



**CITY COUNCIL, ODC & ECTOR COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
JOINT MEETING
CITY OF ODESSA, TEXAS**

February 21, 2023

On February 21, 2023, a joint meeting of the Odessa City Council, Odessa Development Corporation (ODC), and Ector County Commissioners was held at 6:02 p.m. in the Saulsbury Conference Room, Electronic and Technology Building, Odessa College, 201 W. University Blvd., Odessa, Texas.

City Council present: Mayor Javier Joven; Council members: Mark Matta, District One; Steven P. Thompson, District Two; Gilbert Vasquez, District Three; Greg Connell, District Four; and Denise Swanner, At-Large.

City Council absent: Council member Chris Hanie, District Five.

ODC members present: Melanie Hollmann, Larry Robinson, James Kirk, Jeff Russell, and Ismael "Mikky" Navarrete, David Boutin and Kris Crow.

Ector County Commissioners; County Judge Dustin Fawcett; Commissioners: Don Stringer, Mike Gardner, Greg Simmons, and Billy Hall.

Staff present: Agapito Bernal, Interim City Manager; Norma Aguilar-Grimaldo, City Secretary; Dan Jones, Interim City Attorney; Aaron Smith, Assistant City Manager; and other members of City staff.

A quorum being present, Mr. Crow called the meeting to order, and the following proceedings were held:

The invocation was given by Mayor Joven and followed by the Pledge of Allegiance and Texas flags.

Introductions were made.

Ms. Hollmann arrived at 6:06 p.m.

Discuss Ector County Assistance District. Mayor Joven stated that the sales tax passed in Ector County stayed in the County. If a business requested to be annexed in a new development, it would receive City services. Legislation was drafted to split the sales tax between the County and City with ODC receiving part of the City's portion on only the new businesses annexed. An Attorney General's opinion stated it was unconstitutional. The City provided fire, police, code enforcement and solid waste services to the annexed areas. The City wanted Ector County to be developed. Judge Fawcett stated that the splitting of the sales tax would not be giving up any sales tax on current sales tax. He stated that the County did not provide any services but would receive half of the sales tax. The Sales Tax District paid for the sheriff, environmental enforcement and roads. He favored the 50% split with any new annexed property. Judge Fawcett explained the AG ruling.

Commissioner Simmons arrived at 6:25 p.m.

Commissioner Simmons stated that the sales tax would be used wisely. He did not want the annexed land to be cherry picked but review on a case by case basis. Mayor Joven explained that the State did not allow annexation unless the owner requested annexation. Commissioner Gardner stated that the sales tax was vital as it built roads and funded the Environmental Department. He did not have an issue in splitting the sales tax.

Discuss interlocal agreement on Odessa Fire Rescue. Council member Swanner stated that the study results identified the City spending \$10 million in the County and the County paid \$700,000. The City provided fire and EMS service to the County. The numbers were high, and the agreement needed to be negotiated. Judge Fawcett stated that the type of cost did not make sense. He asked for a true cost and how the runs were measured. Mayor Joven asked about the run that included salary, time and equipment. He stated that there was also inflation and replacement costs. Judge Fawcett stated both services were needed. The needs needed to be identified in the County. He stated the amount should be fair and equitable. Competition for employees was not needed. Council member Swanner stated that the study did not include the inflation. Mr. Crow stated that the ISO rating was important as it helped the homeowners' insurance rates. Commissioner Simmons stated that an Emergency Service District was an option but had an elected board. He stated another option was to bid for private ambulance service that was less expensive. He stated to consider a contract with EMS service only since there was the Volunteer Fire for fire service. Mayor Joven stated that there may be an incident with delayed service. He stated it was a high risk for further delay. Jason Cotton, Interim Fire Chief, explained the run types and sending ambulances and fire trucks. Judge Fawcett asked to see data runs. Chief Cotton stated fire station and personnel has been added since the study. He stated private service was not a good idea due to the lack of training. He stated that the City needed to respond to the County. Commissioner Gardner asked about the insurance reimbursement paid to the City as it was not part of the study. He asked how much was recouped from insurance. Mr. Bernal reported that the insurance had a 50% to 60% recovery. Mr. Crow asked that data be given to the County with regards to insurance. A study was needed with updated data.

Discuss interlocal agreement on Ector County Jail. Commissioner Simmons stated that the City paid \$450,000 for jail services. He stated that there was no need for duplication of services. He asked how much the City has saved. Mike Gerke, Police Chief, stated that the arresting authority determined inmates as City or County. Judge Fawcett reported that there were 46% arrests made by the Police Department. Mayor Joven asked the County's cost of the jail. The jail's budget was \$34.2 million. Inmates were sent to other places when needed.

Discuss interlocal agreement on Animal Shelter. Mayor Joven stated that the new shelter had more capacity. The animal population was an issue. There were three officers for animal control. Commissioner Simmons was not sure to continue participate with the City. The Humane Society acquired more property. Captain Bass reported that the County used City services but not with quarantine. Chief Gerke stated that the services would be available for the County. He stated the shelter adopted as many animals as possible and worked with over 20 rescues. Council member Connell stated a veterinarian was needed to help with the spade and neutering program.

Citizen's comments on non-agenda items. Bill Cleaver asked about Nacero with the \$2 million given and has not seen any development on the Penwell site. He asked if the \$2 million could be returned if needed. He stated that mobile homes pay less in taxes compared to homes. He stated that mobile homes depreciated the area. He would like that issue addressed.

Mr. Crow stated that future meetings would be held quarterly for open dialogue. Judge Fawcett wanted to continue discussion to make a better community. Mayor Joven thanked ODC for hosting. He appreciated addressing the issues and to lay a foundation to negotiate issues.

Motion was made by Mayor Joven and seconded by Mr. Navarrete to adjourn the meeting. The motion was approved by unanimous vote.

The meeting adjourned at 7:52 p.m.

ATTEST:

APPROVED:

Norma Aguilar-Grimaldo, TRMC, CMC
City Secretary

Javier Joven
Mayor