



CITY OF GIDDINGS

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

GIDDINGS CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

MONDAY, AUGUST 25, 2025 AT 7:00 P.M.

CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS, 118 E. RICHMOND ST. GIDDINGS, TEXAS 78942

1) CALL TO ORDER:

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Joel Lopez at 7:04 p.m. with the 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: Interim City Manager/Finance Director Heather Garner, Director of Public Services Kenny Ray, City Secretary Andrea Ray, City Police Chief Bill Weems, Municipal Court Clerk Rachel Grube, Director of Library Jessie Akins.

2) PLEDGE TO THE AMERICAN AND TEXAS FLAG: Were said.

3) INVOCATION AND WELCOME: Pastor Bill Ellis New Hope Baptist Church gave the invocation and Mayor Joel Lopez welcomed all in attendance.

4) ANNOUNCEMENTS: Director of Library Jessie Akins presented a Grant for Giddings Library.

5) PRESENTATIONS AND PROCLAMATIONS: Proclamation presented to Leroy Wachsmann for Years of Service for the Giddings Volunteer Fire Department as the mechanic.

6) CITIZENS COMMENTS: Each citizen was allowed to speak for 3 minutes each.

1) Pastor Bill Ellis spoke about the Word Wrangler and his book not being accepted.

2) Genny Wildebrandt- unable to attend.

7) CONSENT AGENDA: The following items are considered to be self-explanatory by this City Council and will be enacted with one motion. There will be no separate discussion of this item unless a City Council Member so requests.

a. Approval of the City Council Regular Meeting Minutes held on Monday, August 11, 2025.

A motion was made by City Council Member Jacob Janda and seconded by City Council Member Linda Pruitt to approve the City Council Regular Minutes held on Monday, August 11, 2025.

Motion carried by the following vote:

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

Nays: None.



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8) PUBLIC HEARING:

- a. Conduct a public hearing on the proposed 2025-2026 tax rate of \$0.6275 per \$100 valuation.

Mayor Joel Lopez opened the public hearing at: 7:18 p.m.

Interim City Manager Heather Garner presented this agenda item to Mayor and City Council. The di minimis rate that was included in the proposed budgets was \$0.6571. The rate proposed now is \$0.6275 per \$100 of valuations. Our average homestead valuation increased from \$200,296 to \$215,423, so this tax rate is effectively a \$107.78, or 8.66% increase.

Mayor Joel Lopez closed the public hearing at 7:20 p.m. with no one else wishing to speak.

9) NEW BUSINESS:

- a. Discuss and take possible action to accept the annual financial report for fiscal year ended September 30, 2024.

Interim City Manager Heather Garner presented this agenda item to Mayor and City Council.

Our auditors, Brooks Watson & Co performed our annual audit.

Jon Watson, CPA with Brooks Watson & Co., PLLC is here to present and answer any questions regarding this item. The City of Giddings has an Annual Financial Report for the year ended September 30, 2024. The city received an unmodified opinion which is the highest level of assurance. The overview audit process was explained and components of the annual financial report, financial highlights.

A motion was made by City Council Member Jacob Janda and seconded by City Council Member Mark Muniz to accept the September 30, 2024-year end audit.

Motion carries by the following vote:

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

Nays: None

- b. Discuss water, wastewater, and electric rate study performed by NewGen Strategies & Solutions.

Interim City Manager Heather Garner presented this agenda item to Mayor and City Council.

NewGen has completed a comprehensive review of the City's water, wastewater, and electric rates to ensure they are sufficient to cover operating costs, capital needs, and long-term system sustainability. Their recommendations are included in the proposed FY 2025/26 budget. NewGen Strategies & Solutions discussion will cover the methodology, key findings, and the suggested rate changes for each utility. Megan Kirkland with NewGen Strategies & Solutions presented this agenda item to Mayor and City Council. NewGen was engaged to complete a water, wastewater, and electric rate study.

All three funds were reviewed individually and on a combined basis and Financial metrics recommended for financial stability are 90 Days Cash on Hand, 1.10x Debt Service Coverage, Build Capital Replacement Fund for future capital needs



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Water

- Achieve self-sufficiency by FY 2030
- Implement annual rate increases to meet proposed financial metrics
- Increase water volumetric tier differential to 15%

Wastewater

- Restore fund balance from current negative position to a positive standing by FY 2028
Note: Water and Electric already have positive fund balances
- Achieve self-sufficiency by FY 2030
- Implement annual rate increases from FY 2026 to FY 2028 to meet proposed financial metrics
- Transition from a tiered volumetric rate to a flat rate

Electric

- Charge for all usage amounts
- Remove demand charges from Residential and Small Business
- Adjust rate for Large Commercial/Industrial to be revenue neutral once charging all usage
- Charge Large Commercial/Industrial for demand less than 10 kW

NO ACTION TAKEN

- c. Discuss and take possible action to approve the Special Event “Public” application from Jackie Handrick to host the annual lighted parade to be held on Saturday, November 22, 2025 to start at 6:00 p.m.

