

**MERCEDES CITY COMMISSION  
REGULAR MEETING  
SEPTEMBER 4, 2018 – 6:00 P.M.  
MERCEDES CITY HALL – COMMISSION CHAMBERS**

<b>MEMBERS PRESENT:</b>	<b>Henry Hinojosa</b>	<b>Mayor</b>
	<b>Ruben Guajardo</b>	<b>Mayor Pro-Tem</b>
	<b>Howard Wade</b>	<b>Commissioner</b>
	<b>Leandro Villarreal</b>	<b>Commissioner</b>
	<b>Cristella De Leon Hernandez</b>	<b>Commissioner</b>
	<b>Sergio Zavala</b>	<b>Assistant City Manager</b>
	<b>Juan Molina</b>	<b>City Attorney</b>

**MEMBERS ABSENT: NONE**

**Staff: Nereida Perez, Marisol Vidales, Tommy Ureste, and Joselynn Castillo.**

**1.)CALL MEETING TO ORDER.**

Mayor Hinojosa welcomed everyone to the meeting and called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

**2.)ESTABLISH QUORUM.**

All members of the Commission were present which constituted a full quorum.

**3.)INVOCATION.**

Reverend Uvaldo Jacques said the invocation.

**4.)PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE.**

Commissioner Leo Villarreal led in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**5.)PUBLIC HEARING REGARDING 2018 TAX YEAR PROPOSED PROPERTY TAX RATE FOR THE CITY OF MERCEDES.**

Mayor Hinojosa opened the Public Hearing at 6:01 pm. Mr. Zavala stated the current tax rate is 0.745 and the 2018 proposed tax rate is to remain the same. The effective tax rate is 0.7492 and the roll back tax rate is 0.727.

Jose Gomez asked what the proposed tax rate from the county at which Mr. Zavala stated 0.7492. Mr. Gomez then asked about the City's proposed rate at which Mr. Zavala and the Mayor stated it was to stay the same at 0.745. There was a question from Manuel Garza asking what the public hearing was about. Mayor Hinojosa stated it is for audience to state if they agree or disagree with the proposed tax rate staying the same. Mr. Garza commented about the audit and recommended lowering the tax rate, and would like to see the funds recouped.

Mayor Hinojosa closed the public hearing at 6:05 pm.

**6.)CONSENT AGENDA (ORDINANCE NO. 98-21):**

**D.) APPROVAL OF MINUTES FOR CITY COMMISSION MEETING (S) HELD AUGUST 21 AND AUGUST 24, 2018. B.) SECOND AND FINAL READING OF ORDINANCE NO. 2018-30 ON BUDGET AMENDMENT FOR REMEDIATION OF POLICE DEPARTMENT BUILDING. C.) SECOND AND FINAL READING OF ORDINANCE NO. 2018-31 ON BUDGET AMENDMENT BY RATIFYING THE INT. CITY MANAGER'S ACTION TO PROCURE MILITARY RESCUE VEHICLE. D.) RATIFY APPROVAL TO SUBMIT GRANT APPLICATION FOR THE LADD AND KATHERINE HANCHER GRANT FOR THE LIBRARY. E.) APPROVAL OF REQUEST TO DECLARE SURPLUS INVENTORY AND AUTHORIZE DISPOSAL (BOND & BOND AUCTION). F.) APPROVAL OF CONTRACT FOR THE NORTH VERMONT DRAINAGE PROJECT. (RDH) G.) APPROVAL OF REQUEST TO AUTHORIZE STAFF TO SOLICIT FOR RFQ TO UPDATE THE CITY OF MERCEDES' PARKS MASTER PLAN.**

Mayor Pro-Tem Guajardo made a motion to approve all items under consent agenda. Commissioner Villarreal seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

**7.)PRESENTATION OF END-OF-YEAR REPORT BY VIDA (VALLEY INITIATIVE FOR DEVELOPMENT & ADVANCEMENT).**

Ms. Priscilla D. Alvarez from VIDA was not present.

