



## REGULAR MEETING

### AGENDA

- A. Call Meeting to Order
- B. Roll Call
- C. Pledge of Allegiance
- D. Invocation
- E. Public Comments
- F. Discussion and possible action on approval of Minutes:
  - 1. Regular Meeting Minutes of May 07 , 2020
- G. Discussion and Possible Action to approve Jasso Consulting Group, LLC to go out and find grants for city due to the COVID 19
- H. Discussion on update on COVID 19 pandemic
- I. Adjournment.

### NOTICE OF ASSISTANCE AT THE PUBLIC MEETING

City Hall is Wheelchair accessible & accessible parking spaces are available. Request for accommodations or interpretive services must be made 48 hours prior to this Meeting. Please contact the City Secretary's Office at 956-262-2140 or Fax 956-262-2920 for further information. Braille is not available.

If during the course of the meeting, The City Council should determine that a Closed Session or meeting is authorized by section 551.071, 551.072, 551.074, 551.075, 551.076, 551.084, 551.086 of the Government Code or Vernon's Texas Codes Annotated, notice of Closed or Executive Session will be given after the commencement of the meeting covered by this notice pursuant to Section 551.101 of the Local Government Code. Should any final motion, decision, or vote be required in the opinion of the council with regards to any item during the meeting, then such final action, decision, or vote shall be made during the open meeting covered by this notice upon the reconvening of the Public Meeting.

I, the undersigned authority, do hereby certify that the above notice of said Regular Meeting of the Board of Aldermen of the City of Edcouch was posted on the main entrance to Edcouch City Hall on the 18th day of May at 5:00 pm and will remain posted continuously for at least 72 hours prior to the scheduled time of said meeting, in compliance with Chapter 551 of the Government Code, Vernon's Texas Codes, Annotated (Open Meetings Act).

**WITNESS MY HAND AND SEAL, THIS 18<sup>h</sup> DAY OF MAY 2020.**

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**Victor H. De La Cruz**  
**City Manager**

**Regular Meeting**  
**05/21/2020**  
**Page 2 of 2**



**MINUTES  
REGULAR MEETING  
CITY OF EDCOUCH**

211 W. SOUTHERN AVE., EDCOUCH, TEXAS  
THURSDAY, May 21, 2020  
6:00 P.M.

**AGENDA**

- J. Call Meeting to Order** Meeting was called to Order by Mayor Gonzalez at 6:33 p.m.
- K. Roll Call** Roll call was called by Mr. Manuel Hernandez as follows:

	Present	Absent	City Staff:
Mayor: Virgino Gonzalez Jr.	__X__	___	Victor H. De La Cruz, City Manager
Mayor Pro Tem: Flores Admin	__X__	___	Manuel Hernandez Jr., Fin./Court
Alderman: Joel Segura	__X__	___	Interim Chief: J. Quintana
Alderman: John Chapa	__X__	___	
Alderman: Robert Gutierrez	___	__X__	
Alderman: Lorenzo Cabrera	__X__	___	
City Attorney: Orlando Jimenez			

Mayor, we have a quorum.

- L. Pledge of Allegiance** Pledge of Allegiance was led Mayor Virgil Gonzalez
- M. Invocation** Invocation was led by Victor H. De La Cruz
- N. Public Comments** No Public Comments
- O. Discussion and possible Action on Approval of Minutes**

**1. Regular Meeting Minutes of May 07, 2020**

A motion to approve the minutes of May 07,2020 was made by Alderman: Flores, 2nd by Alderman: Chapa . All Voted Aye. Motion Carried. (9:30)

- P. Discussion and Possible Action to approve Jasso Consulting Group, LLC to go out and find grants for city due to the COVID 19**

**Hugo: Mayor**, I'd like to pass this item on to Manny.

**Manny:** Ok hello Mayor and member of the city council, I had Carlos Jasso from Jasso Consulting Group approach us last week. He came to the city asking the city to give him a chance to go out and look for grants and due to the COVID-19 there is a lot of stuff out there. I told him to produce a contract that I had to provide it to legal, as long as it dint cost the city any money upfront I don't think the commission would have a problem but I would have to send the contract to legal which I did and I'll have OJ explain more to you guys.

