



## REGULAR MEETING

TAKE NOTICE THAT A REGULAR MEETING  
OF THE CITY OF EDCOUCH WILL BE HELD  
AT 211 W. SOUTHERN AVE., EDCOUCH, TEXAS, ON  
THURSDAY, APRIL 15, 2021  
COMMENCING AT 6:00 P.M.

### AGENDA

- A. Call Meeting to Order
- B. Roll Call  
Pledge of Allegiance
- C. Invocation
- D. Public Comments
- E. Consent Agenda
  - 1. Police Department
  - 2. Fire Department
  - 3. City Managers Report
- F. Discussion and Possible Action on Approval of Minutes for Special Meeting of March 25, 2021.
- G. Discussion and Possible Action to approve fees for towing and auto recovery from Almaraz Towing and Recovery pursuant to State Law for year 2021
- H. Discussion and Possible Action to approve Resolution 2021-15 Towing Fees for Almaraz Towing and Recovery
- I. Discussion and Possible Action to approve Resolution 2021-16 Creating an Interlocal with the City of Weslaco for a RMS project
- J. Discussion and update on upcoming EDC Projects
- K. Discussion and Possible Action for paid per call Program (FD)
- L. Discussion and Possible Action to approve new brush truck
- M. Discussion and Possible Action on complaint on an officer citation
  - 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 complaint on an officer citation
- N. 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 complaint on an officer citation**

**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 Meetings of the Board of Aldermen of the City of Edcouch was posted on the main entrance to Edcouch City Hall on the 12<sup>th</sup> day of April 2021 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 12<sup>th</sup> DAY OF APRIL 2021.**



\_\_\_\_\_  
La Cruz  
Mayor

Reg. Mtg. Minutes  
04/15/21 6:00 pm

**MINUTES**  
**REGULAR MEETING**  
**CITY OF EDCOUCH**  
**211 W. SOUTHERN AVE., EDCOUCH, TEXAS**  
**THURSDAY, APRIL 15, 2021**  
**COMMENCING AT 6:00 P.M.**

**AGENDA**

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

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

Mayor, we have a quorum.

- Q. **Pledge of Allegiance**            Pledge of Allegiance was led by: Mayor Virgil Gonzalez
- R. **Invocation**                        Invocation was led by: Victor H De La Cruz
- S. **Public Comments**                No Public Comments

**T. Discussion and Possible Action on approval of Minutes**

**1. Special Meeting Minutes of March 25, 2021**

A motion to approve the Special Meeting Minutes of March 25, 2021 was made by Alderman Flores , 2<sup>nd</sup> by Alderman Segura . All Voted Aye/ Motion Carried.

**U. Consent Agenda**

**1. Police Dept**

**Chief Guerra:** Mayor for the month we had a total of three accidents. No fatal injuries. No property damage. As far as for traffic enforcement citations were low this month. We had a number of eighty-eight citations for the month of March. Index crimes as far as burglaries we had one burglary, one theft, no robberies, no rapes, one criminal mischief, no run aways. For arrests for the month of March we had ten public intoxications, zero aggravated assaults, and eleven drug related. Assistance to the fire department we had zero. Police assistance to La Villa we had two incidents. Police assistance to Elsa we had four incidents. Number of total calls in the month were eighty-five. And that is it in the month of March on the police side.

**Mayor:** Any more questions for chief regarding the police department? Thank you Chief, I know that Mr. De La Cruz and I spoke earlier about a couple on initiatives we want to start with the police department and later on we will brief you with more detail. More non-threatening visits to the community making sure that they know who the chief is, the police officers, that you guys are a resource to them and that you are here, like you badge says, to serve and protect. We will meet with you for clarification. Thank you sir.

**2. Fire Dept**

**Hugo:** Mayor, fire department will be presenting a couple of items which are part of the fire department report. So if we can go to the next item. I will not be presenting anything today either.

### **3. City Managers Report**

#### **V. Discussion and Possible Action to to approve towing fees for towing and auto recovery from Almaraz Towing and Recovery pursuant to State Law for year 2021**

**Mr De La Cruz:** Mayor, the pricing is on your packets and I recommend that we approve the amounts given to us by Almaraz Towing.

