

**CITY OF LAREDO  
SPECIAL CITY COUNCIL MEETING  
M2018-SC-11  
CITY COUNCIL  
CHAMBERS 1110  
HOUSTON STREET  
LAREDO, TEXAS 78040  
December 21, 2018  
12:00 P.M.**

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

Mayor Pete Saenz called the meeting to order.

**II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Mayor Pete Saenz led in the pledge of allegiance.

**III. MOMENT OF SILENCE**

Mayor Pete Saenz led in a moment of silence.

**IV. ROLL CALL**

In attendance:

Pete Saenz	Mayor
Rudy Gonzalez, Jr.	District I
Vidal Rodriguez	District II
Alberto Torres, Jr.	District IV
George Altgelt	District VII
Jose A. Valdez, Jr.	City Secretary
Horacio De Leon	City Manager
Cynthia Collazo	Deputy City Manager
Kristina L. Hale	City Attorney

Motion to excuse the absences of Cm. Perez, Cm. Vielma, Cm. San Miguel, and Cm. Balli.

Moved: Cm. Altgelt

Second: Cm. Rodriguez

For: 5

Against: 0

Abstain: 0

**Citizen comments**

Mellie Hereford stated that during the primary 2018 election, *El Mañana* reported that there were 80 mail-in ballots with identical signatures, asking how one individual could obtain 80 ballots. She inquired as to the status of that investigation. She noted that during the primary election, there was also a report of a person who wanted to vote on the Republican ballot and had to go to three different polling sites in order to find a ballot.

During the November 6, 2018 general election, Precincts 343, 344, and 356 ran out of ballots. She asked if these situations could be considered voter suppression. During the December 3, 2018, City Council meeting, City Secretary informed Council that he had forgotten to notify them of a polling site change. Mrs. Hereford noted her surprise to then hear Cm. Torres state that he had taken it upon himself to call the Elections Administrator while Cm. Vielma made it known that she did not know anything about the polling site change. Furthermore, Laredo ISD involved themselves at the last minute but only after the *Laredo Morning Times* wrote an article about the polling site change. She voiced her opinion that all of these activities have the air of impropriety, citing Section 61.0001 of the Election Code, which states that a candidate in an election can only enter a polling site when voting or if he/she has official business in the building in which the polling place is located. She conceded that Mayor Saenz and Cm. Vidal Rodriguez had legitimate business in City Hall while it served as a polling site because there was a Council Meeting on that day. However, she asked why the same privilege was not granted to Mr. Jose Perez at Santo Niño Elementary School; instead, the City changed the polling site. Mr. Perez has legitimate business at the polling site as he is the Principal of the school. Mrs. Hereford reiterated her perception that the City attempted to suppress the vote for Mr. Perez. She added that the mobile unit was not made available to the students at Cigarroa during the school day and only available on Saturday.

## V. FINAL READING OF ORDINANCES

Motion to waive the final reading of Ordinance 2018-O-185.

Moved: Cm. Torres

Second: Cm. Gonzalez

For: 5

Against: 0

Abstain: 0

1. 2018-O-185 Amending the Zoning Ordinance (Map) of the City of Laredo by rezoning approximately approximately 5 acres out of Porcion 23, Leonardo Sanchez Survey, Abstract 283, located south of Shiloh Dr. and east of Kirby Dr., as further described by Metes & Bounds on Exhibit A, located south of Shiloh Dr. and east of Kirby Dr., from B-4 (Highway Commercial District) to AG (Agricultural District); providing for publication and effective date. ZC-05-2019 District VI

Motion to adopt Ordinance 2018-O-185.

Moved: Cm. Torres

Second: Cm. Gonzalez

For: 5

Against: 0

Abstain: 0

## VI. RESOLUTIONS

2. 2018-R-169 Canvassing the returns of the runoff city election of the City of Laredo held on Thursday, December 13, 2018 for Mayor, Municipal Court Judge, Council Members for Districts II, III, and VI; and approving the results.

Tiffany L. Franklin, Deputy City Secretary IV, read the runoff election canvassing results as follows:

<u>Candidate Name</u>	<u>Office</u>	<u>Votes</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Roque Vela, Jr.	Mayor	7,698	35.51%
Pete Saenz	Mayor	13,978	64.49%
Rodolfo Morales, III	Mun. Court Judge	9,880	46.04%
Jesus Dominguez	Mun. Court Judge	11,578	53.96%
Vidal Rodriguez	Council, Dist. II	1,688	52.55%
Jose Perez, III	Council, Dist. II	1,524	47.45%
Mercurio Martinez, III	Council, Dist. III	1,406	57.43%
Christina Perez	Council, Dist. III	1,042	42.57%
Marte Martinez	Council, Dist. VI	2,694	54.49%
L. Vish Viswanath	Council, Dist. VI	2,250	45.51%

Total Number of Voters who Voted as per ERM Report: 21,871

Motion to adopt Resolution 2018-R-169.

