# Notice of Regular Meeting Minutes CITY OF BEVIL OAKS, TEXAS

February 20, 2025

- 1. Call to Order @ 6:30
- 2. Pledge of Allegiance/Invocation
  - a. The United States Flag
  - **b.** The Texas state flag: "Honor the Texas flag; I pledge allegiance to thee, Texas, one state under God, one and indivisible."
- 3. Roll Call- All Present
- 4. Conflict of Interest Statement-None
- 5. Citizen Comments (3 minutes each) An opportunity for the citizens to address Council on agenda items or concerns not on the agenda those wishing to speak must complete the comment card, present the comment card to the City Secretary prior to the beginning of the meeting, and observe a 3-minute time limit No Citizen Comments
- 6. Review/Approve Consent Items-M/M/2/C- Councilman Merendino/Councilman Wright- Approved- *Unanimous* 
  - a. Financial Reports for City of Bevil Oaks
  - b. Financial Reports for Public Works
  - c. Utility Innovations Report
  - d. Previous Meeting Minutes
- 7. Executive Session @ 6:32
  - a. The Council may convene to executive session to deliberate the appointment, employment, evaluation, reassignment, duties, discipline, or dismissal of a public officer or employee; and/or to consult with legal counsel to consider a potential complaint or a charge against an officer or employee.
- 8. Resume Regular Meeting @ 7:10
- 9. Review/Approve Action Items
  - a. Consideration/Discussion/Approval of pay adjustment(s) for City employees.
    - 2.5% Cost of living raise for Sabrenna Crain -M/M/2/C-Councilman Merendino/Councilman Thibodeaux-Approved-Unanimous
    - 2.5% Cost of living raise for Heather Steelman- M/M/2/C-Councilman Merendino/Councilwoman Cramer- Approved-Unanimous
    - 2.5 % Cost of living raise for Charles Cramer- M/M/2/C-Councilman Merendino/Councilman Wright- Approved- All approved accept for Councilwoman Cramer. She abstained from voting.
  - b. Consideration/Discussion/Approval of quote received by Jefferson County to repair the far West side of River Oaks Blvd, 13500/13600 block of Thousand Oaks, and the 13300 block of Chimney Rock. M/M/2/C- Councilman Thibodeaux/Councilman Mannette- Approved- Unanimous- the quote that was given by the County was \$25,248.00
    - Councilman Merendino- States that him and the County identified the roads that were the worst. States that the repair cost for those roads is

\$25,248.00. States that the rock that is currently at the park will be used to fix the road. The City will need to purchase the oil to put on top off the rock.

- Councilman Wright- Asks if the process for these roads will be the same as the repair that they did on Shipley
- Councilman Merendino- States that on Thousand Oaks, they will dig u the bad spots and put down cement stabilizer and limestone down before the rock. The same repair will be made on River Oaks
- Councilman Wright- asks if the culd-a-sac will be done on the west
- Councilman Merendino- States that he isn't clear at this point. States if there is enough material left then they might
- Councilman Wright- States that culd-a-sac is used for the buses and garbage trucks to turn around. States that he thinks the road repair is a great idea. States that he is surprised that there is that much money in the road fund account due to the franchise fees
- Councilman Merendino- States that a long time ago, there wasn't any
  money for road repair, but now the franchise fees are being transferred
  into the road account
- c. Consideration/Discussion/Approval of suspending City sponsored and funded events for 2025.M/M/2/C- Declined- Councilwoman Cramer and Councilman Merendino- approved. Everyone else declined. The majority vote carried.
  - Councilwoman Cramer- States that Councilman Thibodeaux has done a great job getting the nutrition for seniors out here. States that the Event Center is not ADA compliant, but the building was built in 1974 so it doesn't have to be ADA compliant. States that barriers still need to be removed as best as they can be. States that if the money that is allocated for events could be reallocated for removing the barriers that are in place and the seniors could be accommodated as they are 40% of our community.
  - Councilman Wright- asks for more details.

