

**MINUTES FOR THE  
FEBRUARY 12, 2024  
REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING**

**1. Call to Order and Recording of Quorum**

The meeting was called to order at 4:00pm and a quorum was established.

**Council Members Present**

Mayor John Low

Emmy Ballantyne

Bill Mitchell

Peter Mako

Kate Lanfear

**City Staff Present**

City Manager William Foley

Asst. City Manager Michelle Pack

Fire Chief William Knupp

Asst. Fire Chief Justin Seibert

Police Chief Gail Baham

Director Rick Baldarrama

Attorney Frank Garza

**Others Present**

Pryor Ballantyne

Bill Fransisco

Collier Bashara

**2. Review/Action of minutes from:**

a. **December 11<sup>th</sup> Public Hearing & Regular Meeting**

The minutes were reviewed, Mitchell motioned to approve, Ballantyne seconded, all voted in favor and the December 11, 2023 minutes were approved as submitted.

**3. Comments by Citizens**

Bill Fransisco asked for council to consider putting in a 4 way stop near the church intersection off Exeter. Fransisco also complimented the services provided by the Police and Fire Departments.

**4. Discussion/Action: Adoption of Ordinance 1530 - Ordering a General Election  
ORDERING A GENERAL ELECTION IN THE CITY OF TERRELL  
HILLS, TEXAS FOR THE ELECTION OF THE MAYOR AND  
COUNCILPERSONS FOR PLACES ONE (1) AND TWO (2), EACH TO  
SERVE A TWO YEAR TERM; TO BE HELD THE 4<sup>TH</sup> OF MAY 2024;  
DESIGNATING THE MAIN EARLY VOTING PLACE FOR SUCH  
ELECTION; PROVIDING FOR AN ORDER AND NOTICE OF SUCH**

**GENERAL ELECTION; DESIGNATING JACQUELYN F. CALLANEN, BEXAR COUNTY ELECTIONS ADMINISTRATOR, AS THE ELECTION ADMINISTRATOR TO CONDUCT SAID ELECTION; DESIGNATING THE POLLING PLACES; DESIGNATING FILING DEADLINES; ORDERING NOTICES OF ELECTION TO BE POSTED AND PUBLISHED AS PRESCRIBED BY LAW IN CONNECTION WITH SAID ELECTION; PROVIDING A SEVERABILITY CLAUSE; AND PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.**

Foley explained that this is a standard ordinance to call for the election of those council places that have terms ending. Mayor Low asked if the general election will be canceled if there are no contested races. Foley confirmed it would be canceled in the next city council meeting if it remains uncontested. Mako motioned to approve, Lanfear seconded, all voted in favor and the ordinance passed.

5. Discussion/Action: Adoption of Ordinance 1531 – Special Election for Tax Freeze **AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF TERRELL HILLS, TEXAS, CALLING A SPECIAL ELECTION TO BE HELD ON SATURDAY, MAY 4, 2024, TO SUBMIT TO THE VOTERS OF THE CITY OF TERRELL HILLS, TEXAS A PROPOSITION TO ESTABLISH AN AD VALOREM TAX LIMITATION FOR PERSONS SIXTY-FIVE (65) YEARS OF AGE OR OLDER; AUTHORIZING CONTRACTS WITH THE ELECTION ADMINISTRATOR OF BEXAR COUNTY TO CONDUCT THIS ELECTION AND PROCEDURES RELATED THERE TO; AND PROVIDING AN OPEN MEETINGS CLAUSE.**

Foley explained that on December 11<sup>th</sup>, a resident filed a petition for a senior tax freeze. The petition had over 300 signatures and more than 200 signatures were verified as valid. Foley said that the petition was also verified by the city attorney which will require the city to call for a special election. Garza pointed out that the petition is only for seniors (65 years of age or older), there was no mention of including the disabled as allowed by the Texas Constitution. Garza said there was no specific ballot language requirements for this election, so he wrote the ballot in parallel with 4 other surrounding cities. Mayor Low said that the April meeting will be designated as an open forum for citizens to discuss the pros and cons of the tax freeze. Low pointed out that Terrell Hills does not have a significant source of sales tax revenue and that the city relies upon the property taxes to fund the city's budget, if the tax freeze passes the city will have to make changes whether it is reducing services, charging for services that are currently free or increasing taxes on those under 65 years of age. Mayor Low mentioned that currently our tax rate is lower than other surrounding areas because we do not have the senior freeze. Mitchell asked if there would be a presentation by the city on the pros and cons at the April meeting. Garza told council that once the ballot is created, city staff can only provide factual information, the city employees cannot label information as pros and cons, only elected officials can have opinions on the pros and cons of the potential tax freeze. Garza stressed several times that the city employees and city resources cannot be used to make opinions on the pros, the cons, or to be for or against the freeze. Mako asked that there be some factual presentations so that those attending the meeting may come to their own assessment.

Foley said there will be information provided. Ballantyne asked for there to be information about the upcoming meeting sent out through the My Terrell Hills App. Low asked for a zoom link to also be provided, Foley said that will be done. Low asked Garza if council members are allowed to adopt a position. Garza said that council can adopt a resolution in favor or opposed and that council/elected members can even had out flyers/information with their stance as long as they city employees or resources are not used to create the handouts/flyers with an opinion for or against. Low mentioned that there were some residents who ran the figures and will be presenting at the meeting in opposition of the freeze. There was no further discussion. Lanfear motioned to approve, Mitchell seconded, all voted in favor and the ordinance was adopted.

6. Discussion/Action: Adoption of Ordinance 1532 – Personnel Ordinance  
**AN ORDINANCE REGARDING PERSONNEL CHANGES IN THE CITY OF TERRELL HILLS SINCE AUGUST 2023**

Low introduced this as general house cleaning and called for a motion to approve. Mako motioned to approve, Ballantyne seconded, all voted in favor and the motion passed.

7. **Discussion/Action: Approval of Interlocal Cooperation Agreement with Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS) to participate in an automated Failure to Appear (FTA) system to deny renewal of a Texas Driver’s License to a person who it subject to a FTA.**

Foley explained that this agreement is a renewal of services for the municipal court to contract with DPS. There was no further discussion. Ballantyne motioned to approve, Mako seconded, all voted in favor and the motion carried.

8. **Discussion/Action: Moving April 8<sup>th</sup> Regular Meeting to Tuesday April 9<sup>th</sup> and the May 13<sup>th</sup> meeting to May 7<sup>th</sup>**

Council approved moving both dates and provided direction for city administration.

9. **Discussion from monthly reports as submitted in the council packets.**

There were no questions for staff.

10. **Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 4:22pm.

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MAYOR

ATTEST:

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SECRETARY-MANAGER