

**MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL CALLED MEETING OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE
CITY OF LUFKIN, TEXAS HELD ON THE 29th DAY OF APRIL, 2021**

On the 29th day of April, 2021 the City Council of the City of Lufkin, Texas convened in a Special Called Meeting in the Council Chambers of City Hall with the following members, thereof to wit:

Bob F. Brown	Mayor
Mark Hicks	Mayor Pro Tem
Guessippina Bonner	Councilmember, Ward No. 1
Robert Shankle	Councilmember, Ward No. 2
Lynn Torres	Councilmember, Ward No. 3
Rocky Thigpen	Councilmember, Ward No. 5
Trent Burfine	Councilmember, Ward No. 6
Bruce Green	Interim City Manager
Jason Arnold	Assistant to the City Manager
Gerald Williamson	Public Safety Director
Kara Andrepont	City Secretary
Rodney Ivy	Human Resource Director
David Thomas	Police Chief
Buddy Cross	Assistant Police Chief
Jesse Moody	Fire Chief
Ryan Watson	Assistant Fire Chief
Jessica Pebsworth	Communications Director
Belinda Melancon	Finance Director
Kevin Gee	Engineering Services Director
Kent Havard	Solid Waste Director

being present when the following business was transacted.

INVOCATION - The meeting was opened with prayer by Mayor Bob Brown.

PUBLIC COMMENT – Mayor Brown opened the meeting for Public Comments on any posted Agenda item at 10:33 a.m. Mr. Roshin Rowjee spoke and proposed that the City of Lufkin sever ties with ERCOT (Energy Reliability Council of Texas). Mr. Don Langston spoke and commended the City of Lufkin employees on their hard work and reaction during the winter storm of February 2021.

1. FINDINGS FROM AFTER EVENT ANALYSIS OF WINTER ICE STORM AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVEMENTS AND DISCUSSION BY CITY COUNCIL

City Manager Green stated Council had requested a review of what happened during the winter storm and the possibilities of improvement in the future. City Manager Green furthered an after-event analysis had been initiated by City Administration that began with each individual department and ended at the administrative level. City Manager Green stated the findings to be discussed were the result of that analysis. City Manager Green furthered there were a number of department needs and improvements that could be made that Council needed to consider.

- **Issue No. 1** – Whether the cumulative effects of the winter storm could have been prevented. City Manager Green stated the answer to that was no. City Manager Green furthered the highly unusual cold temperatures for days, snow and ice, the cumulative effects of the winter storm (such as widespread power failures and overburdened water supply) could not have been prevented by the City. City Manager Green stated the problems of the City of Lufkin mirrored those all across Texas, with the exception of the very small section of East Texas not dependent on the Electric Reliability Council of Texas (ERCOT) electric grid.
- **Issue No. 2** – Whether the cumulative effects of the winter storm could have been lessened by better preparedness by the City. City Manager Green stated there were two

possible answers to the issue. City Manager Green explained given the normal types of emergencies faced by the City, the previous preparedness model based on those types of emergencies, and previous budgetary constraints, the cumulative effects of the winter storm could not have been lessened by the City. City Manager Green furthered there were however ways in which better preparedness might have lessened the cumulative effects of the storm. City Manager Green furthered additional generators on wells covered from the elements, more frequent servicing of motors and generators on wells and more resources invested in overall emergency preparedness might have lessened the cumulative effects of the storm. City Manager Green concluded Public Works and Administration determined the previously dedicated resources were adequate for normal emergencies the City was accustomed to experiencing. City Manager Green stated the February winter storm was not, however, a storm that could not have been reasonably foreseen. City Manager Green noted Administration believed it was advisable to better prepare for the occasional unusual emergency given recent experiences.