**8.)PRESENTATION BY KEEP MERCEDES BEAUTIFUL (KMB) ON RECENT AWARD AND UPDATE ON KMB PROJECTS.**

Joe Martinez informed the Commission that KMB board had received awards at the Keep Texas Beautiful Conference. Mr. Martinez stated that Mercedes came in 3<sup>rd</sup> place overall in the State of Texas. KMB Board received a Good Standing Affiliate Award, Sustained Excellence Award, and Governor's Community Achievement Award. Mr. Martinez updated the Commission on the projects KMB is working on. They would like to start planting in the Park by Ten-Ten store using the tires that were collected by the CSI Program, have a butterfly garden, and pumpkin patches for the community to have fun. Commissioner Wade expressed his appreciation for all the work being done by the KMB board.

Pictures were taken after the presentation.

a motion to award the contract on audit of City sales tax collections to Avenue Insights & Analytics. Mayor Pro-Tem Guajardo seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

Mayor Hinojosa called the meeting into executive session at 6:39 P.M. No action will be taken during this time.

**16.)EXECUTIVE SESSION:**

**-DISCUSSION REGARDING DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE ASSISTANT CITY MANAGER. – SECTION 551.074, TEXAS GOVERNMENT CODE ANNOTATED. – PERSONNEL.**

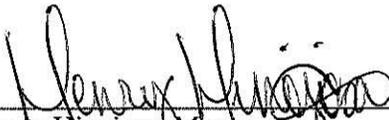
Mayor Hinojosa called the meeting back to order at 8:48 P.M.

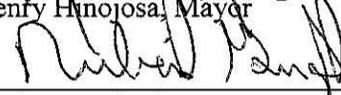
**17.)DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION REGARDING ITEM(S) DISCUSSION IN EXECUTIVE SESSION.**

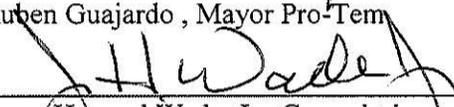
There was no action taken on this item.

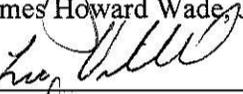
**18.) ADJOURN.**

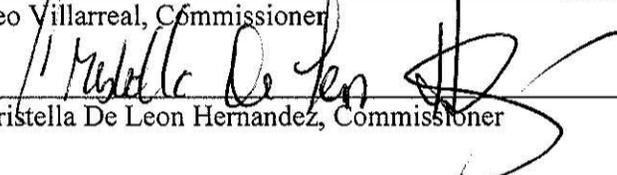
Mayor Hinojosa made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mayor Pro-Tem Guajardo seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

  
Henry Hinojosa, Mayor

  
Ruben Guajardo, Mayor Pro-Tem

  
James Howard Wade, Jr., Commissioner

  
Leo Villarreal, Commissioner

  
Cristella De Leon Hernandez, Commissioner



ATTEST:

  
Arcelia L. Felix, City Secretary

**9.)PRESENTATION BY FIRE CHIEF/EMC TOMMY URESTE ON RECOGNITION BY THE HIDALGO COUNTY COMMISSIONER'S COURT.**

Fire Chief Tommy Ureste informed the Commission that the Mercedes Fire Department was recognized by the Hidalgo County Commissioner's Court for their efforts during the June flood and received a distinguished award.

**10.) UPDATING PRESENTATION BY CITY CONSULTANT MIKE MESA ON FEMA'S DAMAGE ASSESSMENT FOR VALLEY (MERCEDES) REGION.**

Mike Mesa updated the Commission regarding the FEMA damage assessment. Mr. Mesa stated that FEMA has a \$37 Million threshold to qualify for disaster relief with Mercedes submitting \$3.4 Million in damages. As per the Mayor, Mr. Mesa met with other cities that were affected and as a region they submitted \$195 Million in damages. Mr. Mesa will be resubmitting the application to FEMA so they may reassess all the damages. Mayor Hinojosa stated, as a point of clarification, that this was not for individual homes. At a question by Commissioner Wade, Mr. Mesa stated the City will need to absorb the amount not covered by FEMA and any assistance provided would be 80/20. Mr. Mesa recommends taking core samples for damages that can't be seen starting now. Commissioner Wade asked if there are any funds we could use to improve infrastructure. Mr. Mesa stated the money will help repair what is broken and because the City participated with Hidalgo County to develop a Hazardous Mitigation plan in 2016, the City may ask for mitigation money for drainage issues. Commissioner Wade stated some of the problem areas that need to be looked at that the drainage issued that start in Hidalgo County and end in Cameron County.