**Commissioner Flores:** The price that is on there is a fixed price, Hugo?

**Mr De La Cruz:** I have three hundred for sports cars and motorcycles and two fifty for the rest.

**Commissioner Flores:** But is doesn't change, it is the same every year?

**Mr De La Cruz:** Yes

**A motion to approve and Accept towing fees for towing and auto recovery from Almaraz Towing and Recovery pursuant to State Law for year 2021 was made by Alderman Flores \_\_\_\_\_, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Alderman Chapa \_\_\_\_\_. All voted Aye/Motion Carried.**

#### **W. Discussion and Possible Action to approve Resolution 2021-15 Towing Fees for Almaraz Towing and Recovery**

**Mr De la Cruz:** I recommend that we approve Resolution 2021-15 just add that this item for Almaraz Towing on the Resolution that one of the things that is very important is that we keep track of all the vehicles that are being picked up and towed. And that we keep a log of that. I know that the officers are place in a log. I would only recommend to chief that we try to find a way to put that in a digital format. That way if it is written maybe it can be transferred over to digital format. Other than that everything else would fall in place.

**Mayor:** Also if approved, if you can give us an update at least by numbers every month that you report it. How many vehicles were towed for the month if approved.

**Mr De La Cruz:** I also recommended, so the commission knows, I also recommended a policy to be established once that is reviewed by myself and council. I would like to add that as part of the same policy that the police officers have and to have the guidelines as to which cars should be picked up and in addition to that maybe we can put in the protocol. Because there are times that vehicles are being picked up and maybe at the discretion of the officer, should be a little bit more lenient. I will give you an example, lets say someone is driving and shouldn't be driving, maybe the person that is the passenger could take the vehicle, at the discretion of the officer. For someone to just pick up a vehicle and leave a person on the road who will need to get a ride. There are certain situations and I think that that should be identified as for protocol.

**Mayor:** Are we going to include supervisory or administrative, and I would not say permission, but like a green light to tow?

**Mr De La Cruz:** Yes

**A motion to approve and Resolution 2021-15 Towing Fees for Almaraz Towing and Recovery was made by Alderman Segura, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Alderman Flores. All voted Aye/Motion Carried.**

**X. Discussion and Possible Action to approve Resolution 2021-16 Creating and Interlocal with the City of Weslaco for a RMS project**

**Mr De La Cruz:** Mayor, RMS meaning Regional Management System. This is a system that was brought up maybe about a year ago. This actually to move dispatch and run dispatch services from Weslaco. Some of the questions back then were: Are the employees going to be part of Edcouch? And the answer is yes. If you have any questions. I am recommending approval of this resolution but if you have any questions. Chief actually went out and met with the police chief from Weslaco.

**Mayor:** Chief, what do you think?

**Chief Guerra:** Honestly Mayor, I think it is a good idea. I went out there on Tuesday morning. I met with the chief and basically they have their own, and it is not within the police department themselves, it is another building that they have of to another end. So lets just say in the sense of having a storm or something like that and all the power is out like we were when we had that freeze. Dispatch will still be up and running. That is run by three huge generators that they are always running so that they're always having power. Just so you can have an idea, it kind of sits in a holding portion shape like this. The first three dispatchers on that side are from Weslaco PD and then you have the first officer to the front that is Progresso, and the Mercedes, then you have three slots available on the right side where OJ is sitting now and that would be for us if we are willing to go ahead and be a part of it. Now, for the dispatchers and also for the dispatchers for fire so in case 911 calls. That was a big concern as well because 911 system, we obviously don't get 911 here. So it goes to Elsa then we have to get dispatch from Elsa, so we would not have to be dealing with that anymore. So they would get the 911 call. They would answer it over there and then we would be dispatched that way. Also in the sense if our dispatcher is getting flooded with calls, our call would be bouncing around and somebody will pick up the call. Doesn't matter is he works for Progresso, Weslaco whatever the case may be Edcouch Police will definitely help and we will make sure that the call is getting answered. So that is going to be taken care of. There is also a supervisor sitting in the middle of all the dispatchers making sure that all the calls are being taken care of and is also making sure that the guys are doing what they are suppose to be doing. They also inhouse all the citations all the warrants so they can confirm warrants right then and there. So this was on a grant that they are getting. I think right now annually for us is maybe about eight thousand dollars a year that we pay for a system like that. So it would be fourteen thousand dollars a year but we would not have to pay that on our own. WE would be getting help from La Villa and we would split it half and half. So right of the bat we will be saving six hundred dollars and we are going to have state of the art equipment. So with that being said they will go ahead and give us laptops for the units, we will get new radios, and we can run driver's license and license plates from our vehicle. We wont really have to concentrate on dispatch unless we really need to talk to somebody. So we can do everything from our unit and I think it is a good deal.

