

THE CITY OF EASTLAND
CITY COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING

February 18, 2025

EASTLAND, TEXAS §

EASTLAND, COUNTY §

The City Commission of the City of Eastland, Texas, met in Open Session at Eastland City Hall as scheduled, and notice was posted 72 hours in advance and prior to the meeting.

CITY COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:

Mayor	Larry Vernon
Commissioner	Richard Rossander
Commissioner	Shirley Stuart
Commissioner	James Doyle

CITY COMMISSIONERS ABSENT:

Commissioner	Carol Jones
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PERSONNEL PRESENT:

City Manager	Savannah Fortenberry
Finance Director	Leslie Zander
City Secretary	Roma Holley
Police Chief	Tim Pitts
Fire Chief	Joe Williamson
Code Enforcement	Terry Simmons

Guests: Julie Elrod, Thom Cameron, Michael J. Hackney, Gary Ford, Anna Ford

I. Meeting Called to Order

Mayor Larry Vernon called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

II. Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance and the Texas Pledge

Mayor Larry Vernon offered the invocation and Commissioner Shirley Stuart led the Pledge of Allegiance and the Texas Pledge.

III. Public Comment on any Subject Not listed on this Agenda (Limited to Five Minutes Per Speaker)

No Comments

IV. Approve Minutes of the January 21, 2025 Meeting

Commissioner Richard Rossander made a motion, seconded by Commissioner James Doyle, to approve the minutes of the January 21, 2025 Meeting.

Ayes: Commissioners Doyle, Rossander, Stuart
Nays: None
Absent: Jones

V. Financial Report

Mayor Larry Vernon stated the sales tax was outstanding.

Before moving to the next item, Mayor Larry Vernon stated that he had received a letter from the University of North Texas, Texas Municipal Clerks Certification Program, stating that City Secretary/HR Director Roma Holley has completed approximately 200 hours of individual home study on a four-course curriculum and attendance at 96 hours of professional development seminars.

Congratulations to Roma Holley on becoming a Texas Registered Municipal Clerk. We appreciate you completing that training as it will make you better at what you do.

VI. The Board of City Commissioners May Discuss and Take Action on the Following Agenda Items:

1. Discussion and Consideration of a Request by Billy Bob Brown for Hotel Motel Tax Event Funds for sponsorship of the second annual Carbon Classic Weekend (Roping Event)

City Manager Savannah Fortenberry stated we have received a request for Hotel Motel Tax Event Funds from Billy Bob Brown. He is putting on the 2nd Annual Carbon Classic Weekend (a Roping Event). This event will be held in Carbon, May 17-18, 2025. Mr. Brown provided information detailing the number of contestants entering events as well as the number of employees needed, along with the prices of some of the equipment. His request is for \$16,320.

City Manager Savannah Fortenberry stated we do have the funds available and it is her recommendation to approve the request.

Commissioner James Doyle made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Shirley Stuart, to approve the awarding of \$16,320 from the Hotel Motel Tax Event Funds to Billy Bob Brown for sponsorship of the second annual Carbon Classic Weekend (Roping Event).

Ayes: Commissioners Doyle, Rossander, Stuart
Nays: None
Absent: Commissioner Jones

2. Discussion and Consideration of the State of Affairs of the Lyric Art Center

Gary Ford shared information regarding what has been happening with the Lyric Art Center. He referenced the plethora of information contained in the Commissioners information packets.

3. Discussion and Consideration to remove a member from the Eastland Youth Sports Advisory Board

City Manager Savannah Fortenberry explained that in accordance with the bylaws, Board members missing three consecutive Board meetings will be automatically removed from serving on The Board by majority vote of The Board.

Board Member Juan Ojeda has not attended any of the past board meetings and has not communicated with any of the board members.

It is the recommendation of the EYSAB to remove Juan Ojeda from the Board.

Commissioner Shirley Stuart made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Richard Rossander to approve the removal of Juan Ojeda from the Eastland Youth Sports Advisory Board

Ayes: Commissioners Doyle, Rossander, Stuart
Nays: None
Absent: Commissioner Jones

4. Discussion and Consideration to appoint a member to the Eastland Youth Sports Advisory Board

City Manager Savannah Fortenberry advised that Barrett Thomasson had been approached about becoming a member of the EYSAB. She stated Thomasson has lived in Eastland for several years and is very involved in youth activities.

Commissioner James Doyle made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Richard Rossander, to approve Barrett Thomasson as a member of the Eastland Youth Sports Advisory Board.

Ayes: Commissioners Doyle, Rossander, Stuart
Nays: None
Absent: Commissioner Jones

5. Discussion and Consideration to approve the second reading of Ordinance **25-911** AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF EASTLAND, TEXAS AMENDING REVISING CHAPTER 14 "STREETS, SIDEWALKS, AND PUBLIC PLACES", ARTICLE VI "EASTLAND CEMETERY" BY ADDING PROVISIONS REGARDING THE PECAN GROVE URN GARDEN; PROVIDING A REPEALING CLAUSE; PROVIDING A SEVERABILITY CLAUSE; AND ESTABLISHING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

Commissioner James Doyle made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Richard Rossander, to approve the second reading of Ordinance 25-911 revising the Eastland Cemetery provisions regarding the Pecan Grove Urn Garden and adding the phrase concerning cost of spaces to the Eastland Rate & Fee Schedule.

