

MINUTES
City of Falfurrias
CITY COUNCIL
Planning Workshop Meeting

David G. Longoria, Mayor
Frank Nevarez, Mayor Pro-Tem
Justo Ramirez, Alderman
Isaac Homer Salinas Jr., Alderman
Manuel Perez Jr., Alderman
Juan Domingo Perez, Alderman
Rebecca Hayward, City Attorney

L. David Flores Jr., City Administrator/Utility Director
Melinda R. Garza, City Clerk
Alberto Gonzalez, Chief of Police
Adalberto B. Pena, Director of Public Works
Ricardo Soliz, Municipal Judge
Lamar Villarreal, Code Enforcement

February 28, 2018
6:00 P.M.

I. MEETING CALL TO ORDER:

A. Roll Call and Recording of City Council of the City of Falfurrias Members Present

David G. Longoria – Mayor Frank Nevarez – Mayor Pro-Tem
 Justo Ramirez – Alderman Isaac Homer Salinas Jr. – Alderman
 Manuel Perez Jr. - Alderman Juan Domingo Perez – Alderman

Mayor D. Longoria called the meeting to order at 6:14pm, and welcomed the following visitors: Alberto Gonzalez, Lamar Villarreal, Rebecca P. Alvarado, and Adalberto Pena.

Present were: Mayor D. Longoria, Pro-Tem Frank Nevarez, Alderman Manuel Perez Jr., Alderman Juan D. Perez, Alderman Ramirez, Alderman Homer Salinas Jr., City Administrator David Flores, City Clerk Melinda R. Garza.

Absent: City Attorney.

B. Roll Call and Recording of Board Members Present

Roel Garza – President Israel (Sonny) Villarreal – Vice President
 Servando Guerra – Secretary Jordan A. Garcia
 Mauricio R. Lopez Eric Ramos
 Raul Rivera

C. Declaration of Quorum Present

Mr. Raul Rivera advised they had a quorum for The Brooks County ISD Board Members.

D. Recording of City Administrator and Staff Members Present, Superintendent of School Present

II. MOMENT OF SILENCE

Pledge of Allegiances:

Texas Pledge: "Honor the Texas flag; I pledge allegiance to thee, Texas, one state under GOD, one and indivisible."

Mr. Raul Rivera led the City Officials, and ISD Board Members in the Pledge of Allegiance, and the Texas Pledge.

III. THE FALFURRIAS CITY COUNCIL AND BROOKS COUNTY ISD COLLABORATIVE PLANNING SESSION

A. Discussion of Partnership Goals in order to develop collaborative efforts with the City of Falfurrias and Brooks County ISD to better serve the children and families of the community and all matter pertaining thereto.

Superintendent Maria Casas spoke on agenda item. She advised the City Council and Brooks County ISD Board Members they are very excited to establish this partnership with the City. She went on to say the day has come that we come together as two governmental bodies to discuss our needs.

City Administrator David Flores also spoke on agenda item. He advised the Officials this is very

important for our kids and our citizens. Mrs. Casas went over some things she wanted the Elected Officials to keep in mind.

1. To be fully present with body and mind.
2. Treat each other with dignity and respect. We are elected Officials. Let's be respectful and mindful.
3. Tell the truth without blame or judgment.
4. Be open minded. Listen to each other on how we can make our School District and community a better place.
5. Take care of ourselves. Mrs. Casas advised where the restrooms were, and where the exists are located.
6. Let's all remain calm; take a deep breath and just remain calm.

Dr. Casas asked the Officials if they had any additional to add to their list.

Alderman M. Perez advised he was very excited that we finally got the two entities together. Since he had been in office this has never happened before. Alderman M. Perez advised he had been a councilman for the past ten years, and they had never had anything like this before.

Mr. Raul Rivera asked why the County is not at this meeting. Dr. Casas explained how they wanted to start with the City; however this is not the end for this. She said eventually we will have all three entities together. Dr. Casas advised we have a good relationship with both the County and the City, we have been blessed as a learning organization, and they will not exclude anyone.