Moved: Cm. Torres

Second: Cm. Gonzalez

For: 5

Against: 0

Abstain: 0

Cm. Torres recognized newly-elected Council Members Mercurio Martinez, III and Marte Martinez. He congratulated all election runoff winners.

## VII. MOTIONS

3. Consideration to award a construction contract to the lowest bidder ALC Construction Co., Inc, Laredo, Texas, in the amount of \$152,000.00 (which includes the base bid and additive alternate nos. 3, 4, 5 and 6) for the Bartlett Sports Complex Park Basketball Metal Shade – District V with a construction contract time of one hundred fifty (150) calendar Days; and authorizing the City Manager to execute all related contract documents contingent upon receipt and approval of insurance and bond documents. Completion date for the project is scheduled for July 2019. Funding is available in District V Priority Funds, Bartlett Shade - Project #D51901.

Mayor Saenz reported that he had spoken to Cm. Vielma previously, and she did not express an objection to this use of District V funds.

Motion to approve.

Moved: Cm. Torres

Second: Cm. Rodriguez

For: 5

Against: 0

Abstain: 0

4. Consideration to award a construction contract to the lowest bidder ALC Construction Co., Inc, Laredo, Texas, in the amount of \$160,000.00 (which includes the base bid and additive alternate nos. 3 and 4) for the North Central Park John Valls Basketball Metal Shade – District VI with a construction contract time of one hundred fifty (150) calendar Days; and authorizing the City Manager to execute all related contract documents contingent upon receipt and approval of insurance and bond documents. Completion date for the project is scheduled for July 2019. Funding is available in District VI Priority Funds, North Central Park - Project #D61901.

Dr. Marte Martinez, District VI Council Member-Elect, did not express an objection to the proposed use of District VI funds.

Motion to approve.

Moved: Cm. Torres

Second: Cm. Rodriguez

For: 5

Against: 0

Abstain: 0

## **VIII. EXECUTIVE SESSION**

None.

## **IX. GENERAL COUNCIL DISCUSSIONS AND PRESENTATIONS**

### **A. Request by Council Member Alberto Torres, Jr.**

1. Discussion with possible action to authorize the Laredo Commission for Women's to host the 2019 Women Hall of Fame; and any other matters incident thereto. (Co-Sponsored by Council Member Vidal Rodriguez and Council Member Roberto Balli)
2. Discussion with possible action to amend the requirements and criteria for recipients of the annual Women's Hall of Fame to prohibit current city elected officials, city employees, and city appointed officials (i.e. management and committee/commission members) from being recognized or honored by the Laredo Commission for Women; and any other matters incident thereto. (Co-Sponsored by Council Member Vidal Rodriguez and Council Member Roberto Balli)

Motion to consider Items IX. A. 1 and 2 together.

Moved: Cm. Torres

Second: Cm. Rodriguez

For: 5

Against: 0

Abstain: 0

Sandra Rocha Taylor, Laredo Commission for Women Chair, noted that this item came about because last year, Cm. Nelly Vielma was nominated to join

the Commission's Hall of Fame. However, it was decided that the Commission did not want to give the appearance of a conflict of interest. In the spirit of transparency, which Cm. Vielma supports, the Commission decided to amend its qualifications for Hall of Fame honorees. She proposed qualification that prohibit any political candidate running for any office or any current City official from consideration. However, she clarified that the Commission did not want to exclude City employees, as some employees participate in associations or organizations that merit consideration for the Hall of Fame.

Jose A. Valdez, Jr., City Secretary, added that the Commission also decide to exclude any currently-serving Commission Member. Cm. Torres agreed that the term "City official" would cover any member of any City Commission or Committee.

Horacio De Leon, City Manager, asked if the Hall of Fame event would be within the budget year. Mr. Valdez confirmed that the Hall of Fame would not incur any additional costs and would use the balance of last year's budget funds.

Cm. Altgelt noted that consideration for Hall of Fame honorees should be wide open and left to the Commission's discretion. Mayor Saenz and Cm. Torres clarified that these amendments to the qualifications are at the request of the Commission Members.

Mrs. Taylor clarified that the Commission wanted to include all employees, which would include management staff. However, the Commission wanted to exclude elected officials and candidates.

Kristina L. Hale, City Attorney, informed Council that the Laredo Commission for Women has a charge in their bylaws to serve only in an advisory capacity and to make recommendations. Therefore, Council has final approval of all of their recommendations and activities.

Mrs. Taylor added that an elected official can always be nominated to the Hall of Fame once they have completed their term in office. The Commission's exclusion is only for currently-sitting elected officials.

Motion to authorize the Laredo Commission for Women to host the Hall of Fame event as they deem appropriate by the Commission and approved by the City Secretary and the City Manager and to include that no elected officials or candidates for office at all levels or current members of City boards, commission or committees be considered for recognition and to direct the Commission to bring any nominations back to Council for approval, as amended.

Moved: Cm. Torres

Second: Gonzalez

For: 5

Against: 0

Abstain: 0

## **X. ADJOURNMENT**

Motion to adjourn.

Moved: Cm. Torres

Second: Cm. Gonzalez

For: 5

Against: 0

Abstain: 0