**Mayor:** So obviously you are the supervisor for dispatch. Will you be losing any control by them being on site?

**Chief Guerra:** No, it's like Chief Rivera said. They will be housed over there but we have full control of our own guys over there in the sense that if they start acting up then off course we would tell him just go ahead and document and we will go ahead and take care of it.

**Mayor:** For evaluation purposes and everything else you are still in charge.

**Commissioner Flores:** Now reverse this, lets just say we are not happy with the services or the way its working out can we bring it back? How would that work?

**Chief Guerra:** I honestly did not get that information, but I do know that or the only thing that I do know is that he said that everybody that is there right now has really liked it and they are pretty happy with it. So right now everybody that is over there, and I know the question that you asked but I don't think I have that answer but Progresso, Mercedes, and Weslaco they are together so since we dispatch La Villa that is why we split it half and half for them and then we would be over there with them to. So that is the ultimate goal over there. All they would need to do is run the fiber cable wire from their office to ours and he said that that would be included in the grant and like he told me if you really wanted you can move in your guys today. Set you all up and ready to go so you v=can start working out of our office.

**Mayor:** If approved I don't want to delay but as long as we get legal involved and look at the opt out. Do we have to pay for the equipment that we use or anything if we decide to

**Commissioner Flores:** Or the reverse, just in case we are not happy

Mayor: What would happen, yeah.

Mr De La Cruz: Mayor, this actually came up off of the year mark that we met with Vicente Gonzalez and basically what Chief Rivera was telling me is that the year mark when you talk about region, which in this case its what it is. They want to present it as a regional project and just like they got the first grant, that they actually didn't need us, they got the grant. Just like they said back then. We are getting radios, we are getting NCIC, that's already a big plus.

**Chief Guerra:** So the RMS system Mayor, that would be our own. That would e Edcouch's own system. We will have access to hear Weslaco, Progresso, Mercedes we will have access to hear everybody else but we would have our own system.

**Mayor:** So also, in a sense they hear us in case you need additional support.

**Chief Guerra:** We also get to hear out interlocal, or not interlocal we can hear out DPS, Sheriff's office to make sure in case there is a pursuit coming into our city or anything like that we will be aware.

**Mayor:** I know that on my part, this has been a major issue for us. The connect ability and communication for 911 including fire. So hopefully an upgrade like this will satisfy the need for the city and now that we are going to be more high tech and especially if we are going to be tapping in to a year mark from the fed. I mean that is what we have been looking for.

Mr De La Cruz: Right off the bat since you mentioned, and I know we talked about 911 in Austin, we are cutting down about six minutes of response time. At a time we had said 911 calls were taking anywhere from six to ten minutes. Now 911 calls are going to go direct to Weslaco to tone out either fire or EMS.

**Commissioner Flores:** Are the 911 addresses already complete in the city? I know we were having issues with them.

**Mr De La Cruz:** They are not.

**Commissioner Flores:** It is not going to be an issue?

**Chief Guerra:** So lets say, and I know this still doesn't answer your question, but lets say for example, we did not want to go with that Mayor, he also gave me this option to where we can our dispatchers over there, so our annual calls would be forty seven hundred dollars a month and seven hundred and six dollars a month for floor space. So it is kind of like you are just renting the facility. That would be the other option.

