

MINUTES OF A STUDY SESSION OF THE TOWN COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF HIGHLAND PARK, TEXAS, HELD AT TOWN HALL, 4700 DREXEL DRIVE, HIGHLAND PARK, TX, 75205, AT 8:16 A.M. ON TUESDAY, MARCH 4, 2025.

Acting Mayor Pro Tem Lydia Novakov and Town Council Members Alan Friedman, Marc Myers, and Leland White attended the meeting. Mayor Will C. Beecherl and Mayor Pro Tem Don Snell were absent.

FUTURE AGENDA DISCUSSION

Review, discuss, and consider the opportunity for a Town Council Member to request an item to be placed on a future Town Council meeting agenda. Acting Mayor Pro Tem Lydia Novakov asked if any Town Council Member would like to request an item be placed on a future Town Council study session agenda for discussion or consideration. There was no comment.

REPORTS

Review and discuss the horse-drawn carriage program for 2024. Chuck McGinnis, Director of the Department of Public Safety, explained that in the 2024 season, four vendors employed 86 carriage drivers in the Town of Highland Park (“Town”), with 59 carriages permitted. Carriage rides are approximately one hour in duration. Last year, the program generated \$48,126.41 in revenue for the Town through imposed franchise fees to the vendors, as stated in the code. Another \$400 was collected from carriage licensure fees and \$2,950 from carriage registration fees, a total of \$51,476.41. This is approximately \$10,000 less than in 2023 but approximately \$10,000 more than in 2022. Through the operating season, there were eight written complaints. Seven of these complaints were from members of a movement to ban horse-drawn carriage operations nationally due to believed inhumane practices. One written complaint was from a resident wishing to limit the number of carriages permitted due to traffic congestion. There were no reported accidents this season; only one reported a mishap with a horse that had slipped and fell. The owner checked the horse for injuries and loaded it onto a trailer for further evaluation. A national movement has impacted the City of Dallas to ban horse-drawn carriages. The City of Dallas's Quality of Life, Arts, and Culture Committee passed a motion (5-1) to recommend a ban to the Dallas City Council. The Dallas City Council has taken no action and is still reviewing the matter. In response to a question raised by Acting Mayor Pro Tem Novakov, Chief McGinnis stated that if the City of Dallas acts on banning horse carriages, it would limit the number of vendors available to work in the Town. In response to a question raised by Council Member Friedman, Chief McGinnis explained that the holiday traffic is also caused by several tour buses traveling through the Town that stop and take pictures. Acting Mayor Pro Tem Novakov asked if anyone had any further questions, to which there were none.

Review and discuss the Department of Public Safety Annual Report for FY 2024. Chuck McGinnis, Director of the Department of Public Safety, summarized the Department of Public Safety’s (“DPS”) work this past year compared to 2023. The annual report included staffing, crime trends, traffic enforcement, training, alarm operations, communications division, fire suppression, response time, community relations, and crime prevention. Acting Mayor Pro Tem Novakov suggested distributing this report to the public, and Chief McGinnis agreed. Acting Mayor Pro Tem Novakov asked the Town Council if they had any questions, to which there were none.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

1. *In accordance with Texas Government Code, Section 551.001, et seq., the Town Council will recess into Executive Session (closed meeting) to discuss §551.071: Consultation with Attorney regarding pending or contemplated litigation or settlement offer re: USAI, LP v. Town of Highland Park - Cause No. DC-20-80213.*
2. *In accordance with Texas Government Code, Section 551.001, et seq., the Town Council will recess into Executive Session (closed meeting) to discuss §551.072: the purchase, exchange, lease, or value of real property to wit: a parcel of land owned by the Town at 4101 Lomo Alto Drive. Acting Mayor Pro Tem Novakov recessed the study session at 8:57 a.m. Acting Mayor Pro Tem Novakov convened a closed session at 8:58 a.m. Acting Mayor Pro Tem Novakov ended the closed session at 9:04 a.m. and reconvened the study session in open session at 9:04 a.m. No final action, decision, or vote was taken during the closed session.*

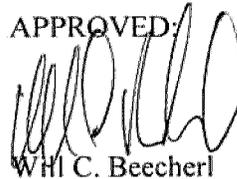
RECONVENE INTO OPEN SESSION

1. *Pursuant to Section 551.102 of the Texas Government Code, the final action, decision, or vote regarding items discussed in Executive Session shall be made in Open Session. Review, discuss, and take action, if any, on matters discussed in Executive Session. Mayor Acting Mayor Pro Tem Novakov reconvened the study session in open session at 9:04 a.m. On a motion made by Council Member Alan Friedman, seconded by Council Member Marc Myers, the Town Council voted unanimously to approve authorizing the Town Administrator to execute the contract related to the lease of property, 4101 Lomo Alto Drive, owned by the Town.*

Acting Mayor Pro Tem Lydia Novakov adjourned the meeting at 9:05 a.m.

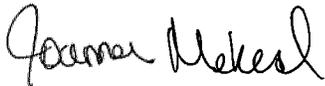
APPROVED on this 18th day of March 2025.

APPROVED:



Will C. Beecher
Mayor

ATTEST:



Joanna Mekeal
Town Secretary