Mr. David Flores said at this point we take the direction from the government body. Mrs. Casas went on to say this is where we facilitate, and then this is where we will establish where we will be together.

Mrs. Casas advised the Officials there is funding where we can apply. She went on to say there are Grants where we can apply and possibly qualify for them. She also advised the Grant was focusing to move to success. She advised this is one objective where we can go apply together for this Grant not only for the ISD, but for the future.

Mr. Flores advised this will improve our over all image, and this could possibly to economic development in the future. He went on to say working together to make things better for the kids and the community.

Mr. Raul Rivera advised people have to have pride in what they have in this town. We actually have to take care of what we have presently otherwise we will never have anything to show for.

Alderman Nevarez advised us the City had never sponsored a TML Conference. He continued this was our very first Conference, and he thanked the ISD for letting the National Honor Society, and Student Council for helping with the serving of the meal. Alderman Nevarez went on to say that the people from our TML Conference were very interested in the restored building where we had the Conference. The owners were able to explain to them when the building was built, and how it took them to restore it. He said the schools are a selling point in our community, and marketing what we presently have.

Eric Ramos School Board Member also addressed the Elected Officials. He advised community issues are above the state average in attendance. He went on to say some sort of collaboration community wide in getting our kids back in school would help a lot. Mrs. Casas also advised there has to be consistency even when they appear in court, and that is a challenge in what we have to do. Mr. Ramos also asked what are the legality that can be looked at, to determine why our kids are not in school.

Alderman Nevarez advised he had spoken to the Police Chief and advised maybe we can set up some sort of Crime Stoppers for schools. He continued to say that way the kids would have someone to call to let them know why certain kids are not in school or other situations, and maybe we could offer some sort of monetary for giving the information. Alderman Nevarez also mentioned we could possibly start enforcing our City Ordinances, and making sure the kids get home early and not on the streets. The Chief advised he is up for a challenge.

Chief Alberto Gonzalez also spoke and addressed the Elected Officials. The Chief advised it's instrumental to get everyone here together. He continued to say Alderman Nevarez had mentioned us working together with the school which we have always done. Chief advised of the mentor program, and went on to say they would do all they can to work with the different

schools. He said we need to come up with new ideas, and take it from there hand in hand. Chief Gonzalez said we don't have all the answers but working hand in hand to see what kind of programs we can come up with and we can do all we can to work with the schools.

Mr. Ramos spoke also on the mentor program. He said the kids need to know that we are there for them for whatever they may need. He continued to say we need to be proactive instead of reactive. The Chief added we are just concentrating on the kids; however we need to reach out to the parents because they play a very important role. Chief went on to say that we need to adapt to change because everyday there are changes, and they need to respect authority.

Mr. Raul Rivera advised of the three year old program, taking the kids from the parents at a very young age and placing them with other relatives. He went on to say that sometimes this is not a good thing. Mr. Jordan Garcia advised we have always had this in our lives. He went on to say that in today's kids we don't have that substitute dad. He continued to say that when he was young his father was hardly ever around because he was always working.

Mr. Flores asked how we can help with this situation. A security Officer at one of the campuses advised things that we didn't have before we have now. He went on to say that we are responsible for educating the people. He said it takes a village to raise a child. He said he is honored to be part of this meeting, and he also said when we partner like this it sends a message out to make the parents understand what they need to do. He advised he is very honored to be a part of this meeting.

Mr. Eric Ramos addressed the elected Officials and advised we need to have a steering committee with criteria's and standards; instead of some quick fix. He went on to say the same steps would apply to the attendance. He continued to say once we get a program going we would have to take it and go with it. Mrs. Casas advised anyone can mentor a student. She advised this is not just developing a program, but building relationships for them to trust us. She advised that kids are being raised by the grandparents, or a family member or even friends. We are going to work together to get this mentor program in place for the betterment of the children.