Mayor: I think this high tech system is really the way to go at this time if approved we try it out. So what is your recommendation?

Mr De La Cruz: My recommendation is to approve the Resolution for the Interlocal with the City of Weslaco.

OJ: Pending legal and I will make sure that we have a reversionary clause in there just in case for whatever reason we are not liking it that we can revert it to the way it was before at no cost to the city.

Mr De La Cruz: Just to be specific council, I think that one of the main things is control. It is our system and there is concerns. There is concerns, one of the main is off course pay. Their dispatchers are making more than our dispatchers and if we start losing our dispatchers and they are hiring them well. So those are some of the things that we have discussed that there is concerns over.

Mayor: I mean obviously the volume is different compare Weslaco to Edcouch. The responsibility, you know it's still the same but in the scope, it is smaller.

**A motion to approve and Resolution 2021-16 Creating an Interlocal with the City of Weslaco for a RMS project was made by Alderman Chapa, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Alderman Segura All voted Aye/Motion Carried.**

## **Y. Discussion and Update on upcoming EDC Projects**

**Mr De La Cruz:** Mayor, we have been working on the EDC projects. Mr Rosales is not here today so I will briefly touch up. Basically, the St Mary's project is moving forward pending, off course, we are going to start discussing with them any legal matters that we might have, timelines and items like that. But for all practical purposes we might have met with one of the owners of the company and they are going to be moving forward . They want to do right by the city, and they want to get the St Mary's project up and running and ready before November. That is one. We are getting, we have not yet, but we are getting some of the properties that Kasal Construction had gotten prior to all of this going forward. We are going to be getting those properties back. Council has set up a meeting with what we know as The Blue Lion property. We will be meeting with them this week and we have some options. Some of those options that we are talking about is offering some of these people to develop, offering them a lyft station specifically for the property. So we are trying to save cost as we are doing this. Other than that we are looking to provide the UV lighting for the covid. So we are looking at sending somebody to measure the different businesses throughout the city and provide that from the EDC. We re also looking at other promotional aspects, I know Mr Segura had recommended, and we actually did one Market Day and I think that the Market Day was a success.

So we want to continue doing that on a monthly basis and eventually maybe work out a flea market also, maybe like on Sundays maybe once a month, something like that. So that is on the EDC side that is what I have to report.

**OJ:** Mayor, if I may briefly as well, I am also the EDC attorney and so I just wanted to make it very very clear that whatever the commission needs or whatever the EDC board meetings I am here to help in any way I can with the EDC. I know that there was maybe rumors or talks that I might have been helping out another local attorney, Mr Reyna, and I had maybe two or three cases that I was helping him out on but now I am completely absolved of that. I actually submitted a resignation, even though I was not an employee, but I submitted a resignation on Tuesday because there was a lot of stuff at his office that dealt with investigation from other departments that have nothing to do with what I wanted to do so I did set up a meeting tomorrow with Rigo Villarreal, which is one of the owners so we got that tomorrow at 2 o'clock. So whatever you guys need from me for the EDC you can count on me for that. Just wanted to make sure you know that I am there for you guys.

Mayor: With that said maybe for the next meeting we can get a list of all the properties that we have and then find out if some are under litigation. An update and then we will select others that we need an update on.