Interim City Manager Heather Garner presented this agenda item to Mayor and City Council. Jackie Handrick would like to have another lighted parade this year, and is here to answer any questions. Jackie presented maps to show the different routes for the parades. Jackie asked to have the parade moved to Veterans Park this year for the lighted parade, this would accommodate the lighted parade and route we need.

A motion was made by Kevin Rinn and seconded by City Council Member Mark Muniz to approve the Special Event “Public” application from Jackie Handrick to host the annual lighted parade to be held on Saturday, November 22, 2025 to start at 6:00 p.m.

Motion carried by the following vote:

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

Nays: None.

- d. Discuss and take possible action to approve the Special Event “Public” application from Daniel White for Preaching Tent Services in the Simmang Park on Wednesday, October 1st through Sunday, October 5th, 2025 held at 7:00 p.m. nightly.



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Interim City Manager Heather Garner presented this agenda item to Mayor and City Council.

Daniel White has asked to host services at Simmang Park at 7:00 p.m. each night and is here to answer any questions. Daniel White presented the Preaching Tent Services this event is for the public and everyone is welcomed. The services will be over at 9:00 p.m. nightly we will clean up and pick all our equipment. Daniel stated he spoke with Director of Services Kenny Ray and he helped me with placement of the tent.

A motion was made by City Council Member Jacob Janda and seconded by City Council Member Mark Muniz to approve the Special Event “Public” application from Daniel White for Preaching Tent Services in the Simmang Park on Wednesday, October 1st through Sunday, October 5th, 2025 held at 7:00 p.m. nightly.

Motion carried by the following vote:

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

Nays: None.

- e. Discuss and take possible action to approve the Special Event “Public” application from the City of Giddings Police Department to host the annual National Night Out at the Giddings Veteran’s Park Pavilion on Tuesday, October 7, 2025 from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

Interim City Manager and Finance Director Heather Garner presented this agenda item to Mayor and City Council. National Night Out is a great community event for all, and our PD is excited to host another one this year. Chief Weems is able to answer any questions you may have. Chief Weems stated we will have hot dogs, safety handouts for the citizens and families. Chief stated they will have Giddings Volunteer Fire Department and the Lee County E.M.S for a night of fun and meeting your Giddings Police Department and First Responders. All law enforcement agencies for our area are invited to join.

A motion was made by City Council Member Linda Pruitt and seconded by City Council Member Jacob Janda to approve the Special Event “Public” application from the City of Giddings Police Department to host the annual National Night Out at the Giddings Veteran’s Park Pavilion on Tuesday, October 7, 2025 from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

Motion carried by the following:

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

Nays: None

- f. Discuss and take possible action to approve the Special Event “Public” application from the Giddings Chamber of Commerce for the annual Cars and Coffee to be held on Saturday, October 4, 2025, at the Giddings Downtown Plaza Parking Lot from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Interim City Manager and Finance Director Heather Garner presented this agenda item to Mayor and City Council. Cars and Coffee is an event that has grown every year. The Chamber looks forward to hosting another successful year. Steve Jones is here to answer any questions and present this agenda item. Steve Jones stated



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this is the 3rd year for the Cars and Coffee to be held downtown. We hope to bring in customers for our all business here in town.

A motion was made by Mayor Pro-Tem Alan Casey and seconded by City Council Member Mark Muniz to approve the Special Event “Public” application from the Giddings Chamber of Commerce for the annual Cars and Coffee to be held on Saturday, October 4, 2025, at the Giddings Downtown Plaza Parking Lot from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Motion carried by the following:

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

Nays: None

- g. Discuss and take possible action to approve the Special Event “Public” application from the Immanuel Lutheran Church for the annual Trunk or Treat to be held at 300 N. Grimes in the church parking lot from 6:00pm to 8:00pm on Friday, October 31st, 2025.

Interim City Manager and Finance Director Heather Garner presented this agenda item to Mayor and City Council. Immanuel Lutheran Church would like to host the Trunk or Treat on Halloween this year. Another very successful event for our community. City Council Member Jacob Janda stated he can answer any questions for the Immanuel Lutheran Church Special Event “Public” application.

A motion was made by City Council Member Linda Pruitt and seconded by City Council Member Kevin Rinn to approve the Special Event “Public” application from the Immanuel Lutheran Church for the annual Trunk or Treat to be held at 300 N. Grimes in the church parking lot from 6:00pm to 8:00pm on Friday, October 31st, 2025.