- **Issue No. 3** – Whether the performance by Departments and individual employees was adequate given the circumstances of the winter storm and the resources available. City Manager Green stated the answer to that was unequivocally yes. City Manager Green furthered the performance of Departments (especially Public Works, Police and Fire) in response to the difficult and ever-changing events of the storm was exceptional, as was, almost universally, the performance of individual City employees. City Manager Green stated were it not for the sacrificial efforts of many employees, in extreme elements, and without rest, the cumulative effects of the storm on Lufkin residents would have been much worse. City Manager Green acknowledged the work of the Public Works, Police, Fire, Convention Services, Communications and Public Information Departments for the work they did to help the citizens and keep them informed.
- **Issue No. 4** – Whether measures might be taken that would help better prepare in the future. City Manager Green stated the answer was yes. City Manager Green furthered every possible emergency could not be foreseen and prepared for and, if it could be, it would be cost prohibitive to prepare for every contingency. City Manager Green stated nonetheless, steps could be taken to better prepare for extreme emergencies in the future and a Comprehensive Public Works Prep Plan had been included for Council to review.
- **Issue No. 5** – Whether there were sources of funding in responding to the priorities set forth in the need's assessment. City Manager Green stated the answer to the question was yes and Staff anticipated being able to free up resources for important needs during the last half of the Fiscal Year 2020-2021 budget year. City Manager Green explained the Fiscal Year 2020-2021 balanced budget and a very conservative estimate regarding sales tax revenues had placed the City in a sound position to meet other challenges that occurred during the year. City Manager Green stated sales tax revenues, so far, had outperformed the estimates but that could change quickly. City Manager Green furthered the City had received Cares Act Funds for police and fire payroll and overtime costs which went to reimburse the costs the City had covered. City Manager Green explained resources were limited and might decrease, but it would depend on how Council wanted to proceed with meeting the pressing needs the City faced. City Manager Green concluded the agenda was for presentation and discussion purposes and no action by Council was requested. City Manager Green furthered Administration did need feedback regarding recommendations and certain needs. City Manager Green stated Administration would follow up by bringing those needs to Council for consideration and vote over the next several months.

City Manager Green highlighted Exhibit A, Well Field Comprehensive Approach, with an unfunded cost estimate of \$2,537,086 and Exhibit C, Lift Stations Comprehensive Approach, with an unfunded cost estimate of \$998,500. City Manager Green then reviewed Chart No. 2 which was a Public Works Needs Assessment by department which also included the cost estimate and the fund source for each need. City Manager Green summarized Exhibit B which was the recommended approach for adding generators, slabs, metal covers, grading roads and a portable generator and trailer with an estimated cost of \$672,786. City Manager Green highlighted Chart No. 3 which referenced the needs of the Fire

Department, Chart No. 4 which referenced the needs of the Police Department and Chart No. 5 which was the General Fund needs for various departments. City Manager Green offered to answer any questions regarding the presentation. Councilmember Burfine asked for a plan that would show the number of generators on the lift stations, the length of service and at what capacity the generators performed during an emergency event as opposed to 100% across the board. Discussion ensued. Councilmember Bonner asked if an analysis had been done regarding the issue of separating from ERCOT as well as the issue of climate change. Councilmember Hicks asked for clarification on what Councilmember Bonner was asking for regarding climate change. A discussion among Councilmembers regarding these issues ensued. Councilmember Burfine had a question regarding issues with the sewer lift stations during the winter storm. Assistant City Manager Jason Arnold responded and explained the issues. Councilmember Thigpen stated there were homes in the City that had flooded and backed up with sewer during the storm due to the lift stations not having generators during the storm. Councilmember Bonner asked if there was the possibility of bringing in temporary personnel to assist with the clean-up. City Manager Green addressed the question and answered questions regarding debris removal and plans to increase the efficiency of clean-up.

Mayor Brown thanked all those involved for their hard work and effort.

There being no further business, Mayor Bob Brown adjourned the meeting at 11:31 a.m.



ATTEST:

Kara Andrepont, City Secretary

Mark Hicks, Mayor