## **Z. Discussion and Possible Action for paid per call Program (FD)**

**Mr. De la Cruz:** Mayor, I will pass this on to fire chief.

**Chief Nieves:** Mayor, council so the Pay Per Call Program is basically the fire fighters will get paid for every call that they attend. For every call, training, for every standby that they attend. This program is actually very successful with the Elsa Volunteer Fire Department, Mercedes, Donna, Santa Rosa, La Feria have all been proven very successful with their program. It improves retention so they have an incentive, hey I'll go because I am going to get five ten bucks per call. It improves recruitment as well. People will be like hey, at least I get something out of it and not doing it just for free. It also can be in use of the stuff that they use, the stuff that they tear, the stuff they can no longer replace. Fuels for their vehicles, the shirts that they tear, the pants that they tear, the cleaning for the gear. Sometimes these people pay for their own cleaning. Their own dry cleaning their own stuff for the gear that the city owns but because it is issued to them, they want to take care of it to be the best possible for every single call to protect the city. This program will also help us with the increasing call volume. Currently right now we are at 45% increase from the previous year. Each year for the last three years we have increased the volume by a significant amount. This year we are at two hundred and last year at this time we were a lot less than that. It is a 45% increase, and each month is the same call volume, it has not gone down. We get calls for grass fires, medical calls, you name it we get it. Cat in the tree, very typical, we got it last month. It is very beneficial. It is something that we have been working on, something that I have talked to the commissioners and the city staff. We do have a proposal. The proposal would be at certain points and certain times, there will be a clock in system, for the fire fighters. A clock in and out so there will be a hey you were there so it can be official so there wont be any hey I was there. You clock in you got your time. So, it will not be based on the honor system, it will actually be a system in place to make sure everybody stays credible to what it is. Any questions for the Pay Per Call Program.

**Commissioner Chapa:** How much are we paying per call?

**Chief Nieves:** Proposed we are considering ten dollars depending on budgetary items. So, if we do bring in enough revenue to be able to support this program and still have enough financial monies to go into the general fund.



**Commissioner Chapa:** Ok ten dollars a call. How many calls did we have last year?

**Chief Nieves:** Last year we had four hundred

**Commissioner Chapa:** How many volunteers or how many people go out?

**Chief Nieves:** On average per call, we get about five personnel per call. Depending on calls so if it is something like a structure fire, the house is burning down we typically get about twenty volunteers to twenty-five volunteers. That sounds massive but structure fires don't happen as often. Last month we had no structure fires, but we did have grass fires. Typically, five people six people show up for grass fires. We only have two brush trucks right now so it is a little bit harder to be able to fight that fire if we need the additional support we will count on La Villa or Elsa.

**Commissioner Chapa:** But then how would you do it if you have your regulars come and now you have more coming because they are getting paid?

**Chief Nieves:** It goes by also by them going to call. So, if they are not making the call and they are on standby it would be different. You know they shouldn't be getting paid the same as the ones actually going into the call. They are not just going to come for the pay. In the policy it is going to state that you actually have to go to the call, you actually have to commit. So, I am not going to pay these guys out of our city fund to just sit around and do nothing.

**Mayor:** Would you control it? Like they say you go to a guy, and you need two or three guys and if ten show up you send the other seven home or what?

**Chief Nieves:** They would be paid just the standby fee. So we have gotten and we propose that we get maybe ten dollars for the call and five dollars will be for the standby fee something like that. That is what I propose.

**Mayor:** What would be the average on a call a grassfire per say?

**Chief Nieves:** Average what? What you charge? An average grassfire depending on the time we can charge about one thousand eight hundred dollars.

**Mr De La Cruz:** Yeah but what are you are going to be paying out.

**Chief Nieves:** We will be paying out approximately six to ten guys

**Mr De La Cruz:** So what is the total?

**Chief Nieves:** Ten times ten one hundred bucks and out of that call we get about one thousand eight hundred dollars.

**Commissioner Chapa:** But the thing is if ten people go or say fifteen go we only use ten we are still paying for the other five to stand there.

**Chief Nieves:** Yeah, but historically here in Edcouch we have had we get one call and all of a sudden another pops up. So if we have those guys on standby they can automatically respond to another call.

**Mr De La Cruz:** My only question would be legally since they are getting paid are we responsible? What type of responsibility does the city have, not necessarily health care, cause they do have but I am talking about Wage and Hour and all of that.

**OJ:** Yeah, those are legitimate concerns. I honestly had not heard of the Pay Per Call Program before and when Commissioner Chapa was talking I was thinking about good it can be but then about how clouded it can be with so many people going out and well ill standby so I will need five bucks. The issues of liability somebody walking back if they were on standby and they get a little sprain on their ankle. There is a lot of legitimate.

