they had a good time, that was what was important, he knew the other issues ranked high but as long as they had a good time that was important too, that he had a good time, he stated that he eye witnessed and saw these things and he questioned them as well and he thought Mario was standing there with him as well when he said wow, he wished he was that way when he was 65.

Council Member Gonzales stated that they noticed that the attendance wasn't as many as usual.

Council Member Rivas stated that when he first walked in, the owner of the restaurant was saying something about 140 to 150 people.

City Manager Maner ask Cindy if he didn't hear the number of 130 somewhere and Cindy advised that last year we had about 134.



The was general discussion about the number of people and this was not picked up by the sound system.

Cindy ask them to let her explain that the Christmas Party and Valentine volunteer party that was a budgeted item and it runs about \$1,200.00. She stated they came to her and said that this restaurant wanted to do it free and they took it to the Site Council meeting, that she didn't think it was her decision to make, it was their Christmas party and they voted on it. She stated that she ask them what they wanted, that some of them were reserved about it because of parking and transportation but they said lets try it so that is what we did, it is about them, what they want, not what she or the council want, that she didn't know because she had been in a medicare class and she wouldn't know until she saw them on Monday, that if they want to go back then we would go back, that she was sorry to break her heart.

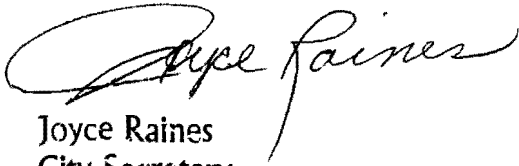
Cindy and Council Member Garcia were speaking at the same time and Cindy's comment could not be picked up.

Council Member Garcia stated that as long as they were happy, she was just saying that those extra things that took place that probably should have gone through her and even though these are things you just see that no one has to tell you, you just know but if the seniors want to have it at any restaurant she was all for it, it was their decision, it was their party, it was just when the extras were there that was not planned for, the restaurant was not the problem in her eyes and everyone sees things differently. She stated that in the Latino Culture and they get invited to a party they have a habit of saying come on, come on and we take an extra guest who the invitation is not even for and she speaks for her culture and they have to break away from that habit because if it says four people that is it, that is what was planned for and it was very generous of the owner.

Council Member Rivas stated that he appreciated all of them here.

Mayor Pro Tem Lee adjourned the meeting at 6:35 p.m..

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Joyce Raines". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the typed name and title.

Joyce Raines  
City Secretary