



REGULAR MEETING

A MEETING OF THE CITY OF EDCOUCH WILL BE HELD BY
TELECONFERENCE/VIDEOCONFERENCE VIA ZOOM : 1-800-000-0000 ACCESS CODE:
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ON THURSDAY, January 07, 2021
COMMENCING AT 6:00 P.M.

THIS CITY OF EDCOUCH MEETING WILL BE HELD USING TELE CONFERENCE
SYTEM/VIDEO CONFERENCING VIA ZOOM AND IS AUTHORIZED BY THE GOVERNOR
GREG ABBOT'S TEMPORARY SUSPENSION OF CERTAIN ASPECTS OF TEXAS OPEN
MEETINGS ACT WHICH ALLOWS FOR A GOVERNING BODY TO HOLD A "VIRTUAL"
MEETING SO AS TO AVOID GATHERING MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC AND/ OR BOARD
MEMBERS, AND STAFF IN A PHYSICAL SETTING THAT MIGHT CONSTITUTE A PUBLIC
HEALTH RISK.

PUBLIC COMMENTS WILL ONLY BE ACCEPTED IN WRITING NO LATER THAN THIRTY
(30) MINTUES IN ADVANCE OF THE MEETING BY THEM TO MANNY HERNANDEZ AT
mannyhernandez@cityofedcouch.org. In the body of the email please include date, your name, your
address, phone number, agenda item # if applicable of subject of discussion, and your comments.
DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION ON THE FOLLOWING MATTERS:

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 Dec 16, 2020
- G. Department Report
 - 1. Fire Dept Report
 - 2. Police Dept Report
 - 3. Engineers Report
 - 4. City Managers Report

- H. Discussion and Possible Action to Accept Judge Marroquin resignation Letter**

- I. Discussion and Possible Action to Approve Brush Truck For Fire Dept Grant Chief Victor Nieves**

- J. Discussion and Possible Action on Litigation against Fulcrum Consulting Services**

Executive Session: Texas Government Code Chapter 551.071: Consultation with City Attorney, the Council shall convene to Executive Session to discuss the following:

- 1. Discussion and Possible Action on Litigation against Fulcrum Consulting Services**

- K. Reconvene: The Council shall Reconvene and take Possible Action on items discussed In Closed/Meeting/Executive Session**

Chapter 551, Section 551.071: Consultation with City Attorney

- 1. Discussion and Possible Action on Litigation against Fulcrum Consulting Services**

- L. 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 4 th day of January 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 4th DAY OF January 2021.

Victor H. De La Cruz
City Manager

Regular Meeting
01/0472021
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**MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING
CITY OF EDCOUCH**

211 W. SOUTHERN AVE., EDCOUCH, TEXAS
THURSDAY, January 07, 2020
COMMENCING AT 6:00 P.M.

AGENDA

- M. **Call Meeting to Order** Meeting was called to Order by Mayor Gonzalez at 6:00 p.m.
- N. **Roll Call** Roll call was called by Mr. Manuel Hernandez Jr as follows:

	Present	Absent	City Staff:
Mayor: Virginio Gonzalez Jr.	<u> X </u>	<u> </u>	Victor H. De La Cruz, City Manager
Mayor Pro Tem: Flores	<u> X </u>	<u> </u>	Manuel Hernandez Jr., Fin./Grants
Alderman: Joel Segura	<u> X </u>	<u> </u>	Police Chief., Roel Guerra
Alderman: John Chapa	<u> X </u>	<u> </u>	Fire Chief., Victor Nieves
Alderman: Robert Gutierrez	<u> X </u>	<u> </u>	Engineer, Eddie Saenz
Alderman: Lorenzo Cabrera	<u> </u>	<u> X </u>	
City Attorney: Orlando Jimenez			

Mayor, we have a quorum.

- O. **Pledge of Allegiance** Pledge of Allegiance was led by Victor Nieves
- P. **Invocation** Invocation was led by Victor H De La Cruz
- Q. **Public Comments** No Public Comments
- R. **Discussion and Possible Action on approval of Minutes**

1. Regular Meeting Minutes of Dec 17, 2020

A motion to approve the Regular Meeting Minutes of Dec 17, 2020, was made by Alderman Flores _____, 2nd by Alderman _____ Segura _____. All Voted Aye/ Motion Carried.

