

**PALM VALLEY CITY COUNCIL
MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING
May 2, 2022**

The City Council of the City of Palm Valley met in a Special Meeting on the 2nd day of May 2022 at 6:00 p.m. at 1313 N. Stuart Place Road, Palm Valley, Texas. (ZOOM videoconferencing was available for the public).

Council members present:

Mayor Pro Tem Michael Galvan
Councilman Jerry Wade
Councilwoman Cynthia Thompson

VIA ZOOM
Jason Mann
Councilwoman Lisa Taylor

Absent: Councilman Eric Hoff

City Secretary: Sylvia R. Trevino (in person)

Staff present (all in person):

Chief A. R. Garcia
Rosendo Flores, Director of Public Works
Jose Rivera, Support Services Aide

1. **CALL TO ORDER** - The meeting was called to order by Mayor Pro Tem Galvan.
2. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE** - The Pledge of Allegiance followed led by Mayor Pro Tem Galvan.
3. **LEGISLATIVE PRAYER** - The Legislative Prayer was recited by Councilman Jerry Wade.
4. **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Public comments were expressed by Charles Ramsey, William Elmer, Gilberto Lucio, and Luis Gonzalez. Their written comments are attached and made a part of these minutes.

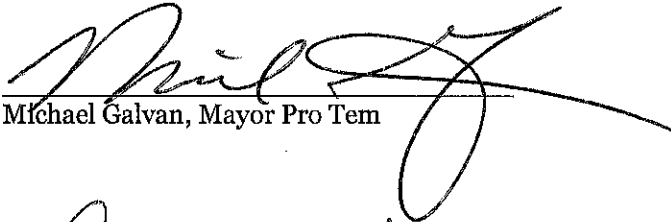
5. **RESIGNATION BY GEORGE RIVERA AS MAYOR OF THE CITY OF PALM VALLEY ACCEPTED.**

Councilman Wade made a motion to accept George Rivera's resignation as Mayor of the City of Palm Valley as per his letter dated April 25, 2022.

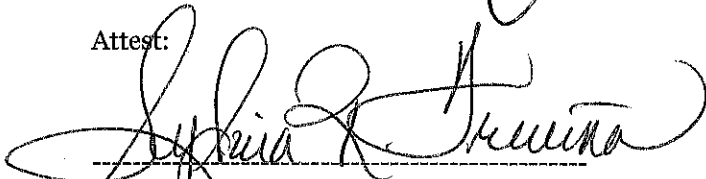
Councilwoman Thompson seconded the motion.

Mayor Pro Tem Galvan took the votes and the motion carried unanimously by all present.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 6:11 p.m. upon a motion by Councilwoman Thompson and seconded by Councilman Wade.


Michael Galvan, Mayor Pro Tem

Attest:


Sylvia R. Trevino, City Secretary

PV Special Council Meeting

02 May 2022

Public Comment Section

Comments by C. Ramsey

708 PVDE

Texas Law on City government goes into great detail on how business must be conducted.

During a Council Meeting the only business that can be discussed and acted upon are those items that are listed as bonified Agenda Items. The Agenda Item from last meeting was to address the four; applicant submissions, for filling the soon to be vacant PV City Secretary position. The discussion regarding George Rivera's desire to be employed by PV and all actions taken in that regard were Out of Order and by Texas Law are rendered null and void.

The position of Mayor Pro-tem is only valid when there is a duly elected Mayor in place. The Mayor Pro-tem acts as Mayor only when the Mayor is unavailable for short periods of time such as a meeting or if Mayor is on vacation out of the area, for examples. Now that George Rivera has tendered his resignation a Special Election must be formulated and exercised so the PV Residents can elect a new Mayor that would serve for one-year. Next year's Regular Election would be for Mayor and two Council Members.

A possible solution from this current quagmire is to request Ms. Sylvia Trevino to remain as City Secretary while the position is readvertised and the City receives applications for the job. Any pre-selection review Committee should have as a minimum one Council Member.

PV City Secretary position also includes being the Administration Department Head. The annual salary should be in the same scale as other current City Department Heads.

C. Ramsey

708 PVDE

Name is Luis Gonzales and resides at 100 La Cana Cir.

