

COUNCIL MEETING, THURSDAY APRIL 13, 2023, 6:00 P.M.

The Mayor and City Council met in regular session on Thursday, April 13, 2023 at 6:00 p.m. with the following members present: Mayor Diaz, Council Members Rivas, Robinson, Lee and Gonzales; City Manager Squyres and City Secretary Raines. Council Member Garcia arrived after roll call and City Attorney DeFoyd out of state.

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 of the previous meeting as presented. Vote: 4 for 0 Against

DEPARTMENT HEAD REPORTS:

Thomas Rogers, Assistant Public Works Director, gave an update on the sewer plant rehabilitation and advised they had a pre bid meeting on the asphalt project and had three contractors attending. He also gave an update on the Northside water main and fire protection project, stating they were putting a lot of pipe in the ground.

He stated they we had a new hire, Alex Castillo, who had been a part time Employee and was now full time.

Chief Mier stated that business was as usual and they would be doing a Stop The Bleed Program with the seniors on Monday.

Elizabeth Flores. Heritage Hall Director, stated that it was a good program for the seniors and they were looking forward to it.

Ivan Rojas, Parks and Recreation Director, stated they may have noticed on Lane Street they were pouring slabs and would be putting in benches, hopefully by next week, along with trash cans.

He advised that they were hiring guards, 16 and above.

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Chief Ayala stated they had been busy with mental health issues, had taken 4 to 6 people to the Mental Health Center where the County was helping them with housing, etc.

He spoke about a young man, Devrayage Daniel, who was 11 to 12 years old and had terminal cancer and had always wanted to be a police officer and a lot of Agencies all over the country has sworn him in as an honorary police officer and he would like for the Jacinto City Police Department to do this and the City possibly present him with a proclamation.

Chief Ayala advised that we had lost another resident in the city, Cynthis Wood, that he did not have any detail yet.

City Manager Squyres stated Stop the Bleed was a outstanding program and the Fire Department had already taught the program to the Public Works Department. He stated that City Hall had been painted, that it was a budgeted item in Capital Outlay and it looked really good and we were replacing the sign at Town Center, which was the oldest sign and we hoped to be able to program all the signs in the city from one computer which would make it much easier for Christal.

He advised that the benches being placed on Lane Street was being paid for by Port of Houston through a grant.

Mayor Diaz ask what about light and City Manager Squyres advised that he had already applied for \$65,000 for lights in next years grant.

There were no public comments.

There was no Unfinished Business.

NEW BUSINESS:

- 1. Ordinance 2023-2 Amending the code of Ordinances of the City of Jacinto City at Chapter 10 entitled "Utilities" at Section 1C(2) water Service rates and at Section 3E(1)(2) Sewer rates inside City limits; Repealing all Ordinances in conflict herewith, establishing effective date.**

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City Manager Squyres advised that every year we are getting notice of rate Increases from City of Houston for surface water which by law we are required to purchase, the subsidence District was established in 1980 by the Texas Legislative and we can only allowed pump to 20,000 gallons of water from our well, that we had absorbed rate increase after rate increase for years, that we have done creative bookkeeping for years but we can no longer do this, we have to raise our rates. We receive a notice from City of Houston on March 29th that rates would be going up but not how much, we called the City of Houston water Department to ask them and they ask us to send them a copy of what we got they didn't know about it, we finally got a rate which was almost 10%. City Manager Squyres went over a water adjustment projection from .0972 through .1500 percent showing what each rate would increase our rate and advised that we had just got told by TCEQ that we have a trace of cyanide in our water and we have to test twice a week for five years at approximately \$400.00 a month, that water is the most expensive item in our budget, that we were already behind, he wanted to tell them the facts and let them make a decision, that if he was ask to make a recommendation he would say 12%.

Council Member Robinson stated that Houston would be going up 10% for the next three years.

Council Member Rivas ask was 12% enough or should we go up more to give us a bumper, he suggested 15%.

Council Member Gonzales stated he agreed with the 15%, we would have to raise the rates again if they go up again and Houston lets their leaks run for weeks and we are paying for that.

There was general discussion regarding the rates.

City Manager stated that both Councilman Gonzales and Councilman Rivas had made an outstanding statement. He stated that we had to raise the rates or the department was going to go broke.

City Council Member Robinson stated that we needed to raise what we could to support the water department.

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Council Member Garcia stated that we were already behind .

Council Member Robinson ask if there was any possibility that the subsidence district would change what we can pump from our well.

City Manager Squyres advised that we have a contract with them now and they were a government organization, he did not thing so but you never know.

A motion was made by Council Member Rivas and seconded by Council Member Garcia to approve Ordinance 2023-2 on the first reading to increase the rates by 15%. Vote: 5 For 0 Against

- 2. Mayor and Council to consider an expansion of the scope of work assigned to LJA Engineering related to CDBG-MIT D212 project to Include a drainage impact analysis for Turkey Run Gulley at a cost of \$124,480.00 and to amend Budget Code 545-32-6752 in the amount Of \$124,480.00**

City Manager Squyres advised this was CDBG-MIT grant that we had received from the General Land Office in the amount of 5 Million plus and was one of two grants we had received. He stated that the Harris County Flood Control District would not allow us to increase the side of the pipe that entered into Turkey Run Gulley, that flood control had hired LJA to do a feasibility study on Turkey Run Gulley for them and LJA had to go to the Flood Control to get permission to use what is in their study and he had talked with other engineers who say we should be able to do this if we do the study.

City Manager Squyres advised that this will come out of general fund not water fund and there is a law in Texas that says if you are a city and spends more than \$50,000 you have to go out for bids and that LJA was already hired when we received the CDBG-MIT grant so it is just adding to the job, that is why we don't have to go out for bids.

A motion was made by Council Member Garcia and seconded by Council

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Member Gonzales to approve an expansion of the scope of work assigned to LJA Engineering related to CDBG-MIT D212 to include a drainage impact analysis for Turkey Run Gulley at a cost of \$124,480.00 and to amend Budget Code 545-32-6752 in the amount of \$124,480.00. Vote: 5 For 0 Against

COUNCIL COMMENTS:

Council Member Rivas stated that he thinks the young man Chief Ayala was talking about was the same young man he saw on television. He stated that he was so proud of our staff, that when we get a report of a water leak it is fixed immediately, that City of Houston leaks go on for weeks, please call if you see any leaks. Have a good weekend and God Bless.

Council Member Robinson thanked everyone for coming out, that water rates were a necessity and to enjoy the weekend.

Council Member Lee stated you hear about the problem with water leaks in the City of Houston but not in Jacinto City, they are taken care of.

Council Member Garcia welcomed all the visitors and thanked all the Department Head and staff.

Council Member Gonzales thanked public works for taken care of all our water leaks and advised that Mr. Purcell was in the hospital.

Mayor Diaz adjourned the meeting at 6:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Joyce Raines".

**Joyce Raines
City Secretary**