S. Department Reports

1. Fire Dept Report

Chief Nieves: For the report of this month coming up. I am going to do the whole year then a little bit of this month. For last year we had a total of four hundred and five service calls for the year of twenty twenty. The highest record in the history of The City of Edcouch. We also pulled in the highest record amount of funds for The City of Edcouch from the Hidalgo County funds for county calls. We picked up one hundred and fourteen thousand six hundred and twenty dollars for the year twenty twenty just for the fire department from the county calls that we responded too. In December we had a total of

thirteen city calls, ten county calls, and we assisted La Villa with one call and Monte Alto with two calls. WE had training

as well. We did don and doffing fire streams and hoses. We have all our fire apparatuses in service with a few exceptions of Humvee and the five tone, which will get worked on as soon as we need them for another raining season. We do have a total of forty-six fire fighters on our roster, twenty of them being active, twenty inactive. We were able to add two firefighters last month to the roster. The bottom list is all the grants that have brought in from twenty twenty and some are already from twenty twenty-one. Starting off with a twenty-thousand-dollar grant from the fire service and one thousand nine hundred from the Safer grant, two thousand three hundred and fifty from the Safer grant, six thousand dollars from the Forest Service and a nine-thousand-dollar grant A&M Forest Service, five-thousand-dollar grand from the ESD and one thousand seven hundred and twenty dollars in donations. We are working on getting new gear. We are working with Hugo and with Manny. We are working on getting some new things with some of those grants. Some pumps and gears and some much-needed boots. Sop that we can go ahead and be able to buy the equipment that we do need. Any questions?

Mayor: Yes. Victor, on the one hundred and fourteen, that is money collected that came into you or that is owed.

Victor: That is money from January of twenty twenty to December of twenty twenty. It is money that the fire department brought into the city.

Mayor: So, we, have it? We got it. We got that money.

Victor: Yes, it came in. We are just pending the last month December and November so those are still pending but the rest of them we already received them. The last one was for September, so they are still coming in little by little, but it is delayed a little bit.

Hugo: He already spent it, Mayor.

Mayor: On the shirts.

Victor: That is a lot of shirts.

Mayor: Any questions for the fire department?

Hugo: Just a comment. The fire department has been very active and just to add to what's happened in the year twenty twenty fire department has an active and very busy Facebook page. They get a lot of traffic through the Facebook page. You can tell by the amount of volunteers that we have. We have great people volunteering not just from The City of Edcouch but from near by cities as well. So, it is a very active fire department, and we are looking forward to doing good things in twenty twenty-one. One minor injury and two major injuries. AS far as the traffic enforcement goes, we had a total of one hundred and forty-four citations for this month. I believe that is actually very low. I would like to work on those numbers as we progress. As far as index crimes we did not have nay burglaries. We did have two thefts, nine public intoxication cases, three disorderly conduct, two assaults, one aggravated assault, nine drug related, four evading, and four resisting. A total number of calls for this month is seventy-eight calls for the month of December. Concurrently we went out to the Sheriff's office this morning and The City of Edcouch is

requesting seven Expeditions and three trucks. It is a surplus of vehicles that they had, obviously they will not be using them anymore. So, I went ahead and typed up a letter and sent it to Eddie Guerra and we got a call back this morning and told us to go pick out vehicles. The ultimate goal

2. Police Dept Report

Chief Guerra: Good afternoon, guys, first of all I would like to start with the traffic summary we had a total of three accidents this month, one minor injury and two major injuries. S far as the traffic enforcement goes, we had a total of one hundred and forty-four citations for this month. I believe this to be very low. I would like to work on those numbers as we progress. As far as index crimes we did not have any burglaries, we did have two thefts, nine public intoxication cases, three disorderly conducts, two assaults, one aggravated assault, nine drug related, four evading, and four resisting to a total number of calls for this month was seventy-eight calls for the month of December. Currently we went out to the sheriff's office this morning. The City of Edcouch is requesting seven Expeditions and three trucks. It is a surplus of vehicles that they have that obviously they are not going to be using them anymore. So, I went ahead and typed up a letter and sent it to Eddie Guerra. We got a call back this morning telling us to go pick out vehicles. So, the ultimate goal I asked for seven. The ultimate goal is to see if we can get at least four in working conditions, four Expeditions and three trucks. It is in the process right now. They said they would get back to me tomorrow morning. The turnaround time is about four weeks before we can get them. The only thing is we would have to send someone to go out there and remove the decals on sight. WE can not bring the vehicles with the decals on them so that is the only thing that we would do. He said that would help out with the turnaround time if we were to send somebody out there, he said maybe we would be looking at about maybe three weeks to get them out here. We had one police officer resign this month. He ended up going to the sheriff's office in Willacy County. I have also applied for trainings through the sheriff's office for the officers. I am waiting for a response on that. We should know something next week. As far as for future goals, I would like to set up a neighborhood also watch a Crime Stoppers. I am also in the process for creating a new patch for the uniforms and possibly new decals for our units. If we do get those units, I would like for all the units to look the same so it is very inexpensive so those are goals for the future. That is about it for right now everything else is going pretty well in the department.