**Chief Nieves:** Those are already in existence. If we have injuries, we will be covered by TML. We create a TML claim, process it and go to report.

**OJ:** I think the injury is one issue. What you said earlier about the Wage and Hour Commission. If one individual says I really wasn't on standby I took the hose over so I want ten dollars rather than the five.

**Chief Nieves:** Standby would be they did not make the truck, they are at the station.

**OJ:** Ok

**Chief Nieves:** That is standby. If they made the truck and they go to the call they are committed.

**OJ:** Are they employees of the city?

**Chief Nieves:** Technically volunteers are. We report to TML their volunteer hours, their training hours everything is reported to them.

**OJ:** Ok, but once you cross volunteer to a dollar being paid then that changes from the legal perspective.

**Chief Nieves:** According to The State of Texas they would still be considered a volunteer program. AS long as we are under twenty one fully paid volunteers. So to The State of Texas the Fire Service they are not considered paid fire fighters. It is more of an incentive.

**OJ:** And what you said, where can I find that?

**Chief Nieves:** Texas Forest Service. Texas A&M Forest Service

**Mayor:** And what about for IRS purposes at the end of the year?

**Chief Nieves:** IRS, there is like a form that they submit but it will be the same thing like if the city is giving them an incentive.

**Mayor:** But its like a w2 or a 1099

**Chief Nieves:** It is very similar, correct.

**Commissioner Segura:** Is there like a max load for people in each engine?

**Chief Nieves:** Correct, each engine takes five or six each brush truck does two.

**Commissioner Segura:** So that is more a less your number?

**Chief Nieves:** Correct unless I need additional man power. So if it's a structure fire even though the engines hold eleven you are going to need max. That is typically when we will roll everything the

brush trucks, the crown vic, everything and everybody will be hands on putting hoses cleaning whatever we need.

OJ: And it is not per hour , right?

Chief Nieves: It is not per hour, correct. Its per call.

Chief Guerra: Going back on that note, we did get the vehicles donated by the sheriff's office so depending on that we will be also donating maybe a unit or two to the fire department. Once we get these other ones up and running.

Mr De La Cruz: One of the things that I heard commissioner concern here, if you were to have like an on call system in place and the person on call is staying behind how is he going to get paid because they are here anyways sometimes. So it can get cloudy. So if you were to have a list of people and you are the ones that are on call and you get a tone out you come out. I mean I am all for

Chief Nieves: This will also help because it will help because they will say you know what if I stay at the station I will get the five ten bucks because I will be the first one here and I am going to go to the call. Which will be better for the city. We take approximately five to ten minutes to respond to a call. There is no lie about it and the reason being is that I am at home, I am in bed, I have to get up put my pants on, whatever the case may be, get ready, run to get on the truck, get all the way to the station, get my gear, turn on the truck, and take off. So that alone has taken five to ten minutes by the time we actually respond to any call. Now if we are at the station that goes down to approximately two to five minutes. Every second counts in a fire. An average house right now, the houses that you guys are living in, will burn down in approximately seventeen minutes to the ground because of all the combustible materials that you have in there. It is scientifically proven, its documented. So the faster we get there, the faster we are able to save your property, life, and anything else and that is all this is about. It is not about us getting anything are prideful that we are a volunteer fire department but its about getting a better and faster response for the community. So we are pushing for the EMT program as well and we are working with the ESB, with the president of the ESB, and we are going to start a program here, which will help in that and they will also be helping in contributing for that program.

Mr De La Cruz: Who else has used this system?

Chief Nieves: Locally Elsa, Mercedes, Donna, Santa Rosa, La Feria, Edinburg is a major one. Edinburg is a big roller, they get about three thousand calls a year and they pay about ten to fifteen dollars an hour. So these guys are banking.

Mr De La Cruz: They have a volunteer department?

Chief Nieves: Edinburg? Yes sir, they one of the largest volunteer fire departments in The State of Texas. At one point they had over a hundred volunteers within their four stations, and they are all pay per call. And so they went to one station being manned and that is what they still have to this day only one out of the five stations is manned paid full time.