Motion carried by the following:

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

Nays: None

- h. Discuss and take possible action to approve the Special Event “Public” application from the Giddings EDC to host the annual Oktoberfest to be held at the Giddings Downtown Plaza on Saturday, October 25, 2025 from 8:00 a.m. to midnight.

Interim City Manager and Finance Director Heather Garner presented this agenda item to Mayor and City Council. Oktoberfest turned out to be another great opportunity for our community to get together. The GEDC is looking forward to an even better year this year.

A motion was made by Mayor Pro-Tem Alan Casey and seconded by City Council Member Mark Muniz to approve the Special Event “Public” application from the Giddings EDC to host the annual Oktoberfest to be held at the Giddings Downtown Plaza on Saturday, October 25, 2025 from 8:00 a.m. to midnight.



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Motion carried by the following:

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

Nays: None

- i. Receive a Summer Reading Program Report from Library Director Jessi Akins.

Library Director Jessi Akins presented this agenda item to City Council. The Summer Reading Program runs the whole month of June. In the City Council Packets there is a report of the Summer Reading Program. The program is designed to inspire young readers. There three components to the program

- 1) Children read and earn prizes
- 2) Children attend on-site education and experiences events
- 3) Interns volunteer to help with the reading program.

We had 235 children registered, they checked out 2,579 books, logged in 3,424 hours of reading and 114 children completing all levels. 519 that attended all events.

NO ACTION TAKEN

- j. Discuss and take possible action to adopt Ordinance No. 908 adopting the annual budget of the City of Giddings for the 2025-2026 fiscal year in accordance with section 102.007 of the Texas Local Government Code. (This will be a roll call vote.)

Interim City Manager and Finance Director Heather Garner presented this agenda item to Mayor and City Council. This year's budget process was more challenging than anticipated, but we were able to adopt a balanced budget that raises property taxes only marginally while still funding many of the requests and priorities identified by the council and staff.

A motion was made by Mayor Pro-Tem Alan Casey and seconded by City Council Member Linda Pruitt to adopt Ordinance No. 908 adopting the annual budget of the City of Giddings for the 2025-2026 fiscal year in accordance with section 102.007 of the Texas Local Government Code. (This will be a roll call vote).

The roll call vote as follows: Jacob Janda - aye, Linda Pruitt - aye, Mayor Pro-Tem Alan Casey – aye, Mark Muinz – aye, Kevin Rinn – aye, Mayor Joel Lopez – aye.

- k. Discuss and take possible action to adopt Ordinance No. 909 adopting the 2025-2026 Tax Rate of 0.6275 per \$100 valuation in accordance with Chapter 26 of the Tax Code. (This will be a roll call vote).

Interim City Manager and Finance Director Heather Garner presented this agenda item to Mayor and City Council. This ordinance will establish the property tax rate for the City of Giddings for fiscal year 2025-2026.

A motion was made by City Council Member Jacob Janda and seconded by City Council Member Kevin Rinn to adopt Ordinance No. 909 adopting the 2025-2026 Tax Rate of 0.6275 per \$100 valuation in accordance with Chapter 26 of the Tax Code. City Council Member Jacob Janda read the special motion I, Jacob Janda, move that the property tax rate be increased by the adoption of a tax rate of \$0.6275 per \$100 of valuation, which is effectively an 8.9% increase in the tax rate.”



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The roll call vote as follows: Jacob Janda - aye, Linda Pruitt - aye, Mayor Pro-Tem Alan Casey – aye, Mark Muinz – aye, Kevin Rinn – aye, Mayor Joel Lopez – aye.

1. Discuss and take possible action to ratify the property tax increase reflected in the 2025-2026 budget for the City of Giddings.

Interim City Manager and Finance Director Heather Garner presented this agenda item to Mayor and City Council. According to statute, when the adopted budget raises more revenue from property taxes than the previous year’s budget, the governing body must separately ratify that fact.

A motion was made by Mayor Pro-Tem Alan Casey and seconded by City Council Member Mark Muniz to ratify the property tax increase reflected in the 2025-2026 budget for the City of Giddings.

Motion carried by the following:

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

Nays: None

- m. Discuss and take possible action to authorize the City of Giddings to continue the agreement with Lee County Tax Office for the assessment and collection of Ad Valorem Taxes for the City of Giddings for FY 2025-2026.

Interim City Manager and Finance Director Heather Garner presented this agenda item to Mayor and City Council. This is the same agreement, at the same rate, that was passed last year for the Lee County Tax Assessor Collector to assess and collect the ad valorem taxes for the City of Giddings.

A motion was made by Mayor Pro-Tem Alan Casey and seconded by City Council Member Jacob Janda to authorize the City of Giddings to continue the agreement with Lee County Tax Office for the assessment and collection of Ad Valorem Taxes for the City of Giddings for FY 2025-2026.