Mayor: I have two questions Chief, the first on the citations. Are those including the warnings, or you are not counting the warnings on these stops?

Chief Guerra: No those are just one hundred and forty-four citations actual citations not warnings. Now, I was speaking to the lieutenant earlier and also to Mr. De La Cruz, I had a meeting last week with Elsa. They have a program that they do. Obviously by law, we can not tell them to give citations, that is not what I am asking them to do, but if you are on shift for eight hours, I believe that you can do at least one traffic stop every hour. That is what they are doing over there, and I think that is a pretty good program. So, the way it works is you need to do at least one traffic contact per hour, which is a total of eight traffic contacts. So, I think that is something that we can look into, and I think that is something that will help us out with our courts.

Mayor: My other question, for communication I know you have 911 but which are the other numbers that connect to the police department? Is it the 2140 or?

Chief Guerra: I did see on Facebook that somebody had made a comment that they were trying to reach out to the police department but to set the record straight sir they were calling the wrong number. They were calling city hall and not the actual police department.

Mayor: Yeah, and that is my point maybe you guys can start reaching out through Facebook

or your webpage highlighting the number for the police department.

Hugo: Mayor, I know that in the past, and I need to check with the phone system, We use to transfer the calls to PD before we left. So, I can see if that is still possible. I know we use to do it with the old system. I am sure we can do it with this system we just need to look into it. Only because some of these calls deal with water emergencies and so I think it is important for us to be able to plus I think we will eliminate that problem by simply transferring the calls over to PD after five o'clock.

Mayor: Yes, so talk to Forge Technology.

Chief Nieves: If it is possible for ours to setup like that. Our it rings three times and if we don't transfer it gets transferred to PD automatically.

3. Engineer Report

Eddie Saenz: This is Eddie Saenz, CSJ Group city engineer. Mayor members of the commission happy new year. I am here to do a couple of the reports. The first one I am going to start off with is the urban county streets for this upcoming year. These are basically street overlays at CV Mendez, which is on 1015 west. Then we also have the streets in Los Laureles, which is Hinojosa and El Jasmin and Kiki De La Garza. The contracts were executed last week between me and Urban County so now we are in the design phase, and we are looking at getting the design done this month and hopefully mid to late February will go out for bids. So, we can get this program year committed and taken care of for the city.

Mayor: What happened to Crenshaw and McDaniel? The last two pieces for those streets?

Manny: They are still working on environmental. They are taking a little longer than usual. They are on that one week on one week of schedule, so it is not moving as fast. I do need to check with Erick Trevino and kind of push him a little so he can get that going. Its been taking a while already. It should not be taking this long.

Eddie Saenz: Right, and to expand that I did speak to PR, and I know that they are having to deal with HUD and getting the environmental push so their hands are tied right now until we get some response from HUD.

Mayor: But they are on the list?

Eddie Saenz: Yes, they are on the list for funding from Urban County, but it goes through the environmental process. And just an update there really isn't one on the GLO application. We probably will not have an update until March. Speaking to Frank from Rutledge and Associates that is when I think the rankings will come out. That is when they feel the rankings will come out. So, we are staying on top of it but hopefully we will be able to get a positive answer sometime in March. And that GLO application covered a new wastewater treatment plant plus some improvements to the lift station.

Mayor: And what is the possibility on that one?

Eddie Saenz: According to Frank, he said it was a good application. So, we just need to stay on top of it. I don't know maybe we can get Hollis to make a call to see how we are doing because it is being taken care of by Austin right now at the lab commissioners office. And I

believe they might have someone from the Water Development Board also helping them rank. WE should ask for some information from Hollis on this maybe at the next meeting.

Mayor: Can you follow up Manny with Frank and see what comes up.

Manny: I will follow up tomorrow.