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- Councilwoman Cramer- States that she isn't sure how much it would cost to do those things. The funds may just need to be temporarily suspended because it may not take all of the funds for events
- Councilman Wright- States that the funds for the events were budgeted
  and some of that has already been spent. States that the remainder of the
  funds that are left in that budget may not cover what needs to be done in
  the Event Center.
- Councilwoman Cramer- States that there isn't anything that needs to be done inside. The parking and side walk are what need to be done.
- Councilman Wright- States that the side walk and parking lot are separate items from the Community Development events and it won't be done by the next meeting. States that it will take some design and planning to figure out what needs to be done along with getting estimates to do that. States that we can also fund the things that need to be done with savings.

• Councilwoman Cramer- States that the budget doubled for events. States that the budget went from \$7,000 to \$13,000, so she thought it included some development.

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- Councilman Thibodeaux- The budget didn't change from last year.
- Mayor Mitchell- States that community development went over \$3,000
- Councilman Wright- States that the budget was \$20,000.
- Councilman Cramer- States that money is being spent as if we were a bigger City. States that we hear complaints about not having certain things, but \$7,000 is spent on fireworks.
- Councilman Thibodeaux- States that there was \$20,000 budgeted for Community Development when he was elected, but there were no specifications as to what that money was spent on. States that the citizens advisory board decided what events they would like to do. States that the budget wasn't increased during the last budget meeting. States that the events that have been held have brought the community together as it was intended to do. States that he nor the CAB team have asked for an increase in budget. They asked for the same budget that has been designated for community development.
- Councilwoman Cramer- Asks if there is anyone that is aware that the building that is being used to serve the part of the community that might have a disability is not ADA compliant.
- Councilman Thibodeaux- Asks where the specifications are for the regulations
- Councilwoman Cramer- States that it is the 1991 regulations
- Councilman Thibodeaux- Asks what needs to be addressed at the building
- Councilwoman Cramer- There has to be a parking spot for a van. The sidewalk has to be 40" to accommodate a wheelchair or a walker.
- Councilman Thibodeaux- States that both of those can be addressed right now as there are massive doors that are ADA compliant in the bay.
- Mayor Mitchell- Asks Councilman Thibodeaux if the certificate of occupancy has been issued for the Event Center yet?
- Councilman Thibodeaux- No
- Councilwoman Cramer- States that for Town Hall and City Council
  meetings, those doors are never opened so opening them for the lunch,
  would humiliate someone that has a wheelchair.
- Councilman Thibodeaux- States that the ADA rules have nothing to do with humiliation, it has to do with access. States that the bathrooms are ADA compliant as well.
- Councilwoman Cramer- States that we aren't required to meet the 2012 requirements with the bathrooms. States that we don't have a certificate of occupancy to hold Council meetings or rent the building out, so let's focus on spending tax payer money wisely and not on fireworks

- Councilman Merendino- States that there can't be one entrance and one exit for handicap people.
- Councilwoman Cramer- States that she put the park on the agenda as well because it isn't ADA compliant either. States that in order for the park to be ADA compliant, there has to be an ADA compliant sidewalk to the park equipment. States that there shouldn't be two events for fireworks when there isn't a certificate of occupancy on the Event Center
- Councilman Wright- States that the events and the ADA compliance for the building, are two separate items. States that there is insurance money that could be used to fix the ADA compliance without hurting the budget.
- Councilwoman Cramer- States that she misunderstood that the community development and events were two different things because she thought that community development was to help the community not do events. States that Councilman Thibodeaux is over the Event Center. States that we have the lunch for the seniors in the Event Center and we aren't supposed to be doing the lunch in the Event Center.
- Councilman Thibodeaux- States that anyone who isn't able to attend the lunch in person, can get home delivery.
- Councilman Wright-States that the same principal applies to the Council meetings. If they want to come to the meeting then they should still be able to get in the building. States that the events and the ADA compliance are two separate issues. States that one shouldn't be canceled to do the other. States that the money for community development was voted on during the budget meeting.
- Councilwoman Cramer- States that the ADA compliance wasn't thought of during the budget meeting.
- Councilman Merendino- States that the CAB team only reports to one Councilman so that is only one vote on the events. States that the only event that has been done since he has lived in Bevil Oaks, has been the 4<sup>th</sup> of July event. Suggests that the other events be voted on by the Council.
- Councilwoman Cramer- Asks what makes the events successful?
- Councilman Thibodeaux- Participation
- Councilman Merendino- States that the New Year's Eve celebration can only be done on New Year's Eve, so if it rains then the money we spent on that event is wasted.
- Councilman Thibodeaux- If we purchase the fireworks for New Year's Eve and it rains out, then they are pre-purchased for the 4<sup>th</sup> of July.
- Councilman Wright- Asks how much money is left in the community development budget
- Councilman Thibodeaux- States that he thinks that around \$5,100 has been spent.

