



# *CITY OF GIDDINGS*

Joel Lopez, Mayor  
Alan Casey, Mayor Pro-Tem  
Linda Pruitt  
Jacob Janda  
Mark D. Muniz  
Kevin Rinn  
Spencer Schneider, City Manager

GIDDINGS CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING MINUTES  
**MONDAY, JUNE 24, 2024 AT 7:00 P.M.**  
CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS, 118 E. RICHMOND ST. GIDDINGS, TEXAS

**1. Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Lopez at 7:03 p.m. with following present:

Members Present: Mayor Joel Lopez, Mayor Pro-Tem Alan Casey, City Council Members: Linda Pruitt, Jacob Janda, Mark Muniz, Kevin Rinn.

Staff Present: City Manager Spencer Schneider, City Secretary Andrea Ray, Director of Public Services Kenny Ray, Library Director Jessi Akins, Assistant Chief Shane Ray.

**2. Pledges to the U.S and Texas Flags:** Pledges were said.

**3. Invocation and Welcome:** Ryan Grube from First Assembly Church gave the invocation and Mayor Joel Lopez welcomed all in attendance.

**4. Announcements:** Mayor Joel Lopez announced the Freedom Fest at Veterans Park Wednesday July 3, 2024.

**5. Presentations and Proclamations:** Giddings High School Girls Soccer Team-Proclamation

**6. Citizens Comments:** Charlie Mayer-spoke on the Giddings Cemetery. Faye Terry spoke on the City of Giddings and Giddings Chamber Agreement.

**7. Consent Agenda:** The following items are self-explanatory and will be enacted with one motion. There will be no separate discussion of these items unless a City Council Member so requests.

a. Consider approval of the minutes from City Council Regular Meeting held on Monday, June 10 2024.

A motion was made by City Council Member Jacob Janda and seconded by City Council Member Kevin Rinn to approve the minutes from the City Council Regular Meeting held on Monday, June 10, 2024.

Motion carries by the following vote:

Ayes: City Council Members: Casey, Pruitt, Janda, Muniz, Rinn

Nays: None



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## 8. New Business:

a. Discuss and take possible action regarding the evaluation report of the Giddings VFD fire apparatus status.

City Manager Spencer Schnieder introduced Larry Di Camillo with C Side Consultants, will present this agenda item. Larry will present a fleet needs assessment for the Giddings Volunteer Fire Department. Larry started with the scope of work to identify chassis type of proposed apparatus purchase and overall needs assessment of a department pumper apparatus fleet to include condition and determined of service life. Compliance with required annualized testing and an overview of maintenance and repair practices. This does not include Insurance Services Office specific assessment, determinations or recommendations. Larry stated the foundations are National Fire Protection Association and the Texas Commission on Fire Protection and the Texas Administrative Code. Larry presented a pumper apparatus overview with the following with no specification standard with exception of all equipped with a 1250GPM capacity pump and 1000-gallon water tank. Insufficient ground ladder quantities for target hazards. No appreciable Class B suppression capabilities for target hazards. Larry stated varying tool/equipment compliments which do not support standardized operations and varying data of apparatus with regards to reliability for standardized operations. Larry listed all engines and the deficiency for each one. Larry stated a comparison on the chassis /cab for custom versus commercial fire trucks. Larry gave a list of recommendations to replace, refurb and retain and also to purchases for fire trucks. There are considerations on replacement costs suggestions for the Giddings Volunteer Fire Department. Moving forward IT is recommended to engage the services of an apparatus advisor for any purchase. To ensure apparatus specifications match the needs of the community while decreasing unnecessary costs. Ensures purchasing entities receive what is specified and purchased. Giddings Volunteer Fire Department Chief Charlie Brown spoke to Mayor and City Council and stated time is not a friend to us. Charlie stated that Larry did get to go out on a call with us, he saw and knows firsthand what is needed for our Fire Department.

**NO ACTION TAKEN ON THE AGENDA ITEM**





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b. Discussion only regarding Traffic Calming Devices to be on public streets in the City of Giddings.

City Manager Spencer Schnider presented this agenda item to Mayor and City Council.