Eddie Saenz: The third one is the community center and the pool project. We are between ninety-to-ninety five percent complete on both of them. We do have a meeting tomorrow to get the actual percentage complete on them two. I have been in communication with Precinct 1 this week. We have sent them the final plan for the parking lot construction and all they have asked for is to help them with the construction staking and the elevation so we are hoping to hear from them on when they can get started and we can have a mini person with them within the next week or so then we can start getting that project going. It has been cleared out so the precinct should have problems going out there and mobilizing and getting started. So, we hopefully should be seeing construction within the next week or two.

Mayor: And that is south of the building, correct?

Eddie Saenz: Yes, correct.

Hugo: Eddie, I got a phone call earlier today, our Judge Jorge Pena also works at Precinct 1, and he was asking about an ADA change on the plans.

Eddie Saenz: Yes, today they were sent. The one that they had was about three months ago. The one that we showed them when we met outside this week, we actually revised the plan to include the ADA parking which is our striping anyway. It is something that they are not going to do. The city is going to do the striping, but the ramps are there in the plans as well. This e are the one that were sent to I believe Gilbert Gonzalez who works with Casarez. But they are included already.

Hugo: Ok thank you.

Eddie Saenz: And then so that will get going the other one is we need to know if we had received the Parks & Wildlife money. I know that the city is now using that money to do

some additional work there at the pool and to do some painting and then we would incorporate the canopy as well. So, I think that is money that we are already utilizing so that was great that we were able to get that from the last time we reported.

Manny: Can we do a report on that project over there on Nixon and by the school. I know we had talked about what you are working on today.

Eddie Saenz: Oh yes, that was the next one. We finally got some cross sections on ditch that is in between or right there by the school or the Bell property. Now that we hopefully have gotten the Bell property on our hands. We are going to know how much volume we are going to need to move hopefully to the school district property and then start having a communication with them and this is how much we would need from the school district to be able to have a detention pond there and be able to fill up that ditch so we can use it the city purposes. So hopefully we receive that last week from the surveyor obviously the holidays kind of slow people down, but we are working on getting that schematic with the new layout of the pond within the walking trail and then connecting it back to the east west irrigation ditch so that we can fill out the north side there along the school property. So that is what I have Mayor and commissioners.

4. City Managers Report:

Hugo: This is our first meeting of twenty twenty-one and I wanted to start off the city manager's report with some goals and some wishes that we have for this year. Obviously, we talked about twenty twenty and the impact that it had on all of us. It was a learning experience and I know Manny. We learned a lot during this year, pretty much the whole year

of twenty twenty. I think it is time for us to look at things from a different perspective now, so we want to take this opportunity to share with you some of the goals that we have and some of the wishes that we have for The City of Edcouch. I was to start off with the finance department and I want to give you a run down of what we are looking at. This had never been done and considering that we actually went through a pandemic, and I am looking at our General Fund for the beginning of the year and it is our first meeting we are looking at a General Fund of sixty-six thousand with seven hundred and forty-one cents. That had never been done. Last January we did not have this amount and so we are off to a good start. And that is like I said considering we had a lot of issues during this year and that is our General Fund on the finance. The water fund is kind of low. Last year it was higher, but we did not start in the negative. We did not start at zero. We are starting and this will go up to about one hundred and twenty by February. We are looking at nineteen thousand six hundred and eighty-nine to start off the year. We are going to start collecting water here pretty soon so that account will go up off course. The next one is the I&S fund. This fund right here never had any money in it. The I&S fund is the interest and sinking fund which is used to pay our debt services. As you all know our debt services you all know our debt service and the information that I am sharing with you right now I am hoping to prepare something and do a Facebook live and do presentation to the community as well because this is very important for the community to know as well also. Because the I&S fund comes from the payment of taxes and so the I&S fund never had any money in it and this year we are starting out the year with sixteen thousand two hundred and eighty-two dollars in the I&S fund. Also, to let you know we already paid three of the bond payments that we have for the year. We paid them January 1st and they were pretty big payments. Our next payments are due some time in June and July so what we are doing is we are preparing this I&S fund. We want to have the I&S fund with the

monies to pay the bonds and that way we do not make an impact on our General Fund account. Our court account, and I wanted to bring this up, this is one of those accounts that is very difficult to budget. We can't really use this as a budget as chief was mentioning right now. We can't tell the officers to give tickets so that we can raise the account, but it is concerning to me because this is an account that should have a lot more funding or collections in it. Right now, we are starting off the year with about four thousand five hundred and fifty-six dollars. If I run an average for the whole year in collections in the court, we are looking at about seventy to seventy-five thousand which is not a lot of change from the time that I took over and so one of my goals this year is to actually up that account and I will talk a little bit more about that when I get to the court. Also, on a wish list I'm looking at a rainy day fund and I know this is something that is really easily said you know a "Rainy Day Fund" but at the same time it is one of the most difficult things to do in an entity because things happen. We had a pandemic and in addition to the pandemic we had a hurricane and so these disasters really hurt the city. We are talking to Smiley our insurance person and we are looking into that because we had the hurricane, and we had a lot of damages here in the city hall and we were not able to collect anything. And so, all these