- Councilwoman Cramer- States that she doesn't think any money should be spent on breakfast with Santat. States that it should be donated.
- Councilman Clayton- Asks if there is money elsewhere that we could allocate to become compliant?
- Councilman Merendino- There isn't any money allocated for that.
- Councilman Clayton- Asks Dru how much liability the City has for the building not being ADA compliant?
- Dru Montgomery- States that based on his experience with the residents that have complained about it, the exposure level is low. States that we should aspire to exceed to become ADA compliant but doesn't think that there is imminent danger of being fined.
- Councilman Clayton- Asks about the website
- **Dru Montgomery-** States that he would need to investigate that further because he isn't sure
- Councilwoman Cramer- States that there are services that could help a disabled person with the website
- Councilman Clayton- States that if someone makes a complaint about ADA compliance, there is a time limit to fix the issue that was complained about.
- **Dru Montgomery-** States that accessibility is the main concern with ADA compliance.
- Councilman Thibodeaux- States that he met with the City inspector on February 10<sup>th</sup> and went over the items on the temporary certificate of occupancy. States that everything has been checked off the list. States that he will come back out to do the inspection.
- Councilwoman Cramer- States that the certificate is not as important as the ADA compliance being that there is now a program that will be hosting lunches for seniors at the Event Center.
- d. Consideration/Discussion/Approval of temporarily suspending permit fees for owner-occupied homes. M/M/2/C- Councilwoman Cramer/Councilman Merendino- Approved not charging permit fees for owner-occupied homes-3 voted yes, 1 abstained, 2 voted no- the I's carried as they had the majority vote
  - Approve- Councilman Mannette, Councilwoman Cramer and Councilman Merendino
  - No- Councilman Wright and Councilman Thibodeaux
  - Abstained- Councilman Clayton
  - Discussion Begins Here
  - Councilwoman Cramer- States that we need to start incentivizing
    people to beautify their properties. States that if there is investors or
    renter, they still need pay the permit fees. Suggests having a different fee
    for owners.

- Mayor Mitchell- Asks if Councilwoman Cramer is talking about a permit for a fence
- Councilwoman Cramer- States any permit fee should be waived.
- Sabrenna Crain- From 10/01/2025-2/19/2025, there were 14 owner pulled permits and 20 contractor pulled permits: That includes gas and electric.
- Councilman Merendino- States that some of those are building permits that cost a lot of money.
- Sabrenna Crain- 14 Owner pulled permit- \$4,318.50. Two of those were contractor owned. The other ones were residential owned. 20 contractor pulled permit \$1,822.60
- Councilwoman Cramer- States that 40% of the community is on a fixed income and we are nickel and diming them.
- Councilman Wright- Asks the time frame of those permits pulled.
- Sabrenna Crain-Since October of 2024.
- Heather Steelman- Asks if the contractors have to pull permits
- Councilwoman Cramer- Any permit pulled on a owner occupied home.
- Heather Steelman- The reason why there are signs about the permits is to keep the rift raft out of the City
- Councilman Wright- Asks what the most common permit pulled during that time?
- Sabrenna Crain- Gas permits. States that the homeowners can do everything except for gas, so that's why there is so many of those. States that a renter can't pull a permit, it has to be the homeowner.
- Councilman Wright- asks how much the permit would be for him to build another shop
- Sabrenna Crain- It depends on how big it is and if there will be electrical and plumbing. If it is completely closed in, it will be based off square footage.
- Mayor Mitchell- The permit fees pay the inspector
- Councilman Merendino- The inspector doesn't charge us right now.
- Councilman Wright- Asks how much the permit fees are in a year
- Councilwoman Cramer- States that the budget was \$8,000
- Sabrenna Crain- States that 4 of the building permits that were pulled were from vacant houses being renovated. 2 were contractors. Those permits issued were expensive because it is based off the square footage. If someone comes in to pull a permit on a house that is completely gutted, it will go off of the square footage.
- Councilman Wright- Asks if he were to come in and pull a permit on a house that he plans to live in, does he have to pay for the permit
- Heather Steelman- States that there are people that come in and purchase some of these vacant houses, the realtor isn't disclosing that the home is below BFE an there can't be any permits issued.

