

City of Brownsville  
Minutes of August 5, 2020 Regular Monthly Meeting

The regular monthly meeting of the Brownsville City Council was called to order by Mayor Allen Whitesitt at 7:00 PM with councilmembers Jeff LeJeune, Rick Voshart, Chelsey Leis and John Jangula present. Also present were Maureen Meiners, City Treasurer and Steve Schuldt, City Clerk. Guests in attendance were Michelle Smith, Brandon Frank and Jim Hakes.

Minutes of the July 1, 2020 council meeting and the Annual Sewer Operations meetings were read. Rick Voshart moved, second by Jeff LeJeune and the motion passed to approve the minutes subject to correction.

Jim Hakes remarked that grass was growing through the gravel on the street near his home and suggested that it be re-shaped and a layer of gravel be added.

Mayor Whitesitt gave a review of the summer recreation program. There was a total of 21 kids signed up for the program with an average attendance of 15 kids. He also informed the council that Cheryl Whitesitt will not be available to supervise summer rec program in 2021.

Council discussed nuisance violations within the city. Council discussed the Tim Serres property and noted that there remains a van body that should be moved from city property. Mayor Whitesitt requested input regarding Roger Doering's farm equipment parked on his property on North 7<sup>th</sup> Street. Chelsey Leis informed council that she must abstain from the discussion regarding Roger Doering. John Jangula informed council that he will abstain from discussion regarding Roger Doering due to his friendship with him. There being no further input, Mayor Whitesitt requested that the matter be tabled until the September meeting. Mayor Whitesitt informed council that he had spoken with Ed Handel regarding an unlicensed car and tractor on his property. Mr. Handel agreed to take care of the matter.

Mayor Whitesitt gave a maintenance department report as follows: (1) Culverts have been installed at 9<sup>th</sup> and Benton Streets with landscaping and seeding completed. (2) A concrete catch basin is to be poured on 9<sup>th</sup> Street in Kyle Blank's yard to capture runoff from the alley and landscaping a drainage ditch along the west side of 9<sup>th</sup> Street to the catch basin. (3) The fire station is now hooked to the city's sewer system. (4) Plans are being made to retrofit the lift station on the south end of town on Highway 26 on August 13. (5) Crack sealing at Marina Drive is scheduled to be completed in September.

Brandon Frank, representing the fire department, presented council with a 2021 proposed budget. Mr. Frank also presented a list of equipment needs both short term and long term. In the short term, the department will take advantage of the CARES Act funding to acquire personal protective equipment (PPE) that is necessary when responding to calls in light of the COVID-19 pandemic. A request was also made to purchase a turnout gear extractor washer which is eligible to be paid for from the CARES funding. Rick Voshart moved, second by John Jangula and the motion passed to purchase the extractor and needed personal protective equipment. Council was also given a list of upcoming needs by priority to consider for future planning. Mr. Frank also suggested that the chimney at the fire station be inspected and the rain gutters be reinstalled. He also requested that major improvements to the fire station be discussed with members of the fire department prior to approval. Fire department personnel believe that a new fire station should be a part of future planning and large expenditures in the existing building might be better used toward a new facility. Mr. Frank reminded everyone of the upcoming chicken dinner and raffle drawing on September 19.

Steve Schuldt informed council of a letter received from Audrey Mularie regarding a DNR park visit in which it was suggested that additional protective surfacing be installed in the playground area. Chelsey Leis moved, second by John Jangula and the motion passed to purchase additional ground cover with the stipulation that it be installed in spring 2021. Schuldt reported that a 2021 budget is being prepared and will be available for the September meeting.

Maureen Meiners informed council of a request by Heidi Forschler to install a Little Free Library in the city. Council agreed by consensus that there was little need because the city already has a small library available every day except Sunday.

Maureen informed council of a request to rent the Community Center for a wedding in October which could have 300 guests. Following discussion, Chelsey Leis moved, second by John Jangula to allow the Community Center to be rented for the event with the stipulation that state mandated guidelines be followed during the event. The motion was voted down by 3 opposed and 2 in favor.

Maureen reported that she received a complaint regarding a yard sign with foul language. Council agreed by consensus that removal of a yard sign on private property would be unlawful.

Rick Voshart reported that he had a conversation with Ron Chamberlin regarding the café at the intersection of County 3 and Highway 26. He explained that Mr. Chamberlin purchased the property with the intention of using it as a bank branch. However, a bank building in La Crescent became available and was acquired instead. Chamberlain has the property for sale and is open to suggestions as to how the property can be utilized. No action was taken.

Council reviewed claims payable for the month of July. Rick Voshart moved, second by Jeff LeJeune and the motion passed to approve all claims.

There being no further business, Chelsey Leis moved, second by Jeff LeJeune and the motion passed to adjourn at 8:18 pm.

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Steve Schuldt, City Clerk

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Allen Whitesitt, Mayor