things hurt us financially and that is why I am amazed that we are able to start our year off with a positive amount. But that rainy day fund in addition to the court would be two of the items I am wishing for, and I am setting myself the goal of increasing those accounts a lot more so that we can help the city breathe a lot easier and be able to help out more. If you recall during the Hanna disaster our city was probably one of the busiest cities. We were out there for our community and showed that we cared. Everyday there was a different company coming out and serving hot meals. You did not see that in the surrounding areas or not even in the big cities and so I think commending you all. You all because I know mayor, I know Rene, Joel, Rob all of you, Chapa, Commissioner Chapa you all went out there far and

beyond you called other officers. Other elected officials, companies, and I know mayor you contacted Congressman Gonzalez. I know Mr. Flores contacted some people over in McAllen. We got food sent out and it was an effort of everybody that is here in The City of Edcouch, and I want to say that we were probably the busiest city in Hidalgo County. So, we got to say it out loud and we have talk about this because it is important to understand how important we are in a part of this community.

Mayor: I don't know if later on you can tally up how much the hurricane cost us, the floods, and covid. How much have you spent in total? What expense did the city go through? That way you can present that. Like look it has been a challenge having to spend for all these disasters that happened in the past two years.

Hugo: Yes, I will do that mayor and adding when covid started and we here about this a lot of forecasting mayor and you and I and PD were all working together along with Victor from the fire department we created a system program for our community before anyone even told us too. A good example of that is from the time that the county came out and entered all these lock downs and all of that we had already established a system for the people with their water bills. And so all of these monies mayor, you got to understand, that all of these monies that we wrote off were not collected because we created that

program and so hoping that the government would pass a bill that was able to help our entities and that did not happen. So, I will gather up all that and I will get that to you. On the next screen I got the court. Something about the judges. We have I think 2 excellent judges right now. We have an item on the agenda, we won't be having one of our judges that was here for a while, Judge Marroquin, but we have Judge Ramos, and we have Judge Pena. Both of them have displayed compassion at the same time they are firm. We are starting to see some important collections for the court. I had Tessa print out the month of December. I wanted to bring up the month of December because this month, total collections should have been, somewhere along 15,000 to 24,000 and in actuality they were somewhere near around 6,000. So, I have about 4 pages of people who are dismissals or are not coming to court. And so all of those monies or potential monies are monies we are losing. So, we need to enforce that program to require our officers to make at least 8 traffic contacts. Pretty much what that does is to get those guys to stop working.

Chief Guerra: Right so I think that would be something good for the guys to go ahead and start doing. I have already spoken to some of them, some of them are on board with it. I had a meeting with the Elsa chief last week, they are doing some really good things over there. McGinness did they say they are doing anywhere from 580 to 600 traffic citations a month. I understand we are not as big as Elsa, but I would consider at least half. We should be at least in the 300s. To be very honest.

Mayor: And that was my concern the size and traffic difference is a little big, we don't have the eateries and the drive thus. I mean I am all in for our officers to be more active. But I am just a little hesitant on the number itself.

Chief: Right, and I had also spoken to Hugo Mayor about being a little more vigilant within the community, it's not all about making more traffic stops or issuing out citations but driving into the community and making themselves more vigilant. You can get traffic stops inside the subdivisions as well.

Hugo: One of the things Mayor is that this is not a budgeted item and that is why I put it as one of my bullet points. But there is expenses coming out of the court. I mean we are paying the prosecutor fees. We are paying judges. We have a clerk in that department. There is

expenses so vigilance, is I think the magic word for this court. Not bring in 300,000 a year but anything over 100,000 would be good. I will tell you that we are going to be looking into serving warrants. A lot of tickets fall through the cracks, and we need to look into taking care of this.

Mayor: When is your amnesty day or round up day?

Hugo:

We are loo

Hugo: Water collections. This is in comparison to prior years. This is one of the departments that we started working on when we got here as soon as the new city commission brought me in. We started looking at water collections. Water collections have been growing steadily. And we are in a really good position right now. We are collecting more than they were collecting before us. We are at about 110,000 a month.