- Councilman Mannette- Asks if a contractor has already figured an inspection into his bid for a job, does he still need to pull and pay for a permit at the City?
- Sabrenna Crain-Yes, the permit still has to be pulled and paid for. States that they can hire their own inspector, however, the City will need a copy of the inspection report.
- Councilman Merendino- States that for a roof, the City doesn't do an inspection, but a windstorm inspector will need to do the inspection which costs around \$500.00. States that if you want windstorm insurance then a windstorm inspection must be done on the home. Pulling a permit with the City, is someone giving the City money so that they can make their house better. States that if a new air conditioning unit installed, you have to pull a permit for that. States that the people that pull permits for an air conditioning unit, there isn't an inspection.
- Sabrenna Crain- Yes there is. States that the only thing that the inspector doesn't do is roof inspections.
- Councilman Mannette- States that if someone's AC goes out on a Friday and they need a new one installed, they can't put the new unit in until the permit is pulled? That would leave them without AC until Monday. Would the inspector have to come in and inspect the work?
- Sabrenna Crain- Yes
- Councilman Merendino- There have been times that it has been a week before an inspection has been done.
- Mayor Mitchell- There is an option to do an inspection yourself.
- Councilman Clayton- States that if someone hires their own inspector, they have to make sure that he is licensed for their home insurance.

### 10. Reports

## a. Mayor Mitchell- Allowed Sabrenna Crain to make a report

Sabrenna Crain-States that she is trying to make sure that the homes that aren't in compliance it the 2' rule can obtain a permit by obtaining a LOMA (letter of map amendment) on the structure. States that a LOMA takes the structure out of flood zone AE and puts into flood zone X. In order to qualify for a LOMA the lowest adjacent grade (the lowest ground that touches the structure) must be at or above BFE (base flood elevation). States that there are 3 letters that went out. The first letter went to residents whose structures are below base flood elevation. They have been vacant since Harvey. The letter states that the only permits that can be pulled on the home are to demo the home or to elevate it. The second letter went out to 19 homes. These homes qualify for a LOMA, however, in order to apply for a LOMA, we will need them to send us a copy of their deed. States that the Mayor has obtained a few LOMA's, however, she had to obtain the deed which costs. States that she is trying to eliminate the cost of obtaining the deed. States that it is free to apply for a LOMA, however, the deed is part of the documentation that is required to apply for a LOMA. The third letter went to 38 homes. States that these homes would qualify for a LOMA, but the lowest adjacent

grade isn't at or above base flood elevation. States that the elevation certificates that the City has on file are old. States that it is possible if a new elevation certificate was obtained that the lowest adjacent grade would be different.

- Councilwoman Cramer- Asks if it is a possibility that the homeowners could have a different elevation certificate, but the City just doesn't have a copy of it?
- Sabrenna Crain- Yes. The letter is just based off the records that the City has on file. States that she is trying to help the homeowners get cheaper insurance and be eligible to pull permits if they need to. States that it won't matter if they are 2 feet above if they are in flood zone X.
- Councilwoman Cramer- Asks if the second list is based off of recent elevation certificates?
- Sabrenna Crain- No. It is based off of the information that the City has
- Councilwoman Cramer- Asks what differentiates the second list from the third?
- Sabrenna Crain- the second one qualifies for a LOMA based off the elevation certificate that the City has on file. All we need is a copy of the deed. The third letter states that we need a copy of the deed and a new elevation certificate to see if the lowest adjacent grade is at or above base flood elevation. The lowest adjacent grade could be changed. It just depends where the surveyor is shooting the lowest adjacent grade from.
- Councilwoman Cramer- Asks if there is a cost for an elevation certificate?
- Councilman Thibodeaux- Yes.
- Sabrenna Crain- States that there isn't a timeline or deadline on when the residents need to get the information to the City.
- Councilwoman Cramer- Asks if the letters have been sent out yet?
- -. •. Sabrenna Crain- No.
  - Councilwoman Cramer- Asks Sabrenna to let her know when they go out so that she can go door to door to some of the houses to see if they have any questions.