Alderman Nevarez asked if Falfurrias has ever been involved with the Big Brother, Big Sister program. He continued to say maybe we can reach out to this group to see what kind of assistance or advise they can give us. Teresa Ramon Pena spoke on the agenda item. She advised the Elected Officials that she was involved with this program. She went on to say when you enroll in this program there is an intense interview with the family that will be hosting a child. She went on to say that this is a very good program, and you have to be committed. She advised that it is a very fun program, and can be educating at the same time. She said that you will through a very intense back ground check due to the sensitivity of the program; however it is a very good program. Alderman Nevarez asked is she could get some more information on this program. She advised she could.

Mrs. Casas advised they would be having a meeting "long Term Vision" next Wednesday at 6pm, and she was extending an invitation to all that were at the meeting tonight. Mr. Flores advised her that is actually when we have our City Council meeting so we probably won't be able to attend. Mrs. Casas advised that they could adapt.

Mr. Jordan Garcia advised they have had several grants that they have missed out on. He advised there was one for Law Enforcement on the large dome building, also known as the FEMA buildings for shelters.

Alderman M. Perez asked with all these events that are going on such as the shootings are we prepared. Mrs. Casas advised that she could not say that we are. She advised she would like to commend the Police Department on a drill they had. Everything went well. She advised she felt very blessed. She went on to say that they had a threat and the Police Department was there, and they stayed there until it became safe for everyone.

Mr. Jordan Garcia asked about the traffic flow at the different schools. He advised it's dangerous when the kids are crossing. Mrs. Casas advised the crossing guards need to be more aware. Mr. J. Garcia advised even if you see a Police Unit present that might slow the people down. He went on to say like in Driscoll people slow down even if no one is in the unit. However people think there is someone in there. Chief Gonzalez advised that they have been talking about a ghost unit at different locations. He advised they have been monitoring traffic at the different schools, and we are working together to get this resolved.

Mrs. Casas asked when will we come together, and we will need to discuss only one item to see what solution we can come up with. Mr. Ruiz advised on thing we struggle with here are a lot of obstacles to adapt. He went on to say having places and facilities where students can go to. He also advised that it would be costly if we can possibly designate a place for the kids.

Mr. Raul Rivera advised if we could have more things for the kids in our town would be great. If we could open an old theater, or even improvise having a movie night in front of the court house. Alderman M. Perez advised during the summer they only have the Little League. He also advised they had thought of a possible swimming pool, or even a water park would also be good to establish in the town. Alderman Nevarez advised that would keep the kids occupied.

Mrs. Casas advise what else they would like to talk about at our next meeting. Alderman Ramirez advised it would be good to continue to beautify our City. He continued to say keeping up with the cleaning of the communities. He went on to say cleaning the neighborhood, and keep this going until our City is where we want it to be. Mrs. Casas added maybe we can also have learning services for our children.

Mr. Raul Rivera advised we should only discuss one topic at a time. He said possibly the topic of Mentorship. Mr. Flores added truancy issues. Alderman Nevarez added that maybe we can include the children to see what they want to see from us as Elected Officials. He said possibly all walks of life. Alderman M. Perez asked if we would include the County at the next meeting. Mrs. Casas added we most certainly can. We will have to plan to see when the best time for all entities is.

Mrs. Casas also added that they were very appreciative with the City Personnel. She advised they had helped them with spreading some asphalt at the bus barn. She also advised they would help fix the press box at the Pony League Field. She went on to say that they would put all their resources together to get things done. She also said whatever you need from us we will share with you. Mr. Flores advised the City will more then likely help with the truancy aspect. Mr. Flores also advised our SRO Officer has been here since 2009, and things are going well with him. Mr. Flores also advised another program he would like to look into is opening up a Boy's and Girl's Club. He went on to say that Day one has been an accomplishment. Mrs. Casas added this is a continuation that we will follow through.

IV. ADJOURN

Mr. Raul Rivera adjourned the Planning WORKSHOP Meeting at 7:07pm.

The following minutes were approved at a Regular Meeting held on April 04, 2018.



Melinda R. Garza, City Clerk

David G. Longoria, Mayor