And that is considering technology issues and the reason, I talk about technology issues. And I am going to combine both bullet points there which is technology and water meters. The communication system that communicates with the water meters is on a stall. We are not using the technology. We are actually going out there manually reading. We had some issues with the antenna. So, they kind of forced us to upgrade with them and that cost was something that I did not think was feasible to the city. So, I haven't paid it and I am not going to pay it. Because I think it is something that should be giving to us because we already have the system. So, in the future I will ask you all to go out for RFQ s to bring in a new company. Or we will just continue doing this manually. Its not hurting us we are still doing the job but I wish we had the technology so we could share it with the community. Because at the end digital water meters is the way to go. Look at the courts, we already going digital. We started the test mode it works. The officers can write the tickets in half the time. So, technology does work it's just that in this certain situation the way it was brought in, I don't think that they did it with the best intentions fir the community. I know that in you all mind the community is always in your minds. SO, I would rather for right now just continue doing manual reads and then hopefully move forward and as part of our goal is to actually be able to digitize everything and bring that technology and be able to collect and offer more services to our community. So, if you have any questions on water collections. Ok, so on city infrastructure, I am not going to go to much into the Urban County projects, but I know that all county projects that we are looking at, I know Eddie discussed some of them. GLO is something that we are looking at specifically with the water sewer, with the sewer system, and hopefully we did get some encouraging letters from GLO, and we forwarded that to CSJ and to Hollis Rutledge so they can send the information requested. So that is looking pretty good. Phase two on the

pool a very important part of what we are looking at and I think that was a blessing for us. We worked diligently to try and save this. If you recall this was the initial Parks & Wildlife project was a project that was with different entities to include Precinct 1 and the school district. For whatever reasons that project fell through but some of those monies were already spent and unfortunately those monies we paid for them. So, we ended up losing that and out of nowhere we got a phone call from Parks & Wildlife lady by the name of Susan and we were able to revive that project. So, we came up with the idea of using our current pool project as the fifty percent. They voted and agreed and I'm happy to say we are going to start phase two on the pool within a few weeks. The community center off course like Eddie mentioned is ninety ninety-five percent complete. Some of the goals wish list that I have would be a masterplan for the city. A masterplan is very important because we could actually design a plan. A ten-year plan or a five-year plan and this, to a certain degree, enforces any

future members of the commission or city management or whoever to try and to follow in that masterplan and we can save the city in actuality when it comes to infrastructure. I think a lot of these projects when we look at it a two-year term. You normally have to test yourself. These projects normally take two years and we have been able to do this in one. So, a masterplan would really help. Drainage is always on my mind, and I think it is in all of our minds. I think that that would be something that we need to work on this year and off course public relations with local entities. This is one that we have not been able to do in the two years that I have been here but in know that some of you all are working and trying to establish public relations with the school and with other cities. I think that Chief Guerra did

something very important which was reach out to The City of Elsa. I think if we can continue on in that trend, we are going to be able to do things with other entities and this is going to help the city. So, it is looking really good, and it is something that is on my wish list. Any questions on city infrastructure and projects? Public works and water. Public works has been a pretty steady department, but it has proven to be a very difficult department to work with, especially when it comes to personnel. But when it comes to both public works and water departments, I think that one of the things that we are lacking in is education. And I am not talking about people that did not go to high school or whatever. I am talking about us educating. We are bringing people in, and we are just kind of throwing them out there and we are not educating. There is certification programs that we can have. This year we had a lot of problems with maintenance on vehicles and all of that was due to the fact that these guys do not know how to use the equipment. The backhoe, someone gets on there and they really don't know how to use it and they burn the engine or something. And so, I think education will be something very important. And so, I want to be more efficient when it comes to that department. We actually started working in 2020 on the motor pool, well I call it a motor pool, but it is the area where we have our vehicles, we already have a person that is going to be in charge of the equipment. Maintaining it, cleaning it, and having it ready for Public Works to come out there and use it. I don't have and I wanted to get a cost of expenses. I will get that to you just so you can see and just to give you an example last month we had someone come out and work on the backhoe and we spent close to twelve thousand dollars on the backhoe for it to be burned out within one week. So that was twelve thousand dollars that was for nothing. And so, I think it is very important and that we really consider education when it comes to Public Works. Off course I want to concentrate on 107 and 1015. Those two areas we need to have those places spotless, and we need to make the effort to get out there and sweep those places out. One of my goals for this year is maybe get a sweeper Mayor, commission. Try to get the machinery so we can do that streets and off course alleys. So, if there are any questions on Public Works and Water or comments. Ok well just to