He is currently a disabled army vet with 21 years of service.

He did not like what he saw at the April 19 city council meeting.

He had to pass various background and personal checks when applying to work for the government, i.e., the dept of agriculture and Department of homeland security.

He feels like they hired a friend at the top of the salary range as a favor and that the city secretary position should be neutral while the mayor is clearly not.

Asks council to reconsider their hiring decision of the mayor.

William Elmer's Statement to City Council

This is patronage plain and simple.

- The job advertisement required an application, resume, and letters of recommendation. Common practice requires background checks, credit report, and an interview with the applicant. Applications closed on April 8th, 2022.
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- The minutes of the March 15th City Council Meeting at which the decision was made to initiate the job search, have not been posted as of this morning, May 2.
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- Citizens were not told that the job was advertised, nor told where it was posted so we could read the particulars of the job. We do not know how applications would be processed nor who was appointed to review and score the applications.
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- The video of the April 19th City Council meeting shows at least one City Councilman totally caught off guard. The Councilman asked to see the applications and was refused. No evidence was presented to show the short comings of any of the applicants.
-
- Did Mayor Rivera file an application and submit a resume and letters of recommendation by the closing date for applications?
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- Why did none of the other reviewing committee members show up at the April Council meeting to support the Mayor's contention that none of the applicants were suitable.

We are not required to use a merit-based hiring system. We need to establish an ordinance for such, to prevent this kind of naked power grab in the future. We have no ordinance about hiring and thus are open to lawsuit if a candidate feels slighted.

5-2-2022

Lewis

- I am very offended by what I saw during the Council meeting April 19th.
- I had to pass many background and personal checks when I was hired by the government. There was policy and procedure to follow.
- I feel the Council hired a friend, at the top of the salary range, as a favor!
- The City Secretary should be neutral. The Mayor, plainly, is not neutral.

5-2-2022

I've always thought that once I spoke of in front a city council, I would have this speech set up where I would challenge you point by point on your budget, drainage projects, transparency, and increasing water fees. Which are still on the table for now. But instead, I'm here speaking out on just one of those points, transparency.

At the city council meeting in March of 2022, I listened as City Council discussed new city positions, specifically a city manager position, the role, salary, duties, and so forth, due to pending a retirement. Walking out, I knew that this decision had already been made.

So now I am here speaking on a human resources decision that seems anything but transparent. What I'm talking about is having a sitting mayor step down and appoint himself a city administrator. A position that was created by him, for him, with no concern for the optics of his decision. The majority of the City Council then agreed and praised the mayor for his unilateral decision. The Mayor Pro Tem, who was selected by the mayor, was then tasked to determine the mayor's salary. In a closed city council session, that point was quickly addressed, and in a matter of minutes, Palm Valley now had a new city administrator, with a substantial salary.

Access to the applicants who applied, well those requests were denied. I hear city councils all over the US talk of transparency. Even recently, when one of your own members was on a social media site, talking of transparency. He indicated that he had

posted this special meeting because he had nothing to hide. The fact is he posted this meeting because is the law in the State of Texas.

So yes, we are in this special meeting. Having our say in a decision, that has probably already been decided. Yet residents still came, still asking questions about the qualifications of applicants, and of salaries that are beyond the standard for such a position. But we do know the mayor's qualifications. He stated one of them at the last meeting. Qualification, I love this city. I can see why residents of Palm Valley have concerns over budgets, costly projects, and rising fees. They have no trust in the people they had selected.

I used to teach a course called Principles of Law. The course had Texas Essential Knowledge skills that each student must learn and a rubric that listed the expectations for an assignment. One module of that course was Ethics. The expectation. Is this behavior ethical?

I presented real-life situations of organizations and politicians, where people found themselves in questionable ethical behavior. Students would present their argument on why they felt the behavior was either right or wrong.

I'm sure that if this situation was presented to them right now. They would all come to the consensus that this, right here, is highly questionable ethical behavior.

In closing, about three months ago, I met someone from this very governing body. He stated that this was his city. I strongly disagree with this. This is our city. Thank you very much, I'm
Gilberto Lucio

Gilberto Lucio

May 2nd, 2022