

MEETING MINUTES
City Council, City Of Quitman
Thursday, November 15, 2012 – 7:00 PM
City Council Chambers, City Hall – 401 E. Goode Street, Quitman, TX

COUNCIL PRESENT: Jerry Edwards, Mayor; J.R. Evans, Mayor Pro-Tem; Toni Cole, Alderman; Sam Lange, Alderman; and Randy Dunn, Alderman

COUNCIL NOT PRESENT: Larry Crow, Alderman

STAFF PRESENT: Delene Allen, Civic Services Director; Meri Joy Brightwell, Assistant City Secretary; Miles Tucker in for Kelly Cole, Police Chief; Dee Gilbreath, Utilities Director; Mike Hall, City Secretary / Administrator; Walter Lutonsky, Streets & Maint Director; Scott Wheeler, Fire Chief; and Jim McLeroy, City Attorney.

Edwards called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

Edwards lead an invocation.
At Edwards request, Evans lead the pledge.

Item 1 – Quitman Development Corporation Report; Dr. Randal Bennett, President

Bennett gave a summary of recent increases in retail sales tax noting that budgeted projections were based on total allocations of \$475,000, which were comparable to 2007-2009 levels prior to the economic downturn. He explained the current allocation for the most recent 12 month period was just in excess of this amount and the outlook for the immediate future remained positive due to construction and ongoing development.

He discussed the development of the new ETMC facility expected be complete in late Summer 2013 and the WCEC office expected to be complete in Spring 2013, noting further economic expansion would require additional development. He noted that inquiries into development had increased based primarily on the developments and the Richards Street Project.

He discussed the status of the Richards Street Project, noting the progress delays due to drainage and site planning issues. He also explained that a drainage study had recently been completed and a soils study had just been authorized. Discussions with potential development partners were ongoing and potential, with the vision for development remaining mixed use retail. There was general discussion about the connection of the roadway back NW to SH 154W and the potential alignments and funding for such. Hall noted the need for development and grant funding in coordination to accomplish this necessity.

Bennett discussed the QDCs efforts in local business development and small business loans for the purpose of expansion and creation. He also discussed the development of an umbrella 501c(3) or other type foundation entity to serve the entire community as a clearinghouse for charitable contributions and efforts, which was ongoing due to name and legal issues but expected to be prepared and functional near or after the first of the year. Bennett also discussed the county-wide EXPO center and Quitman's leadership in moving this project forward even though other communities continued to seem resistant to the project due to the scope and location issues.

Item 2 – Citizen Comments (COMMENT ONLY)

Sherri Dupree was present to speak about the property she recently purchased directly behind the Dairy Queen which she also owns. She requested that the City abandon the alley way between the two properties.

Debbie Robinson with the Wood County Electric Cooperative was present to request that the City grant a permit to allow the Cooperative to drill a water well to be used for irrigation only stating this would promote energy efficiency and conservation.

Without objection, Edwards took Items 3 & 4 together.

Item 3 – October 18, 2012 City Council Meeting Minutes

Item 4 – October 26, 2012 City Council Meeting Minutes

Evans made a motion to approve the minutes, Cole seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Without objection, Edwards took Item 8 and then Item 10 next.

Item 8 – Vacating of Public Right of Way [Alleyway] Adjacent to Block 3 Lots 1 & 2 AND Block 4 Lots 1,2 & 3 Richards Addition at Request of Property Owner

Cole made a motion to approve the ordinance, Evans seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Item 10 – Water Well Permit – 501 South Main Street, Wood County Electric Cooperative

Edwards introduced and explained that by passing this resolution it would deny the issuance of the permit in accordance with the regulations of the Code of Ordinances as the City had the ability to provide water in the given situation. There was general discussion about the nature of public versus private property rights. There was also general discussion about the contributions of WCEC as a community organization. There was general discussion about the affect of allowing private wells and whether such would negatively impact the utility system from a revenue standpoint.

Evans made a motion to approve the resolution, Cole seconded the motion. The motion failed with Evans voting for and Cole, Dunn and Lange voting against.

Lange made a motion to amend and pass the resolution to grant a specific variance to the ordinance to grant the water well permit, Dunn seconded the motion. The motion passed with Cole, Dunn, and Lange voting for and Evans voting against.

Item 5 – October Financial Report

Evans made a motion to approve the report, Cole seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Item 6 – October Budget Report

Evans made a motion to approve the report, Cole seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Item 7 – October Departmental Reports

There was general discussion about the departmental reports.

Evans made a motion to approve the reports, Cole seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Item 9 – Environmental & Health Code (Nuisances & Environment, Substandard Buildings)

McLeroy explained that due to recent case law regarding dilapidated structures and substandard buildings revisions to the Code of Ordinances had become necessary to establish a means to enforce basic Health & Environmental regulations in a manner that would be judicially enforceable.

Edwards explained the Ordinance would amend the Code of Ordinances to strike the previous portions of Code and replace them with the revisions and recommended passage.

Evans made a motion to approve the ordinance, Lange seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Item 11 – Section 380 Economic Development Program Guidelines

Hall explained the program guidelines, noting this was an additional program for economic development most often in the instance of residential development where tax abatements were not possible. There was general discussion about the nature, process, negotiation, and arrangement of such agreements. Edwards introduced the resolution noting passage would approve the adoption of program guidelines and recommended approval with a specific change in Section 3(d)(IV) from “Administrator” to “Secretary”.

Cole made a motion to approve the resolution with the change in the guidelines as recommended, Dunn seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Item 12 – Quitman Development Corporation Board Appointment

Edwards introduced the resolution noting that Mark Ellison had requested to not be reappointed to the board and that the QDC Board had recommended David Dobbs to fill the seat for the term expiring October 1, 2014.

Dunn made a motion to approve the resolution, Lange seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Before Adjournment, Edwards requested that each of the department heads give a 3-4 minute presentation highlighting their department for the council at the next meeting, including some pictures for display on the overhead.

Edwards also noted that he intended to not approve the decision on the water well and send the matter back to the Council for reconsideration. He noted his concern was that the request and consideration did not include the location of the intended well. He also noted he felt additional consideration was needed about the affect approving such a request would have on the utility system.

Adjournment

Evans made a motion to adjourn, Lange seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 8:05 PM.

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THESE MINUTES ARE A TRUE AND CORRECT RECORD OF THE ITEMS CONSIDERED AND ACTION TAKEN AT THIS MEETING AND THAT THESE MINUTES HAVE BEEN APPROVED AS TRUE AND CORRECT AND THAT AN EXECUTED COPY IS ON FILE WITH THIS OFFICE.

**MICHAEL E. HALL
CITY SECRETARY-ADMINISTRATOR**