conclude public relations I think it is very important for the city to get out there and we have been very active on Facebook during the pandemic we were always transparent with the community and keeping people informed. I think it is important to have that type of communication with our community. It creates integrity. It creates transparency and with that transparency that we are offering the community they start trusting us. That is the positive image that we are giving to the community. Now one thing that does bother me, and I have to bring it out, I have to say it and unfortunately not everyone is here and I'm recording this, and I hope that this gets to everyone, but I think that we have to maintain that integrity. We all have a responsibility. When we hear people out there talking about the city manager or assistant city manager taking money or getting duds or doing this, it bothers me. And I know it bothers some of you and I think that we have to attack this. We cant let people just, and I understand people have opinions and they can have an opinion about what I am doing as a city manager but when they start talking about illegal activities and all of these things, I really want to say that that crosses the line as far as when we talk about. And I don't know if OJ

can shed some light on this but it crosses the line from talking of what I do as city manager or how Manny works as assistant city manager but when they talk about it it crosses that line as it being, and I cant find the word council. But I really feel that we should address this with cease-and-desist letters or something because we have to protect the city from everything and to maintain that integrity. I don't know if I'm on the right track here OJ.

OJ: Yes, absolutely there are quite of bit of courses of action on these outlandish accusations. I mean there defamation of character, there liable, there's slander even though they are personal attacks perhaps on an individual basis, but because both of you are officers of the city then we definitely can and should get involved on behalf of the city because it does bring and hold a negative reputation on the city as a whole, so that is a very good point and I know we spoke about that and maybe we can have another round table discussion with the board specifically regarding this matter so we know what kind of attack we can do. But yeah, absolutely there are things I can do on behalf of the city to protect the officers the employees and the city council from these kinds of ridiculous, outlandish accusations that have absolutely no merits in law or in fact. **Hugo:** And that is my presentation Mayor, if you all have any comments, we will take them at this time. **Mayor:** I just want to thank you guys for the good work, all the commissioners, office staff, city administration, you can feel the difference when we set our goals and we put our minds to work you can see it. We are definitely on the right track. Good Job.

T. Discussion and Possible Action to Accept Judge Marroquin resignation Letter

Hugo: Mayor I got a letter from Judge Marroquin basically thanking you and thanking the commission, we all know that Judge Marroquin is moving on to bigger, better things as one of our county court judges. So, at this time I request that we approve this item.

A motion to approve and Accept Judge Marroquin resignation Letter was made by Alderman Segura, 2nd by Alderman Gutierrez. All voted Aye/Motion Carried.

U. Discussion and Possible Action to approve Brush Truck for Fire Dept Grant Chief Victor Nieves

Chief Nieves: Can everybody see it? Ok so we were able to secure a 20,000 grant for the Forestry Service to put a pump and a pan on a vehicle, so this with this money we do not pay the money back, our original plan was a 5 ton, which is the one you see on the screen. We were

trying to get a 5 ton to get the project going. Unfortunately, the 5 ton we do have requires to much work to be approved by the Forestry as a unit under the State of Texas. I was able to locate several other 5 tons that do meet the requirement and are a lot newer and in better condition. So, the one you are seeing on board is \$16,000 for this individual truck but I was able to locate a lot cheaper truck. The second one that you see on the screen was actually \$7,500 at the surplus for cities and municipalities. So was able to secure this truck. They are selling it to the City of Edcouch for only \$3,000 compared to the \$16,000 or the \$7,500. Si it is the cheapest in the market that we are going to find to do this project with the Forestry Service. So, if we do get it is going to come with new tires, four new batteries, full service for this truck if we do get it. The complete project is going to cost us \$41,000 but \$20,000 of that is a grant. That the grant is going to pay and off course 3,000 of that is the truck itself that we are going to be buying. So, I know a lot of questions like do we need a truck like this? What is the purpose of this truck? SO yes, this truck is much needed. In some areas of the city and county we are not able to make it through because our trucks are to small. So, this truck is designed to go over larger trees, over larger limbs. It's a 6x6 but it does not get stuck as often as our smaller trucks do being only 4x4. It does have an automatic ignition system so it can automatically inflate and deflate its tires and be able to go through mud, sand, water without any problems. This truck is also going to be designed as a water rescue. A high water rescue. SO, the bed of the truck is not only going to have a tank, but it is going to have ladders on all three sides to be able to rescue people from high waters. I mean we know that we have high waters in the city and in county areas so this truck will be beneficial. This truck will not only benefit The City of Edcouch but also the surrounding cities and areas. We have gone all the way to Weslaco to Monte Alto to help in high water rescues. So, as we know the more calls we do, the more money that comes in from county that will go into the city. So, for every call that we do it brings in money. Every call that we assist in the city brings in money to be able to support the city and keep the city going. For the complete project is \$41,000 and the truck is going to come ready to roll. Ready to attack fire including lights, sirens, tires, batteries, paint job, decals, hoses, nozzles. Basically, as soon as they drop it off, we can dispatch it to a call immediately after we fill it up with water. So, it is the cheapest. I also spoke to The City of Elsa with the fore chief and asked him how much their project cost? Their project cost over about 50 to 60 thousand dollars and our we are getting it for a lot cheaper than they were because we were able to locate the truck for cheaper. They spent the \$7,500 on the truck and we are only going to spend the 3,000. And there is the grant we got from the Forestry Service and then the invoice as well. Do I have any questions?