Mayor: I mean I like it. I know it's about time that we did something for our fire fighters, but we just need to clean it real good. There is no room for interpretation. It is what it is. This is how much you are going to get so if you can get us some templates of what other people are using that way, we can get an idea and then for budgetary purposes and then

OJ: I can reach out to, I mean if Edinburg is using it, I know the city attorney really well I can ask him those questions that were brought up earlier about employment about employees

**Chief Nieves:** Edinburg has used it for years. They have a lot higher pay rate than us and they have a lot more calls.

**OJ:** How many people go per call?

**Chief Nieves:** Average five. On average per call. Most of the calls we get here are illegal burns, grass fires.

**Commissioner Flores:** And each call you are not going to make less than eight hundred dollars?

**Chief Nieves:** If it is within the city limits, we don't get paid. The city is our territory to protect but the county makes up for the city calls.

**Commissioner Flores:** On a city call, are they still going to get paid?

**Chief Nieves:** The objective is yes to motivate them to keep coming.

**Commissioner Flores:** See and that is where it is not fair because then if we are not getting paid for city calls but we are paying out

**Commissioner Chapa:** Ok, on last year on the four hundred and five calls, how many of these were city calls?

**Commissioner Flores:** I do not have a number.

**Mr. Hugo De La Cruz:** There is a lot more county calls than city.

**Chief Nieves:** Ok just to put it in perspective, last year we made over one hundred thousand dollars in county calls.

**Commissioner Flores:** For Edcouch

**Chief Nieves:** For Edcouch. So, the fire department made an approximate one hundred nineteen dollars not including tax revenue that we picked up. Not including grants or donations. So that was just basically the county.

**Commissioner Flores:** Is this true?

**Mr. De LA Cruz:** Yes

**Commissioner Flores:** So, then I don't see what the issue would be to pay them.

**Mayor:** That is not the problem, what we need to be careful to is the amount of work that it might take to do something like this. Are we taking any of your time now as the chief? How often are going to pay? A week a month every quarter?

**Chief Nieves:** It just depends on how we want to do it as the city. Edinburg does it annually, but I would not recommend that because that means we would have to save. I would recommend it quarterly like the rest of the departments do or monthly. So, I know Elsa does it quarterly so every three months there's your check.

Mr. De La Cruz: Can we do this, can we set up a workshop for the next meeting that way Chief can come in with a template and give an explanation of different calls different scenarios and then we can put them on the agenda so that we can discuss. What if it ends up being that it has to be more than ten dollars?

Mayor: And in the meantime, you work on your templates and talk to the city manager

Chief Nieves: What we can do is I can get what Edinburg is doing and then just modify to what we are doing. Lets Edinburg is paying fifteen thirty bucks a call and we just modify to what we can afford.

Mayor: We want to be fair to the guys too. Like Hugo said it might be more than the ten you never know.

Mr. De La Cruz: I recommend that we come back, and we table this item , Mayor.

**A motion to table the paid per call Program (FD) was made by Alderman  
\_\_\_\_\_ Flores \_\_\_\_\_, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Alderman \_\_\_\_\_ Segura \_\_\_\_\_.  
All voted Aye/Motion Carried.**

#### **AA.Discussion and Possible to approve a new brush truck**

**Mr. De La Cruz:** Mayor, I pass this on to fire chief.

**Chief Nieves:** This is the same topic we were discussing in the last meeting. Unfortunately, you were not able to see exactly what I was seeing because of the computer. So, this is actually an estimated cost of this truck but within the estimate it cost half is going to be paid by a grant. Approximately what the city is going to pay out of our packets is going to be twenty-one thousand five hundred dollars for this brush truck. The other twenty thousand dollars is going to be allocated by the Texas Forest Service. The Forest Service is going to give us twenty thousand dollars for this unit for this grant. The reason I went with this company is because this company and chose this company, I had several proposed grant proposals, this company is going to give me from start to finish a complete truck including hoses, nozzles, lights, sirens, decal, everything. So, this truck is going to come of the trailer ready to fight fire. Just put water in it and its ready to fight fire. Everybody else was charging me about thirty-five thousand just for the skid unit, which is the bed of the truck which includes the tank and so forth. With this tank I am getting the complete package including tankage and everything for this truck. This truck is going to be very beneficial not only because it can go through dense forest but because of the amount of water it carries. So, it carries one thousand gallons the same as our engine. So, in case we get to fires, and we do need this truck can supplement the rest of the trucks with the amount of water that it carries. One of the concerns was the mechanical. We did get the mechanical. We did get a mechanical inspection on the truck, and it did pass inspection. They are going to replace all the tires for us, and they are going to replace all the batteries for us brand new.

