

April 27, 2020

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING
OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE
CITY OF OLNEY, TEXAS

6:00 P.M.

The City Council of the City of Olney, Texas, met Monday, April 27, 2020, at 6:00 P.M.

Those present were: Mayor Phil Jeske, Mayor Pro-Tem Rue Rogers, Councilmembers Tommy Kimbro, Chuck Stennett, Harrison Wellman, and Terri Wipperman. Absent: None. Staff Present: City Administrator Neal Welch, City Secretary Tim Houston, Chief of Police Conny Clay, City Clerk Arpegea Pagsuberon, Officer Dustin Hudson, and City Attorney William Myers. All agenda items were subject to action. Meeting was broadcast and recorded online using GoToMeeting.com in accordance with Open Meetings Laws guidance during COVID-19 Pandemic Disaster.

Mayor Jeske called the meeting to order at 6:02 P.M.

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Myers gave the invocation.

INVOCATION

No citizens appeared before the Council to comment.

CITIZEN COMMENT
PERIOD

Mayor Jeske entertained a motion to adopt the minutes from April 13, 2020 Regular Meeting as written. Mayor Pro-Tem Rogers made said motion, and Councilmember Kimbro seconded. Council voted unanimously to approve the minutes.

CONSIDER APPROVAL
OF MINUTES FROM
PREVIOUS MEETING(S)

Roger and Jamie Ricketts appeared before the Council to discuss issues related to the property located at 1102 W Howard St. and the recent drug bust there. Mr. Ricketts stated he was a concerned citizen who had been dealing with a drug house for at least the past 18 months at least at the address above, and that it had forced him to his back yard since they were worried about the folks across the street selling drugs. He stated that he believed Olney was experiencing a drug pandemic and wanted to express ways to combat the issue. Mr. Ricketts stated that citizens needed a way to report drug houses without fear of retaliation, and that to find drug houses one need only talk to a postal worker. He stated the City needed to do more to go after and tear down drug houses, and dilapidated structures, the Council should seek drug related case reports each month, and replace or even increase the number street lights in town so that more bright LED lamps were used. Further, he also stated that Code Enforcement needed to be stricter with increasing penalties, and that the police needed new radios so that people could not listen in to their radio communications by scanner. He also suggested more community support and programs could help the drug issues and as a way to offset the costs of the programs above he suggested raising taxes to do so, since he would be willing to pay more. Without further measures he postulated that it would only become harder to convince good people to move here. Mr. Ricketts stated that he and his wife were tired of being bullied, eyeballed, and questioned by the neighbors at the drug house. Councilmember Wipperman corroborated Mr. Ricketts information on the situation since she was also a neighbor of the drug house at 1102 W Howard St. and had one of her dogs poisoned, which she believed to be done by the neighbor at the address above. Mayor Jeske inquired if the house was now empty. Mr. Ricketts replied that it was. Council briefly discussed the issue and informed Mr. Ricketts that they appreciate his information and would take it under advisement.

HEAR CITIZEN
CONCERN ON
PROPERTY LOCATED AT
1102 W HOWARD ST

Mayor Jeske inquired about the ordinance and the reasoning for it. Mr. Welch stated that the City had been taking a bath on people allowing the animals to be impounded, quarantined, surrendered, tested, etc. Essentially, some were using the City as a way to simply rid themselves of unwanted pets or pets that may get them ticketed or in trouble. Council discussed the ordinance briefly. Councilmember Wellman inquired if the animal control penalties could be added to the utility bills of customers as leverage in order to require payment of the penalties and fees. Mr. Houston replied that they could not be added as the Texas Attorney General had determined such actions to be an unconstitutional tax since it was above and beyond the operating costs for the utilities provided by the City. Mr. Myers agreed and stated the ordinance was basically a set of penalties from the City and had to be treated as such. Councilmember Kimbro asked if the ordinance could be written in such a way that it would not be necessary to come back to Council each time a fee needed to be raised. Mr. Houston explained the ordinance did this by stating the individual would pay the actual costs involved. This was acceptable to the Council. Mayor Jeske entertained a motion to approve

CONSIDER ORDINANCE
O8-20 ON FIRST
READING TO AMEND
ANIMAL CONTROL FEES
AND PENALTIES

Ordinance 08-20 on First Reading. Mayor Pro-Tem Rogers made said motion, and Councilmember Stennett seconded. Council voted unanimously to approve Ordinance 08-20 on First Reading.

There being no further business to come before the Council, the Council adjourned by consent ADJOURNMENT at 6:45 P.M.

ATTEST:

Mayor

City Secretary

Date Approved