Mayor: So, which is the truck

Fire Chief Nieves: It is this one and it is not going to have that , it is going to have a 1,000-gallon tank, a thirty-gallon tank foam of to be able to fight fires and off course it is going to be designed to do high water rescues in mind too so it is going to have the ladders, hoses, everything. It is going to come fully equipped to fight fires and for high water rescues. So, it will be a multi-purpose truck.

Mayor: So that is the truck itself that they are selling you?

Fire Chief Nieves: That is the actual truck itself, correct.

Mayor: And has anybody inspected it or I don't know that it has a good engine, good foam.

Fire Chief Nieves: I spoke to the actual person selling it and he is from an actual fire department, so the truck is running, and it is in service. The only thing they are going to do for

us is give us better tires and new batteries. So, it is in service and has everything. I can actually go ,because it is here in Texas so I can take a trip, to make sure it is running. It was running and everything its just that they did not use it for the project that they wanted to. So, it was like hey I have this do you want it and it was a lot cheaper it'll work for you. So, it was a unit that had service. The reason they did not use it was because they put a semi-tanker on it, and it was to big for this truck, so they went and got a bigger truck.

Hugo: Ok so how much, and I know we have a grant but how much actual money is the city going to have to put in on this project?

Fire Chief Nieves: The city is going to put up \$20,000 out of pocket for this grant. So, I did speak to the finance department to make sure I had everything covered and he said we will be able to cover this expense and I also spoke with the company, and they are willing to work with us to where we don't have to do the whole 41,000. Since the grant will take approximately three months to build, we can do it in different payments so that the city will be able to collect the money, save it, and then make a payment.

Hugo: Can I make a suggestion, Mayor? If we could present or if we could maybe table this item and bring it and present it to the EMS Board because I could see this project or this truck helping other areas in the county and so if that is the case maybe, they can help us with half of it. So, I make a recommendation right now to table the item and bring it back after we present to the EMS Board because this is going to benefit not only The City of Edcouch, but it will benefit the surrounding areas county.

Mayor: Yes, I'm up for the table but I just have a concern with the truck itself. I just want to be careful with that and not to be blinded in buying an inexpensive truck for a project that is going to cost \$40,000 because that is all extra stuff that we are going to add and what if the truck does not work. That is my concern. I want to ask certified people that it works for emergency purposes.

Fire Chief Nieves: The truck will be inspected by the Forestry Service of The State of Texas once we get the truck and they certify it the truck can actually be on the road.

Mayor: Ok, perfect.

A motion to table Brush Truck for Fire Dept Grant Chief Victor Nieves was made by Alderman _Chapa_____, 2nd by Alderman ____Cabrerria_____. All voted Aye/ Motion Carried.

**Executive Session
TABLED**

V. Discussion and Possible Action on Fulcrum Engineering

A motion to table on possible action Tabled on Fulcrum Engineering was made by Alderman __Flores _____, 2nd by Alderman _____ Gutierrez_____. All voted

W. Reconvene

X. Adjournment

At 7:11_ pm, a motion to adjourn was made by Alderman: Segura, 2nd by Alderman: Flores. 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, January 07, 2020.

Passed and Approved by the Board of Aldermen on this 07 th day of January 2020.

ATTEST

Manuel Hernandez
City of Edcouch