**OJ:** Mayor, city council, I did get a copy of the contract. I reviewed it and even spoke with Mr. Jasso regarding a little provision I was a little uneasy about. It is not going to cost the city anything upfront. The only thing that Mr. Jasso is requesting is that whatever grant that is awarded to the city that he is going to get the standard 10% fee and I dint have a problem with that. There was a language in there, cause I do know that there are some grants from the federal

government and from the state government that do not allow that kind of fees splitting. So, I asked them what happens in that situation. So, what he told me is that if he's not able to get a percentage of the fee or a percentage of the share then what he will charge a flat \$1500 application fee. So I don't think that's \_\_\_\_\_ I think that's actually great cause I have had the opportunity to see some of Mr Jasso's work on other grants and there are very extensive and so if it does come to that point that that particular program and that particular grant does not allow the 10% then Mr Jasso will charge the city a flat \$1500 after that it gets approved. So again, it's a fantastic opportunity for the city to kind of have a \_\_\_\_\_ in house grant writer without having to actually pay for one upfront. So I am recommending approval Mayor.

**Mayor:** Any questions for OJ or Hugo?

**A motion to approve Jasso Consulting Group, LLC to go out and find grants for the city due to COVID 19 was approved by Alderman \_\_\_\_\_ Segura \_\_\_\_\_, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Alderman \_\_\_\_\_ Chapa \_\_\_\_\_. All voted Aye. Motion Carried**

#### **Q. Discussion on update on COVID 19 pandemic**

**Hugo:** Mayor, as we all know the pandemic continues and were looking at the reopening of a variety of businesses

**Manny:** Ms De La Cruz, may I interrupt? Commissioner time is 6:36 and Commissioner Gutierrez has entered the meeting.

**Hugo:** How is it going commissioner?

**Robert:** Pretty good.

**Hugo:** Ok, so basically, we know we are at a reopening phases one and two in different areas of the business in the city. Some are 25% some are going to be at 50%. That is still with the numbers of COVID-19 cases pretty steady. They have not gone up, they have not gone down. Everyday there is the same amount almost between eight and ten cases. I'm happy to say that here in The City of Edcouch we have not had a case in a few days, I guess more than a week. All the cases that we have had here have been in the outskirts of Edcouch mainly to the north side of Edcouch. I don't know why but most of the cases are from that area mile 19, 20, 21 those areas. In addition to that, we are at this moment, I know that you have heard on the news and you have been following some of the newspaper articles they have been talking about the reimbursements of burn rate that we have as far as expenses for the city, which ill have Manny give an update on how much we have spent, but the reimbursement is going to be done in a variety of ways. Number one it is going to be done through a budget. We have to submit a budget within the next thirty days and in addition to that we also have to request for the funds and we also have to show how we are spending the money. This brought up a lot of questions as to why it is being done like that but at this time there are some cities, including The City of Edcouch, are expressing their feelings on why these funds are being released in that manner. So with that said, if all have any questions, specific questions, on COVID-19 issues or even on the finances I'll wait for those and then I'll pass it on to Manny so Manny can give you all the rundown of all our expenses as of now. I will add that we are continuing with the Hazard Pay. There is a variety of ideas that we have, the Mayor and I have been talking about the different ways of us to find a way to get that money. There is approximately \$268,000 that have been allocated to The City of Edcouch. That does not mean that we have them. It means that we

have the proof that we need them and so Mayor and I have been talking about different methods on doing that. One of them specifically is to allow the citizens of Edcouch to get a relief on their water bill. It won't get maybe a fifty maybe seventy five dollar relief on their water bill meaning that were going to reduce it here at the city so that means that those monies would be coming in directly to the city. So that is one way. If you all have any other ideas as to how we can do that but just do keep in mind we do have a burn rate on the DSO and we are spending an amount of money on the employees. Hazard pay, we are still buying gloves here and there, we are buying things that we need to maintain the city. So, if you have any questions?

**Mayor:** So the goal of the money is to get all the money that we spent to reimburse ourselves and then whatever is left over trying to help out the community and to offset some of the revenue that we lost such as the sales tax and the water but we have to write it in a certain kind of way where it looks like its an expense that the community is doing but we get the benefit as well. The customers get it and then the city as well because we do not want to return any of the money back. I mean \$258,000 is hard to spend with all the restrictions that they are going to give us, but the other thing is that we are still not done fighting for more money. The bigger cities got \$110 per person; the small cities got \$80. So, there is still \$30 in limbo that Hugo and I and others are fighting and that's where you guys are going to try and to convince others to bring in that money to us that was given to the county. They are saying that they want to do hot spots for internet and other kinds of services but at the end of the day I am willing to assure that the city is getting their fair share of funds in whatever manner they give it to us.

