



## CITY COUNCIL WORKSHOP CITY OF BAY CITY

Monday, February 10, 2025 at 4:00 PM  
COUNCIL CHAMBERS | 1901 5th Street

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### COUNCIL MEMBERS

**Mayor:** Robert K. Nelson

**Mayor Pro Tem:** Becca Sitz

**Council Members:** Benjamin Flores, Jim Folse, Bradley Westmoreland, Blayne Finlay

#### Vision Statement

We envision Bay City as a thriving, family-centered community where our citizens can live, work, worship, and play, while welcoming visitors to experience our beautiful environment and diverse culture.

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### MINUTES

#### CALL TO ORDER AND CERTIFICATION OF QUORUM

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Robert K. Nelson at 4:01 PM.

#### PRESENT:

Mayor Robert K. Nelson

Mayor Pro Tem Becca Sitz

Council Member Jim Folse

Council Member Bradley Westmoreland

Council Member Blayne Finlay

#### PUBLIC COMMENTS

Jerry Evans, a former City Council Member, stated that in over 12 months, he did not see where Council had taken a vote to change anything regarding the charter. He feels like it's being rushed because of the election deadline and feels Council is trying to delete 8 pages from the charter and settle it in one vote. Mr. Evans then passed out copies of ordinance 1628. Bruce Kroskopf (Bay City) commented on the changes being made to the City Manager's residency status. He stated the City may have a candidate in the future that wants to raise animals for 4h and that is hard to do from a backyard in town. Bobby Head (Bay City) also commented on the residency status of the City Manager. Jessica Duhon (Bay City) made a comment about the notice the City puts out about the meetings on the website. She is also unclear about the wording repetitive state law or in contrast, on the agenda. Anne Marie Odefey, City Attorney, gave some clarity on the red lines and wording in the proposed charter changes and the reasons why these are proposed changes. Ms. Odefey mentioned there will be a lot of education for the voters in the next two months.

#### REGULAR ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION, CONSIDERATION AND/OR APPROVAL

##### 1. Charter ~ Discuss proposed Charter Amendment Measure "A".

City Attorney, Anne Marie Odefey stated there will be a form available at tomorrow's meeting for council to vote on each particular section as they please. The form will be a public document and will decide what goes on the ballot. Mayor Robert K. Nelson commented these meetings are just clarifications for us to know the information that is going to be voted on by the public. Ms. Odefey commented in the past charter review, former Council Member Mr. Cornman, liked El Campo's charter,

so that's what council went with for the ballot. That's how the residency requirement got in the charter, not by the charter commission. Council Member Blayne Finlay asked out of respect for transparency, how can the public expect to be educated moving forward from now till the election? To which, City Manager, Scotty Jones replied, the City will use external newsletters, town hall meetings, newspaper publications, and council meetings so the public can hear what's going on and share their thoughts.

## **2. Charter ~ Discuss proposed Charter Amendment Measure "B".**

City Attorney, Anne Marie Odefey said council meetings are done by ordinance, and can be done on a preset schedule. Crystal Folse does not agree with having meetings once a month and stated there's no reason council cannot have two meetings a month. She feels it gets a lot more accomplished. Council Member Jim Folse said there's nothing in the charter that states what the schedule is or that it has to be on a specific day. It just states that there has to be a set schedule that's adopted. The schedule can be changed and published. Ms. Odefey commented that there is no fiscal impact on holding council meetings once a month.

## **3. Charter ~ Discuss proposed Charter Amendment Measure "C".**

City Attorney, Anne Marie Odefey stated that probably 90% of this measure came from the charter revision of 2018 and the legal review that was done with them at that time. Jerry Evans requested someone give the City Attorney a copy of the 1868 ordinance. Mr. Evans asked why the Council is going into executive sessions and asked Council to give the public the right to know what they are voting on. If this is deleted, the City Secretary is no longer a city officer under the local government code. Council Member, Blayne Finlay agreed with Mr. Evans in that he does not think power should be taken away from Council for the right to an appeal for directors. Ms. Odefey mentioned the City has no clear definition of directors and explained some differences between weak-mayor and strong-mayor forms of government. It is stated that an organizational chart will come through the budget process and be approved by Council. The Mayor stated that, in practice, that is what we have been doing. Everything comes to Council first, and we will put into charter what we are practicing. The majority of what we are doing is cleanup. Council Member Bradley Westmoreland proposed discussing measures C and D together. Council Members Blayne Finlay and Jim Folse both agreed. City Secretary, Jeanna Thompson, commented that we are not taking anything out, just going by state law. Ms Odefey stated measures A, B and E are ready. Measures C and D can be held till the Council is ready, and they have more time to discuss. Council Member Folse would like to see measures A and E go through. As far as measures B, C and D, he proposed continuing to meet and setting the elections for those measures for next May so they can be discussed further. Council Member Finlay agreed and stated Council is still gathering information and facts as well; decisions haven't been made yet. Ms. Odefey commented that the City is not violating the charter, only the spirit is being followed, nothing has been hidden from the Council. There are mis-definitions in the charter and it is in conflict with itself. That is why we are trying to clean it up. City Manager, Scotty Jones, wants to improve communication with the community and recommends having a standing routine item for any updates or questions. Mr. Westmoreland asked to pause the discussion of measures C and D till a later date and continue discussing measure E.

## **4. Charter ~ Discuss proposed Charter Amendment Measure "D".**

## **5. Charter ~ Discuss proposed Charter Amendment Measure "E".**

Council Member Bradley Westmoreland would like to see the requirement reduced to a response time rather than distance. Council Member Jim Folse agrees with the limit being within the county, within so many minutes response time. City Attorney, Anne Marie Odefey stated the charter will continue to say Bay City ETJ, council will have to find good cause to extend to Matagorda County. Mayor Robert K. Nelson commented that you can find someone that's perfect for the job, but they want to raise a family on family land or their kids are involved in FFA or 4H and the City cannot hire them

because of the limitations. They just lost an awesome candidate. There has to be some flexibility in order to get the best for the City.

**ITEMS/COMMENTS FROM MAYOR, COUNCIL MEMBERS AND CITY MANAGER**

Mayor Nelson thanked everyone for being at the meeting and thanked them for sharing their concerns.

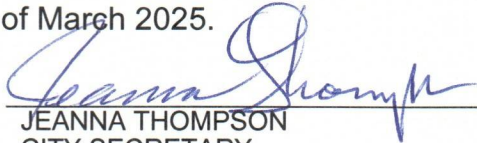
**ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 5:43 pm

**PASSED AND APPROVED**, this 25<sup>th</sup> day of March 2025.



ROBERT K. NELSON, MAYOR  
CITY OF BAY CITY, TEXAS



JEANNA THOMPSON  
CITY SECRETARY

