

**MERCEDES CITY COMMISSION
SPECIAL MEETING
MARCH 20, 2020 – 12:00 PM
MERCEDES CITY HALL – COMMISSION CHAMBERS**

CITY COMMISSION PRESENT

Mayor Henry Hinojosa
Mayor Pro-Tem Leo Villarreal
Cris Hernandez
Jose Gomez
Leonel Benavidez

STAFF PRESENT

Joselynn Castillo, City Secretary
Mark Sossi, City Attorney
Sergio Zavala, City Manager
Hugo Peralez, I.T.
Dago Chavez, ACM/Police Chief
Nereida Perez, Finance Director
Javier Campos, Interim Fire Chief
Antonio Montelongo, PD Officer

OTHERS PRESENT

Claudio Hinojosa, Mercedes Enterprise

(NOTE: due to the '10' rule, people
would come in & out during meeting)

(NOTE: meeting was FB live streamed)

1.) CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Mayor Henry Hinojosa, noticing that a quorum was present, called the meeting to order at 12:00 p.m.

2.) ESTABLISH QUORUM

A quorum was present. All members of the City Commission were present, with no one being absent.

3.) INVOCATION

Commissioner Gomez expressed a prayer on behalf of those present.

4.) PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Commissioner Hernandez led those present in an honorable declaration of our country's Pledge of Allegiance.

5.) CONSIDERATION OF EXTENSION THE DECLARATION OF LOCAL DISASTER DUE TO PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY

City Attorney Mark Sossi indicated that the Mayor has the statutory authority to Declare an Emergency, but no more than seven days. If it is to be extended, this requires the affirmative vote of the City Commission.

Commissioner Leonel Benavidez referred to the City's Emergency Management Plan, and whether it is available for the general public to view. City Manager Zavala indicated that if it was not on the city's website, then it'll be posted soon hereafter. Mayor agreed that it should be posted on the City's website.

Mayor Hinojosa stated that on this COVID-19 threat, if someone feels symptoms, that they should go to their private doctor to further examine them specifically for the virus.

Mayor Pro-Tem Leo Villarreal asked how the Declaration would be enforced. Mr. Zavala stated that notices will be prepared to send to residents so they would be more aware of the threat, and the need to comply with safety measures. Ultimately, the Police Department and the Code Enforcement Office will be involved on enforcement matters.

Commissioner Leonel Benavidez made a motion to approve the extension of the Emergency Declaration until April 3, 2020 (11:59 p.m.). Mayor Pro-Tem Leo Villarreal seconded the motion. Upon a called vote, the motion to approve the extension was unanimously approved.

6.) RE: 1 MILE ROAD E. PROJECT – AUTHORIZE STAFF TO NEGOTIATE WITH TOP ENGINEERING FIRM(S)

City Consultant Mike Mesa explained the City/TXDoT procurement process being that the RFQs are published, 3 raters rank the filed engineering proposals, and that points are awarded on various criteria. The process includes that only the City Manager is authorized to negotiate with the top firm; however, TXDoT has to review the city's ranking process for their approval, too.

There was discussion from the Commission in that Staff did not provide sufficient data on the engineering firms, and the preferred need of having some information provided so they could also further examine the firms. With no information, the Commission did not know who were the top firms, their qualifications, and the type of projects they completed.

In the discussion, Mr. Mesa explained that if the City did not agree with contractual terms with the first 'top ranked' firm, then the City Manager could meet with the second ranked firm; and so forth. He also stated that the City Commission is able to be part of the negotiations.

Thereafter, Commissioner Leonel Benavidez made a motion to approve this item subject to TXDoT approval. Commissioner Jose Gomez seconded the motion. Upon a called vote, the motion for approval was unanimously approved.

Prior to adjourning, Mayor Hinojosa expressed that the City Commission would meet on Monday regarding their consideration to postpone the May election to November 2020.

7.) ADJOURN

With no further business to conduct, Commissioner Leonel Benavidez moved for adjournment, with Commissioner Leo Villarreal seconding. Upon a called vote, the motion to adjourn was unanimously approved.