**Hugo:** You know and just so you can kind of understand our thinking process we do not know at this time and some of the comments I have made is , with the concerns that I have had is, I need the money now not three months from now. And so, if that money is there already some of the expenses that we have made already we need to put those monies back into our account. I mean we are living on a check by check type of situation here. Our budget was not set for the type of expenses that we have already incurred during the COVID-19 pandemic. Keep in mind that \$268,000 that we are getting, if I am understanding the budget process properly, they are wanting us to budget this amount until yes \$268,000 are for the next six months? Those are the types of questions that we have because I will be honest with you, we spent over \$100,000 in two months. So, \$268,000 is not a lot.

**Mayor:** But that is where all these other guys come in. Jasso and Hollis so we can get more . . .

**Manny:** The income means because they are still trying to get grants for us because of the COVID-19 but what is Mayor, is that we have been keeping up with the DSO's. My office has been diligently working around the clock, and for you guys that do not know, and I learned this along the way, a DSO is a disaster summary outline. It is what Emergency Management personnel uses. It is like a spreadsheet that they use to account for all the damages that occur during a disaster, for example and real simple, the COVID started back in March, we kept track of all the expenses that have been done since March and since March I have been turning in DSOs to the state biweekly and I have already accounted that in the last two months we have already spent roughly \$140,000 in expenses that we did not budget. So, keep in mind that these \$140,000 are off budget so we did not count on using this money. So that is where the \$258,000 kick in. They want us to prove that we did spend the money. Believe me we have backups, we have DSOs, we have receipts we have everything where the money was spent. So, when it comes down to where they want us to do the budget we are going to be turning in the DSOs and we are going to be showing them and telling them look here is where we spent it.

Ok, we need our money. Like Hugo said we do not want it next year, we do not want it two years from now. The city manager, The City of Edcouch, the council needs the money now and that is what we are trying to fight for right now.

**Mayor:** Keep at it. Keep at it.

**Hugo:** Yeah, we are going to continue. We are big enough, I have been talking to La Villa, I have been talking to Donna. We are reaching out to some of the cities that may have a different view, a different opinion as to the monies. But I will tell you this that The City of Edcouch is leading the way in a lot of these items and we are toe to toe and side by side with Mayor Darling of Mcallen Pharr. I mean, we are there, and a lot of the thought process is the same. Our feeling is if that money was sent to the municipalities, then then it should go to the municipalities. We do not need anyone to hold our hand. We have been managing the city during this pandemic without anybody's help and so the way I'm mentioning things is because if it does come down to that, we are going to have to protect the city. And this is why I want you to understand the gravity of our situation. If you go back and remember our budget, we had a balanced budget with about \$46,000 left at the end of the year. Keep in mind when you look at them you are going to hear Manny talking about how we already spent \$140,000, that is what we are talking about. We are already in the negative. Off course we are managing on a monthly basis, but we are already in the negative as far as the budget goes.

**Mayor:** The other thing that happens with our budget is that we are assuming that we are going to get money based on certain things. Right? Based on the water and the sewer, taxes are a give in, but we are assuming that we are going to get the money. We never got the money straight up. We are assuming that between that year we are going to get X amount of money and that is how much we are going to spend. The problem right now is that we are not getting all the money that we thought we were going to get. So, we are getting hit twice. One for spending it and one for not getting the money we are supposed to be getting. So, along the way this budget can really go way out of line.

**Hugo:** I will tell you this Mayor, in addition to that , I will add the fact that we did lose in tax collection. We lost about 1.3%. 1.3% I think is the last time that we talked to them, right Manny?

**Manny:** Yes, with the tax office, yes.

**Hugo:** And so, it might not sound like a lot but it is.

**Manny:** Oh yeah, when it comes to the 1.3 is a lot.

**Hugo:** And so, in addition to that our sales taxes went down a little bit. So, I am not trying to paint a dangerous picture here because we are managing and we are going to continue to manage. The city is going to flourish, and we are going to be able to make it out of this. There are just certain areas that I just would like for the city to be more comfort zone when it comes to the finances. That was our goal when we started and unfortunately these things happen but all in all is yes \$268,000 at this point in time in our budget would really help.

**Mayor:** All right, any other questions? No

## **R. Adjournment**

At 6:53 pm, a motion to adjourn was made by Alderman: Flores, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Alderman: Chapa. All Voted Aye. Motion Carried.

Take Notice that this are the true and correct minutes taken of the Regular Meeting of the City of Edcouch held on Thursday, May 21, 2020.

Passed and Approved by the Board of Aldermen on this 21<sup>st</sup> day of MAY 2020.

ATTEST

\_\_\_\_\_  
Manuel Hernandez  
City of Edcouch