**Mayor:** Is it certified? Is it a certified vehicle?

**Chief Nieves:** It is going to be a surplus. It is not certified, its coming from another departments surplus but they are going to fix any details like the tires the batteries and so forth. They are going to bring it to us ready and fully functioning. It is a military five ton. Most of these trucks average between fifteen and twenty thousand miles already on them these are motors that can run four to five hundred thousand miles. If you maintain them and you keep using them, you keep changing the oil they run forever.

**Mayor:** The grant that you talked about, it has already been awarded?

**Chief Nieves:** That grant has already been awarded and we actually risk of losing it because we have not moved on it. So that is why I wanted to put it on the agenda.

**Commissioner Flores:** So, the grant pays how much?

**Chief Nieves:** Twenty thousand

**Commissioner Flores:** So, we would be coughing up twenty thousand?

**Chief Nieves:** I did speak with finance, Me and Mr. Hugo did speak to finance, we can go ahead and be able to do this. I spoke with the company as well, so we don't have to pay the whole amount at one time. We can do it in payments. So, the total time it is going to take three months to build. We can do it withing the three months and give monthly payment, so it won't be, and I don't know how to say this.

**Commissioner Chapa:** A strain on the city.

**Chief Nieves:** Correct. To much strain on the city. So, we can do it in payments we wont feel it as bad.

**Mayor:** And what did your city manager say? You have the money?

Mr. De La Cruz: I know that he had brought this item in the last meeting that we had and after talking to finance a lot of the, or pretty much all of the grants that chief has brought me cost the city upfront and we do get the money back and that is my only concern because I have to pay everything and then I get the grant. I wish I could just get the grant and then just purchase what we need right but that's the way these grants work.

**Mayor:** Including this one?

**Mr. De La Cruz:** Yes, including this one.

**Mayor:** So how quick is the turnaround? The reimbursement.

**Chief Nieves:** The turnaround is really quick. The Forest Service will send an inspector, certify the truck, they will say hey yes this qualifies for a grant and then they will come and cut a check. It usually takes about a couple of weeks. So, it does not take long at all. Most of them will come in within two weeks after I send them all the information. So, this are pictures of five tons that I found online from different websites and different things

**A Motion to approve a new brush truck was made by Alderman \_\_\_\_\_, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Alderman \_\_\_\_\_. All voted Aye/ Motion Carried.**

**BB. Discussion and Possible action on appointment of Municipal Judge for the City of Edcouch**

**Mr. De la Cruz:** Mayor, this item was brought in by two of the commissioners and I would like to pass this item to them for their recommendation.

**Commissioner Flores:** I want to recommend Orlando Villarreal as our municipal judge.

**Mayor:** As a municipal judge?

**Commissioner Flores:** As a municipal judge.

**A motion to approve an appoint \_\_\_\_\_ as Municipal Judge for the City of Edcouch was made by Alderman Flores, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Alderman Segura. All voted Aye/Motion Carried.**

**CC. Discussion and Possible Action on complaint on Officer Citation**

**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 complaint on an officer citation**

**DD. 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 complaint on an officer citation**

**EE. Adjournment**

**At \_ pm, a motion to adjourn was made by Alderman: \_\_\_\_\_, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Alderman: \_\_\_\_\_. 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, February 04, 2020.**

**Passed and Approved by the Board of Aldermen on this 04 th day of February 2020.**

**ATTEST**

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**Manuel Hernandez**  
**City of Edcouch**