# b. Councilman Merendino

- States that the County came out and did pothole repair. States that there was some material left over so that we can repair any potholes that may come up. States that he is over the roads and ditches now, so he would like to be informed if there are ditches being dug. States that the ditches that were dug on Wayside have brought up a problem with a culvert that the City will have to purchase to fix the issue.
- Councilman Thibodeaux- Asks what the protocol is if there is a problem with someone's ditch or culvert?
- Councilman Merendino- States that if there is a problem then someone can call Sabrenna, me or Councilman Clayton. States that he has been keeping Councilman Clayton updated on everything that is being done with the roads and ditches since Councilman Clayton is his back up on

the roads and ditches. States that a citizen came to Councilman Clayton and Councilman Clayton went to Sabrenna and he didn't know what was going on. States that before he took over the roads, there were 100 work orders and the County didn't know where they needed to start, so all those work orders were thrown away.

- Councilman Clayton- States that he just brought the issue to Sabrenna because one of his constituents brought it to his attention.
- Councilman Merendino- States that he understands. States that we don't want to overload the County with work orders again.
- Councilman Thibodeaux- As the single point of contact, who would they call.
- Councilman Merendino- States that they will call Sabrenna and she will inform me. States that he doesn't want work orders turned in that aren't priority.
- Councilman Thibodeaux- Asks if he will be getting with Sabrenna on which work would be priority
- Councilman Merendino- Yes.
- Councilman Mannette- It also affects your budget
- Councilman Merendino- States that since there is a renter living at that residence, they aren't going to pay for the culvert to be fixed so the City will pay for it so that it's done.
- Councilman Thibodeaux- Is there a way to attach a fee to the actual owner for the culvert repair?
- Councilman Merendino- States that the renters aren't going to pay to have it fixed. Typically the City pays for it.
- Councilman Thibodeaux- States that if it is blocking the rest of the draining then it would be imminent domain.
- Councilman Merendino- States that he met with DD6 about ditch # 1204 that has been an issue for a while because the property owners wouldn't allow them the extra easement that they need. States that Charly spoke with the property owner and they agreed to give them the easement. States that he met with the owners as well. States that Councilman Wright has brought some other DD6 ditches that aren't maintained as well that he will be looking at.
- Councilman Mannette- States that he would like to know when the meetings are with DD6 so that him and Councilman Clayton can go to the meetings with him.
- Councilman Merendino- States that the previous Mayor and himself went to a DD6 meeting and DD6 told them that if they would come to a DD6 meeting and "give them a pay on the back", it would help DD6 to get grants because that will be entered into the meeting minutes. States that there is a guy from DD6 that is assigned to our area.
- Councilman Mannette- States that the purpose in him wanting to go to the meeting is so that if there is an issue that there has already been a face to face interaction between them and DD6.

- Councilman Merendino- States that Sabrenna had more interaction with John Murff than he has so he is the guy who is spearheading our area
- Councilman Clayton- States that Councilman Merendino did call him and let him know about the DD6 meeting, but he isn't able to attend those meetings because they are at 9am.

## c. Councilman Mannette

- States that Lori with the County got someone to send Sabrenna a quote for road signs. States that he isn't sure how much it will be to get what is needed, but he would like to put the quote on the agenda to be voted on.
- Councilwoman Cramer- asks if he has to put it on the agenda?
- Mayor Mitchell- States that if it is over \$2,500.00, the Council has to vote on that high of an expense.
- Councilman Mannette- States that the filter for the HVAC system was changed at City Hall. Ask how long the funding sign at the park on River Oaks, has to be up.
- Mayor Mitchell- States that she would need to look it up.
- Roger Mannette- Asks if he needs to put in an agenda request for future things that he would like to discuss?
- Mayor Mitchell- Only if he needs something to be voted on.
- Councilman Mannette- States that he would like to see reflective tape on the swing gates
- Mayor Mitchell-If it falls within your budget, then you can do it
- Councilman Mannette- States that it would be under the road budget.
- Councilman Mannette- States that it would be under signs in the budget
- Councilman Merendino- States that it is something that needs to be done though because you can't see them at night.
- Charles Cramer- states that if he would like to use a different company other than the one that we got a quote from for the signs, then we could.
- d. Councilman Clayton-No
- e. Councilwoman Cramer- No