Ayes: Commissioners Doyle, Rossander, Stuart
Nays: None
Absent: Commissioner Jones

6. Discussion and Consideration of recommendation to approve Planning & Zoning Case# 25-001 To obtain a Specific Use Permit (SUP) in order to use the property for an apartment in a C1 District, with a variance to allow the entire structure to have the apartment use, due to the building's size and configuration

Request: To obtain a Specific Use Permit (SUP) in order to use the property for an apartment in a C1 District, with a variance to allow the entire structure to have the apartment use, due to the building's size and configuration.

Staff Report: The idea behind the use of apartments in the C1 district had been specific on the condition that the apartment use would keep to the upper floors in order to retain the commercial buildings in the district. The majority of buildings downtown have their upper floors as separate areas that are independent of the first floor, creating separate use spaces. This property has been unoccupied for many years due to its small size and configuration. The property is more like a townhome than the other commercial buildings in the area.

Planning & Zoning Board Recommendation: Approval. The Planning & Zoning Board has no objection to the granting of a Specific Use Permit for the apartment use in the C1 district, and grant a variance that allows the use for the entire structure due to its small size. The Planning & Zoning Board approved this at their meeting 02/10/2025.

Mayor Larry Vernon stated that letters had been sent to property owners within a 200-foot radius and there were no objections.

Commissioner Shirley Stuart made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Richard Rossander approve Planning & Zoning Case# 25-001 to obtain a Specific Use Permit (SUP) in order to use the property for an apartment in a C1 District.

Ayes: Commissioners Doyle, Rossander, Stuart
Nays: None
Absent: Commissioner Jones

7. Discussion and Consideration to approve the first reading of Ordinance **25-913** updating Cargo Container uses

Ordinance details: This ordinance update pertains to cargo containers and their use. Current rule is found in a definition with no regulations as far as placement.

Staff Report: There are some containers in areas of town that were placed prior to zoning being created in 2007. There are some citizens that have contacted city staff wanting to place new containers or use them in new construction. This ordinance is to give more opportunity to citizens, but have some regulations, as there are none currently.

Planning & Zoning Board Recommendation: Approval. The Planning & Zoning Board approved this at their meeting 02/10/2025.

Discussion centered around the definition of a cargo container, the way it can be used and the appearance of it.

Commissioner Richard Rossander made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Shirley Stuart, to approve the first reading of Ordinance 25-913 updating the uses of Cargo Containers.

Ayes: Commissioners Doyle, Rossander, Stuart
Nays: None
Absent: Commissioner Jones

8. Discussion and Consideration to approve the first reading of Ordinance **25-914** creating a Limited Business Zoning District.

Ordinance details: This ordinance update is the creation of a Limited Business District area. This zoning type would allow for limited office type commercial business uses in an area that is near residential zoned areas.

Staff Report: The creation of this zoning district ties into the replat of the Old Rip addition that was completed by Nicholas Petroff in May of 2024. The discussion of the creation of this zoning was discussed at that meeting.

Planning & Zoning Board Recommendation: Approval. The Planning & Zoning Board approved this at their meeting 02/10/2025. This zoning type will offer more options for use

of property, while also allowing some control to ensure businesses near residential areas remain peaceful and does not disturb the area.

Commissioner Shirley Stuart made a motion, seconded by Commissioner James Doyle, to approve the first reading of Ordinance 25-914 creating a Limited Business Zoning District.

Ayes: Commissioners Doyle, Rossander, Stuart
Nays: None
Absent: Jones

9. Discussion and Consideration to approve the first reading of Ordinance **25-915** AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF EASTLAND, TEXAS REPEALING AND REPLACING ORDINANCE NO. 24-912; ADOPTING AN AMENDED COMPREHENSIVE RATE AND FEE SCHEDULE ESTABLISHING RATES AND FEES TO BE CHARGED FOR CITY SERVICES; PROVIDING A REPEALING CLAUSE; PROVIDING A SEVERABILITY CLAUSE; AND ESTABLISHING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

Commissioner Richard Rossander made a motion, seconded by Commissioner James Doyle, to approve the first reading of Ordinance 25-915 amending the Rate and Fee Schedule.

Ayes: Commissioners Doyle, Rossander, Stuart
Nays: None
Absent: Commissioner Jones

10. Discussion and Consideration of Resolution **2025-03**: Continuing participation with the Steering Committee of Cities served by Atmos A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING MEMBERSHIP IN THE ATMOS CITIES STEERING COMMITTEE; AND AUTHORIZING THE PAYMENT OF FIVE CENTS PER CAPITA TO THE ATMOS CITIES STEERING COMMITTEE TO FUND REGULATORY AND RELATED ACTIVITIES RELATED TO ATMOS ENERGY CORPORATION

Commissioner Richard Rossander made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Shirley Stuart, to approve Resolution 2025-03 authorizing continued participation with the steering committee of cities serviced by Atmos and authorizing the payment of five cents per capita to the steering committee.