Motion carried by the following:

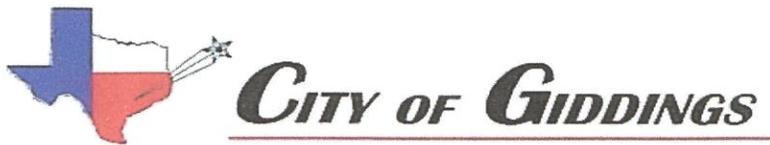
Ayes: Council Members: Casey, Pruitt, Janda, Muniz, Rinn

Nays: None

- n. Discuss and take possible action to adopt Resolution No. 583-2025 regarding the Civil Rights Policies for the GLO Community Development Block Grant-Mitigation (CDBG-MIT) Regional Mitigation Program, Contract #24-065-154-F069.

Interim City Manager and Finance Director Heather Garner presented this agenda item to Mayor and City Council. The next several agenda items are in reference to the GLO MIT grant. Our grant administrator Cheryl Ray with Traylor & Associates is here to answer any questions.

Cheryl stated the Resolution No. 583-2025 is to accomplish the Civil Rights Activities required for this GLO funding opportunity. The “Citizens Participation Plan” we are adopting a new policy which will take out the requirement of having a public hearing at closeout. The other policies we are approving with this resolution are requirements of the GLO for this funding.



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A motion was made by City Council Member Jacob Janda and seconded by Mayor Pro-Tem Alan Casey to adopt Resolution No. 583-2025 regarding the Civil Rights Policies for the GLO Community Development Block Grant-Mitigation (CDBG-MIT) Regional Mitigation Program, Contract #24-065-154-F069.

Motion carried by the following:

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

Nays: None

- o. Discuss and take possible action to adopt Resolution No. 584-2025 Designating Authorized Signatories for Contractual and Financial Documents pertaining to the GLO Community Development Block Grant-Mitigation (CDBG-MIT) Regional Mitigation Program, Contract #24-065-154-F069.

Cheryl Ray with Traylor & Associates presented this agenda item to Mayor and City Council. This Resolution No. 584-2025 is required for every new GLO grant award to the city. This will give authorization for both contractual documents and financial documents to be executed by Mayor Lopez, Heather, and Andrea.

A motion was made by Mayor Pro-Tem Alan Casey and seconded by City Council Member Kevin Rinn to adopt Resolution No. 584-2025 Designating Authorized Signatories for Contractual and Financial Documents pertaining to the GLO Community Development Block Grant-Mitigation (CDBG-MIT) Regional Mitigation Program, Contract #24-065-154-F069.

Motion carried by the following:

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

Nays: None

- p. Proclamation declaring April 2025 as the City of Giddings-Fair Housing Month; Mayor to Sign Proclamation.

Cheryl Ray with Traylor & Associates presented this agenda item to Mayor and City Council each time the city receives grant funding there are a minimum of fair housing activities that have to be accomplished. Historically, one of the activities the city has done is fair housing month. This is just a proclamation establishing fair housing month for the citizens of Giddings. Cheryl stated the City of Giddings has already had the proclamation done and approved. **NO ACTION TAKEN**

- q. Discuss take possible action to approve the contract for the Grant Administration Services for the GLO Community Development Block Grant- Mitigation (CDBG-MIT) Regional Mitigation Program, Contract #24-065-154-F069.

Cheryl Ray with Traylor & Associates presented this agenda item to Mayor and City Council the City awarded Grant Administration Services for this contract to Traylor & Associates. At the time of the application, we had not executed the contract yet, so this item is for the authorization of execution.

A motion was made by City Council Member Jacob Janda and seconded by City Council Member Linda Pruitt to approve the contract for the Grant Administration Services for the GLO Community Development Block Grant- Mitigation (CDBG-MIT) Regional Mitigation Program, Contract #24-065-154-F069.

Motion carried by the following:

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

Nays: None

Monday, August 25, 2025 City Council Regular Meeting Minutes



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- ii. Sales Tax – Collections remain strong. We have collected \$1.7 million year-to-date, surpassing our \$1.8 million budget projection, and are on track to finish the fiscal year just over \$2 million.
- iii. Staff Updates – Big thanks to Andrea. She has been working diligently to get all public meetings and boards caught up. Please keep Angie in your prayers as she has been out sick today.
- iv. Only five more days until Aggie football kicks off!

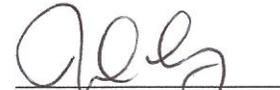
10) ADJOURNMENT:

Mayor Joel Lopez adjourned the meeting at 8:38p.m. Monday, August 25th, 2025.

ATTEST:



 Andrea Ray, City Secretary



 Joel Lopez, Mayor