**11.)PUBLIC HEARING REGARDING RE-ALLOCATION OF FUNDS OF PROPOSED FY 2017 PROGRAMMED ACTIVITIES.**

Mayor Hinojosa opened the Public Hearing at 6:25 P.M.

Mr. Zavala addressed the Commission that the Hidalgo County Urban County program informed the City of non-expenditures from the Senior Services – Senior Community Outreach. A total of \$7,500 in funding is now available and needs to be re-allocated. Mr. Zavala recommends \$2,000 being allocated to Dr. Hector P. Garcia Memorial Library for furniture in the Children's section and \$5,500 to the Mercedes Fire Department for weight training equipment. Mayor Hinojosa called for any public comments at this time.

Mr. Israel Coronado asked if the funding can be used for drainage, flood victims, or parks. Mr. Zavala stated the funds cannot be used for drainage or flood victims but can be used for parks. Mr. Coronado would like the funds to be used to build a retention pond at the park to help mitigate some of the flooding. Mayor Hinojosa called for any other comments at which there were none and closed the public hearing at 6:28 p.m.

Commissioner Wade stated that the issue addressed in the public comments can be addressed with the help from FEMA. Commissioner Wade made a motion to approve \$2,000 being allocated to the Library and \$5,500 for the Fire Department. Commissioner Villarreal seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

**12.) DISCUSSION AND ACTION TO AUTHORIZE STAFF TO SOLICIT FOR RFP'S FOR A LEASE PURCHASE OPTION OF POLICE FLEET READY VEHICLES.**

Mr. Zavala informed the Commission about the age of the police fleet vehicles in the Police Department and would like to rectify the matter. Mr. Zavala stated that increasing vehicle maintenance was the major criteria in the assessment and would like support to authorize staff to solicit for a lease purchase proposal for 9 vehicles. Mayor Pro-Tem Guajardo stated he would like go out for all vehicles not just fleet vehicles which include brush trucks. Mayor Pro-Tem Guajardo then made a motion to authorize staff to solicit for RFP's for a Lease Purchase option of Police Fleet Ready Vehicles. Commissioner Wade seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

**13.) DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION TO APPROVE PROCEDURES FOR SELECTION AND CONTRACTING OF PROFESSIONAL SERVICE PROVIDERS FOR FEDERAL ROAD PROJECTS.**

Mr. Zavala addressed the Commission about approving procurement procedures TXDoT has re-vamped. Mr. Zavala stated if there are more layers involved in the process and no step can be overlooked. The City has a project with the MPO for street widening and due to the County of Hidalgo already adopting the policy, the city tried to have them be the lead agency. Mr. Zavala recommends that the City of Mercedes adopt the TXDoT procedures in order for the process to be faster. Mike Mesa was present and commented that 3 cities have already adopted the policy and if approved the project can move forward. Mayor Pro-Tem Guajardo made a motion to approve procedures for selection and contracting of professional service providers for federal road projects. Commissioner Wade seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

**14.) DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION TO RE-APPOINT FOUR MEMBERS AND APPOINT TWO NEW MEMBERS TO THE KEEP MERCEDES BEAUTIFUL BOARD.**

Mr. Zavala informed the Commission about the 9 KMB members' terms. The KMB board consists of 9 members with 4 members whose term expires in September 2018. All 4 members expressed interest in continuing to serve and there are 2 vacant seats. Ms. April Castro, Mr. Lawrence Serna, and Ms. Ashley Werbiski submitted applications for the KMB board. Commissioner Wade stated he spoke with Mr. Serna who decided to withdraw his application. Armando Garcia addressed the Commission that Ms. Ashley Werbiski was no longer interested in being appointed to the KMB Board. Mayor Pro-Tem Guajardo made a motion to re-appoint all current members and to appoint Ms. April Castro to the seat expiring September 2018. Commissioner Wade seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

**15.) DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION TO AWARD CONTRACT ON AUDIT OF CITY SALES TAX COLLECTIONS.**

Mr. Zavala addressed the Commission that in soliciting for RFP's for sales tax collection auditing services the City only received one proposal from Avenue Insights & Analytics. Mr. Zavala stated the firm would not be paid outright, but by the percentage of the proceeds recovered. Mayor Hinojosa stated the Cities the Company has worked for and then made