Ayes: Commissioners Rossander, Stuart, Vernon
Nays: None
Absent: Commissioner Jones
Abstain: Commissioner Doyle

11. Discussion and Consideration to approve the master service agreement between the City of Eastland and Kennedy Computer Solutions, Inc.

Chance Isham, owner of Kennedy Computer Solutions, Inc, addressed the Commissioners and explained the Master Service agreement which the Commissioners had a copy of. Discussion centered around some of the wording and the fact that the Eastland Police Department has had issues with the service in the past. Mr. Isham assured the Commissioners, along with Police Chief Tim Pitts, that these issues have been addressed and there will be 100% response with no delays.

City Manager Savannah Fortenberry noted some issues with wording and discussion followed with Mr. Isham stating that he is willing to do whatever it takes to keep this account.

Commissioner Richard Rossander made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Shirley Stuart, to approve the Master Service Agreement after amendments and contingent upon City Manager Approval.

Ayes: Commissioners Doyle, Rossander, Stuart
Nays: None
Absent: Commissioner Jones

VII. City Manager Report

GLO-CDBG-MIT Project Planning

The street improvement project continues to progress. Contractors continue to work on West Moss Street. Several storm drains have been replaced and installed on Moss Street.

- Daugherty and Moss
- Walnut and Moss
- Green and Moss
- Lamar and Moss

Demo construction has begun on East White Street.

Phase two of the creek resurfacing will begin on February 24, 2025. This project is expected to last 90 days.

We are working with GLO for a 24-month extension for the buy-out portion. This process is still ongoing.

TWDB Flood infrastructure Fund Grant

The contract award documents have been signed and submitted to TWDB for review and awaiting approval. Once TWDB completes their review, we will schedule a preconstruction meeting with the contractor.

Downtown Sidewalk Repairs

Unknown timeframe.

General Election

Update will be given after the filing deadline has passed.

Wildfire Mitigation

The wildfire mitigation grant allows for purchase of equipment to reduce hazards that fuel wildfires. We are actively working on the RFPs for specific pieces of equipment. Once RFPs are received, Commission will review the bids and award if appropriate.

Eastland Youth Sports Authority Board

Eastland Youth Sports Authority Board is actively working to ensure the fields are playable, sittable, and watchable for the upcoming season.

Kenneth Chapman Pavilion at the Park

The top has been removed on the existing pavilion. The poles will be removed pending the weather.

The estimated timeline is to have the new pavilion up in April.

Pecan Grove Urn Garden

Sterling Monument installed the Pecan Grove Marker for the urn garden at the Cemetery.

VIII. Code Compliance Report

Code Enforcement Officer Terry Simmons reported the Code Compliance Report for January 2025. There were 8 open cases at the beginning of the month, 14 new cases were opened and 5 cases were closed, which ended the month with 17 cases open. 1 citation was issued for Dangerous Building. Fines assessed were \$256.

IX. Police Chief Report

Chief Tim Pitts stated there were 347 calls for service in January. 11 cases were filed with the District Attorney and 1 case was filed with the Juvenile Authorities. There were 44 offense reports generated. He noted 18 arrests. A total of 671 traffic stops were initiated. This resulted in 500 warning citations and 171 citations issued. He also stated that 924 “business checks” were conducted. Our Animal Control reported 101 business calls. 21 animals were impounded and 14 were adopted and 1 was quarantined. 2 citations and 0 warnings were issued.

Chief Pitts noted 4 narcotics arrests and 11 warrant arrests and 1 vehicle pursuit. Lt. McDade attended the Texas Ranger Interview School.

X. Fire Chief Report

Fire Chief Joe Williamson gave the following activity report for the month of January 2025 for the Volunteer and Paid Firefighters. Total call volume: 114 which was an average of 3.7 calls per day. 89 of these were in the City Limits and 20 of them were in the county and they responded to 5 calls for mutual aid to other county fire departments. There were 16 incidents between 10 p.m. and 7 a.m. There were 7 structure fires, 0 grass fires and 4 vehicle fires. They responded to 68 Medical calls; 6 Motor Vehicle accidents and 16 Public Service assists and 6 false alarm/investigation.

Chief Williamson noted that they have started a remodel of the living/sleeping quarters in order to accommodate the extra staffing of volunteers. Upon initial investigation of the hvac system, it was discovered that their return air system, which is a climate control system, has been pulling air from the truck bays, which has been contaminated with diesel fumes. Therefore, the air being introduced into the living/ sleeping quarters is very unhealthy. There appears to be no other method of rectifying this situation short of tearing out all of the sheetrock, vents and air supply systems and remodeling, basically from the studs.

The 4th Chili Cook-Off will be held February 22, 2025.

XI. Adjournment

Commissioner James Doyle made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Richard Rossander, to adjourn at 7:30 p.m.

APPROVED

Larry Vernon, Chairman
Board of City Commissioners

ATTEST

Roma Holley, City Secretary