A city has authority to install traffic calming devices under Sections 311.002 and 544.002 of the Texas Transportation Code. However, the Transportation Code requires that a city obtain the Texas Department of Transportation's permission to place or maintain a traffic-control device on a highway under the department's jurisdiction. TEX. TRANSP. CODE § 544.002. In addition, a traffic study is required prior to the installation of speed bumps. Tex. Att'y Gen. Op No. JC0175. The bigger issue that arises with speed bumps is the argument that they are "obstructions" in the road. Cities have a duty to keep public streets free from obstructions, and erecting or placing any object on a public street that interferes with the full and free use thereof might be considered an obstruction. This duty was originally found in Texas Revised Civil Statute Article 1016, and is now based on Transportation Code § 311.002 and *Dozier v. Austin*, 253 S.W.2d 554 (Tex. Civ. App.--Austin, 1923, writ dismissed w.o.j.). Several cases have been decided in which a city was held liable for damages for failure to remove an obstruction from a city street, from piles of gravel to ropes to wet paint stripes. See e.g., *City of Austin v. Daniels*, 335 S.W.2d 753 (Tex. 1960); *Crow v. City of San Antonio*, 301 S.W.2d 628 (Tex. 1957); *City of Texarkana v. Williams*, 146 S.W. 333 (Tex. Civ. App. 1912, writ refused). The risk involved with the use of speed bumps is that a city might be held liable for any injury or damage that can be attributed to their use and that a court would find that other traffic control devices, such as signs, flashing lights or reduced speed limits are a more reasonable method to control speeding. Traffic Calming Devices (Speed Bumps) Rubber Traffic Calming Device (6' device with end caps) \$210.00 each The state requires that each set of devices shall be a minimum distance of 300'. A typical street width for thru traffic in Giddings is 60'. The drive portion of the street is 40'. Each set of devices would be 36'. Traffic Calming Devices on N Madison Street from Brenham to Independence. Example:  $\$210.00 \times 6 = \$1,260.00 \times 4 \text{ blocks} = \$5,040.00$ . City Manager Spencer Schneider stated he will meet with the Giddings Police Chief and Assistant Chief Shane Ray and come up with a plan for traffic control in neighborhoods and bring it back to the Mayor and City Council.

### NO ACTION TAKEN ON THE AGENDA ITEM

c. Discuss and take possible action regarding the Giddings Chamber of Commerce and Visitor's Center Agreement.

City Manager Spencer Schnieder presented this agenda item to Mayor and City Council. The last HOT Board Training was stated that the if the City of Giddings was given money to the Giddings Chamber of Commerce and Visitor's Center there needs to be an agreement between the two.





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The agreement was draw-up by our City Attorney and brought to Mayor and City Council on the October 10, 2023 City Council Meeting. The document was in the packet and the 60% was on the front page of the agreement. Spencer distributed a report of all the HOT funds for the past years from 2019 till 2023. The money from the Hotel and Motel Tax is always from the previous year funds and the money is always in the rear. The City does know every year how much money there is to allow for the HOT Board to divide up among the groups that ask for it. Spencer asked Heather to go back the past 5 years to show who received what and the amount. If you add what the Giddings Chamber and the Visitor's Center has received from the HOT Board money it has added up to 59% of the funds. Mayor Joel Lopez stated this was on the agenda item from October 10, 2023 City Council Meeting and was voted on and passed for 60% on the agreement. Mayor stated he takes the part of flaunt of that. Mayor stated this amount will take away from the HOT Board decisions for the seven-member board now. Hotel and Motel needs to be heads in beds to allow all groups to qualify for the money. Mayor Pro-Tem Alan Casy stated he asked for this agenda item to be placed the agenda and reviewed. Mayor Pro-Tem Alan asked for the Giddings Chamber's and Visitor's Center to speak first on the agenda item. Denice Harlen is the Director for the Giddings Chambers and Kelita Thomas Tourism Director. Denice read a letter to Mayor and City Council stating all duties and jobs and reasonability's in which the job includes for our City of Giddings and Lee County. The Chamber of Commerce and Visitors Center is grateful for your continued support. We are happy to provide information about all tourism activities, advertising, tours, articles, photographs, and social media documents that are part of our annual report. Since 2012 our office has submitted a detailed report of all advertising and expenditures required by the City of Giddings every year. Over the past 12 years we have received a portion of Hotel Motel Occupancy Tax each year. On average we have received about 57% of the available funds each year. This allows our office to act as the Official Visitors Center for Giddings and Lee County. This is a great way to help travelers and visitors get to know Giddings. We answer calls throughout the year from people looking for information about Giddings and Lee County events and activities, relocation, movie locations, travel bloggers wanting to come to Texas, television shows and national magazines wanting to do spotlights, and much, much more. Every day is different and unique. We are referred to from City Hall, the County, local businesses, and other communities. We strive to help meet the needs of our community and all the travelers and visitors who need our help. As we have in the past, we will continue to provide the City Council with our extensive report that provides in depth information about our work. We hope that city council will continue provide with us with an average of 57% of available hotel motel funds so we can continue to represent our community. Again, we want to thank you for trusting us to be the Official Visitors Center of Giddings and Lee County.

