

DEE MARGO
MAYOR

TOMMY GONZALEZ
CITY MANAGER



CITY COUNCIL
PETER SVARZBEIN, DISTRICT 1
ALEXSANDRA ANNELLO, DISTRICT 2
CASSANDRA HERNANDEZ, DISTRICT 3
SAM MORGAN, DISTRICT 4
ISABEL SALCIDO, DISTRICT 5
CLAUDIA ORDAZ PEREZ, DISTRICT 6
HENRY RIVERA, DISTRICT 7
CISSY LIZARRAGA, DISTRICT 8

**SPECIAL CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
CITY HALL, 300 N. CAMPBELL
MAIN CONFERENCE ROOM, 2ND FLOOR
March 25, 2019
9:00 AM**

The City Council met at the above place and date. Meeting was called to order at 9:07 a.m. Mayor Dee Margo present and presiding and the following Council Members answered roll call: Peter Svarzbein, Alexsandra Annello, Cassandra Hernandez, Sam Morgan, Isabel Salcido, Henry Rivera, and Lizarraga. Late arrival; Representative Claudia Ordaz Perez at 9:08 a.m.

AGENDA

1. Discussion and action on the City of El Paso's efforts to address the current immigrant influx.

Mr. Tommy Gonzalez, City Manager, introduced the item, briefed Council and thanked all the staff who has been assisting with this.

Fire Chief Mario D'Agostino provided a briefing on the status of the immigration influx and the efforts taken by the City to mitigate the situation. He also stated there is a shortage of volunteers and spaces needed for housing.

Mayor Margo and Representatives Svarzbein, Annello, Hernandez, Morgan, Ordaz Perez, and Rivera commented.

The following staff members commented:

1. Mr. Tommy Gonzalez, City Manager
2. Ms. Karla M. Nieman, City Attorney

The following members of the public commented:

1. Mr. Dylan Corbett, Diocese of El Paso
2. Ms. Marisa Limon Garza, Hope Border Institute
3. Mr. Ruben Garcia, Annunciation House

1ST MOTION

Motion made by Mayor Pro Tempore Ordaz Perez, seconded by Representative Rivera, and unanimously carried that the City Council retire into **EXECUTIVE SESSION** at 9:46 a.m.

AYES: Representatives Svarzbein, Anello, Hernandez, Morgan, Salcido, Ordaz Perez, Rivera, and Lizarraga.

NAYS: None

2ND MOTION

Motion made by Representative Salcido, seconded by Representative Ordaz Perez, and unanimously carried to adjourn the Executive Session at 12:24 p.m. and **RECONVENE** the meeting of the City Council.

AYES: Representatives Svarzbein, Anello, Hernandez, Morgan, Salcido, Ordaz Perez, Rivera, and Lizarraga

NAYS: None

The City Council Meeting was **RECESSED** at 12:28 p.m.

The City Council Meeting was **RECONVENED** at 12:29 p.m.

3RD MOTION

Motion made by Mayor Pro Tempore Ordaz Perez, seconded by Representative Rivera, and unanimously carried to **APPROVE** the following motion as read into the record.

WHEREAS, as of 2018 the U.S. Southern Border has confronted an unprecedented number of migrants seeking asylum in the United States; and

WHEREAS, since October 1, 2018, federal authorities have processed and released approximately 50,000 migrants onto El Paso streets; and

WHEREAS, arriving migrants lack the means to secure food, shelter, medical care, or transport out of the City of El Paso; and

WHEREAS, the City has thus far averted an imminent crisis relating to homeless migrants due to the good will of non-profit organizations such as the Annunciation House, local churches, and other faith based organizations who have housed, fed, and transported as many as 753 migrants per day; and

WHEREAS, the resources of local groups striving to aid with the ongoing arrival of migrants has substantially depleted; and

WHEREAS, the City and other agencies anticipate the continued arrival and release of thousands of migrants into the El Paso area; and

WHEREAS, the U.S. government has failed to provide the necessary infrastructure, personnel or financial resources to eliminate the mass release of migrants onto City streets; and

WHEREAS, the release of mass groups of people without access to potable water, food, or shelter exposes the migrants and El Paso residents to the origination and spread of potential and actual disease; and

WHEREAS, the potential encampment of large groups of migrants on City rights of way and parks poses safety risks to migrants and citizens alike; and

WHEREAS, in awaiting the due support of the Federal Government the City finds that the expenditure of public funds for the temporary housing, care and transport of migrants released into the City of El Paso accomplishes a valid public purpose of protecting public infrastructure, and protecting the health, safety and welfare of the Citizens of El Paso; and

WHEREAS, local non-governmental organizations have the ability and desire to support with the care of transient migrants.

THEREFORE, Motion made, seconded and carried:

The findings listed in the Whereas are hereby incorporated into the Motion.

1) That in order to protect the public health, safety and welfare, that the City Manager is granted broad authority until April 29, 2019 to take all action necessary to commit, direct, and assign necessary personnel and resources, to provide humanitarian relief to migrants released by federal authorities into the El Paso community;

2) This Motion also ratifies past actions taken by City officials and employees in response to previous migrant influxes that have occurred;

3) The Mayor is directed to notify the El Paso federal delegation of the request and need for reimbursement for resources and expenditures used in addressing the continual arrival and release of migrants;

4) That the City Manager or designee be authorized to provide a contribution of public funds in an amount not to exceed \$20,000.00 dollars, establish funding sources and make any necessary budget transfers to make said contribution to the United Way, a non-profit corporation, towards funding a volunteer coordinator;

5) That upon the City Attorney's Office review, that the City Manager or designee be authorized to execute any and all necessary documents, including agreements with the United Way; and

6) That the City Manager is directed to provide quarterly reports to City Council of the budgetary impacts of the City's efforts to address the current immigration influx, such report to include but not be limited to expenses pertaining to transportation and personnel.

AYES: Representatives Svarzbein, Annello, Hernandez, Morgan, Salcido, Ordaz Perez, Rivera, and Lizarraga

NAYS: None

4th MOTION AND FINAL

Motion made by Mayor Pro Tempore Ordaz Perez, seconded by Representative

Annello, and unanimously carried to **AMEND** the motion to strike out “*with the exception of financial contributions*” and to replace with “*The findings listed in the Whereas are hereby incorporated into the Motion*”.

AYES: Representatives Svarzbein, Annello, Hernandez, Morgan, Salcido, Ordaz Perez, Rivera, and Lizarraga

NAYS: None

ADJOURN

Motion made by Representative Hernandez, seconded by Representative Svarzbein, and unanimously carried to **ADJOURN** this meeting at 12:46 p.m.

AYES: Representatives Svarzbein, Annello, Hernandez, Morgan, Salcido, Ordaz Perez, Rivera, and Lizarraga

NAYS: None

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APPROVED AS TO CONTENT:

Laura D. Prine, City Clerk