### f. Councilman Thibodeaux

- States that the flyer for the Nutrition & Services for Seniors went out in the mail to all the addresses in Bevil Oaks. The registration is 11-1 on Tuesday, February 25,2025.
- Councilman Wright- Asks if there are stipulations that you must meet or do you just have to be 60 years of age?
- Councilman Thibodeaux- No. You just have to be 60.
- Councilman Merendino- States that he wouldn't eat every day, but he doesn't want the food to be wasted if he chooses to not to come on a day that he doesn't want the food to go to waste.
- Councilman Thibodeaux- States that he spoke to the people for the organization and the coordinator said that there wouldn't be any waste.

- States that when the people come to eat, they will sign up for the other days that they will be attending.
- Councilman Merendino- What if they don't show up?
- Councilman Thibodeaux- States that those things are going to happen, but there will be minimum waste.
- Councilman Mannette- Asks if they will be eating the meals at the Event Center
- Councilman Thibodeaux- Yes, they are required to eat the meals at the Event Center.
- Councilwoman Cramer- If they don't sign up on Tuesday, February 25,2025, are they still able to sign up?
- Councilman Thibodeaux- Yes. They can sign up any day after March 03,2025 (when they start serving the meals)
- Councilwoman Cramer- What if they don't have a site coordinator by March 03,2025?
- Councilman Thibodeaux- They will provide someone until there is one set in place.
- Councilwoman Cramer- Asks if they need help?
- Councilman Thibodeaux- States that volunteers are always good to
  have. States that he would like to spring off of this event and have some
  activities for the seniors to do, such as bingo.
- Councilwoman Cramer- Is this just limited to Bevil Oaks residents
- Councilman Thibodeaux- States that if they can make it to the Event Center, then they can get a meal. Also, there is a resident that saw the notification on the water bill and called the office. Now she is on meals on wheels. States that meals on wheels and nutrition and services for seniors are part of the same program. States that meals on wheels is also a great way to keep an eye on the individuals that are receiving the services because the care giver can check on them while they are there to make sure that they are okay.
- Councilman Thibodeaux- States that 6 homes that are on the vacant homes list are now on the sheriff sale.
- Councilman Merendino- Do we have a list of the 6 homes on the list?
- Councilman Thibodeaux- It is on the Jefferson County website.
- Councilman Merendino- Asks if we (Bevil Oaks) has a list of those homes?
- Councilwoman Cramer- Asks if any of those houses are on the list for the LOMA's?
- Councilman Thibodeaux- States that the garage sale is set for the first weekend of May. States that he spoke with the Sherriff's department about the damage that was done to the park during the winter storm in January and he spoke with the family about bringing in the sand to fix what was messed up.

- **Heather Steelman-** asks if Mike is going to be the code enforcement officer?
- Councilman Thibodeaux- States that Mike is highly qualified for
  everything that we need. States that he has never charged the City to
  come out and do inspections. States that he has made the City an offer to
  be the Inspector, Code Enforcement Officer and Floodplain Manager.
  States that he would love to make some expectations. States that we
  could make a list of things for him to check out while he is out here
  doing inspections.
- Councilwoman Cramer- Would he be considered and employee or a contractor?
- · Mayor Mitchell- an employee.
- Councilman Wright- Asks if Mike has a limit to what he will work?
- **Sabrenna Crain-** States that Mike told her that he would only work 2-3 days a week.
- Councilman Wright- States that if we would want to direct him on what needs to be done.
- Councilman Thibodeaux- States that with what we give him would be able to develop a full job description on what the person after him would be doing.
- Councilman Merendino- How would he be able to go on someone's property?
- Councilman Thibodeaux- As a code enforcement officer, he is allowed to do that.

g. Councilman Wright- No Report

11. Adjourn Meeting @ 8:39 p.m. M/M/2/C- Councilman Merendino/Councilman Clayton- Approved- Unanimous

**Mayor Cheri Mitchell** 

ttest:

v Secretary, Jeff Thibodeaux

Approved on this 20 day of March, 2025.