At this time Denice Harlan turned over the discussion to Kelita Thomas and stated she is better at explaining the numbers. Kelita passed out handouts to Mayor and City Council on the value of the visitor's center and examples of what your visitor's center has done for the community. Kelita passed out a handout on the Hotel Income on a monthly basis with details, this listed all the top producing months and shows other months as well. Kelita stated that she will do her job at 200% because this is where her salary comes from.





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Mayor Pro-Tem Alan Casey spoke at this time I agree the Chamber and the Visitor's Center are very critical to our city and the way of life for our community. Mayor Pro-Tem Alan Casey asked why would we strip the money from the HOT Funds. The Mayor and City Council now have a new HOT Board with new members and we cannot just let them come in and only award 40% to other entities of the community. Alan stated he did not look at the agreement and when Spencer stated about the agreement in his redline, I just thought it was just a housekeeping agreement. We have all appointed new members and I don't think it is right by not letting them do the job for HOT Board. I would encourage the Hot Board to look over the applications that are applying for HOT Funds and be fair. Alan is asking to let this HOT Board to get through this year let our Hot Board Members get warm with the HOT Funds. Alan stated he was shocked with the agreement since he didn't look at. Alan asked the Visitor's Center to come back to City Council if they feel the need for more money. Alan stated when the money goes up the percentage goes up and when the money decreases then the percentage will decrease. Alan asked to give the Hot Board Members a chance to serve our city. Denice asked how would you handle the agreement and make changes. Alan stated the agreement is already wrong it states the Chamber owns the land in which the land is County owned. Alan said the agreement would need to be rewritten all together.

A motion was made by City Council Member Jacob Janda and seconded by Mayor Pro-Tem Alan Casey to remove the 60% of the Giddings Chamber of Commerce and Visitor's Center Agreement.

Motion carries by the following vote:

Ayes: City Council Members: Casey, Janda, Muniz, Rinn

Nays: Pruitt

d. Discuss and take possible action to adopt Ordinance # 889 increasing the price of new meter loops from \$45.00 to \$75.00.

City Manager Spencer Schneider presented this agenda item to Mayor and City Council. The city provides electric meter loop cans to the electricians that install new or upgrade meter loops in Giddings. We have kept the price for meter loops at \$45.00 for 20 plus years. The cost for meter cans is currently \$55.00 to \$75.00. We are asking to increase the cost for meter loops to \$75.00 to help offset the cost of the meter cans.

A motion was made by Mayor Pro-Tem Alan Casey and seconded by City Council Member Mark Muniz to adopt Ordinance # 889 increasing the price of new meter loops from \$45.00 to \$75.00.

Motion carries by the following vote:

Ayes: City Council Members: Casey, Pruitt, Janda, Muniz, Rinn

Nays: None



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### 9) City Manager's Report and Announcements:

1. The budget process is going well. We have met with all of the department heads. The first rough draft will be presented to the mayor and council at the July 08, 2024 meeting.
2. The auditors are wrapping up a few loose ends. We expect the audit report to be completed soon.
3. We have switched our city land lines provider from Frontier to Stratihost. We will no longer be using anything from frontier within the next 6 months.
4. Please remember the HOT Board training will be held here at city hall on Friday, June 28, 2024 at 2:30 p.m. Please make sure you contact your HOT Board representative regarding this class. No HOT Tax Board Member will be able to set in and vote at the meeting in August unless they attend the training.
5. I am handing out to the mayor and council the annual water report
6. Claims from the hail damage to city vehicles are now in the processing stage. There were 14 vehicles with hail damage.
7. We are still waiting on the hail damaged structures report from TML.
8. LC Express will be hosting a fried fish fundraiser on July 03, 2024. This will be held at the Venue on Main. This will be plates to go.
9. There has been 35 to 50 people per day visiting the pool. I have directed city staff to order the new sand filters and be ready to install them as soon as the pool closes for the summer. We have been posting on social media the days the pool is opened or closed.
10. Report on the new water well.

**10) Adjournment:** Mayor Joel Lopez adjourned the meeting at 8:58 p.m. Monday June 24, 2024.

ATTEST:

Andrea Ray, City Secretary

Joel Lopez, Mayor

