



City of Santa Clara, Texas Regular City Council Meeting Minutes

Monday, August 25, 2025

The City Council called the meeting to order on August 25, 2025, at 6:30 PM at City Hall located at 1653 N Santa Clara Road with Mayor Chase Grier.

A. PLEDGE

Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America: I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America, and to the republic for which it stands: one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

B. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

1. **Roll Call:** Marian Carty, Ernest Schoenefeldt, Amanda Desormeaux, Dwane Atkins and Darin Henningsen
2. **Declaration of Quorum:** Quorum was present for August 25, 2025, Regular City Council Meeting

C. PUBLIC COMMENT

- Bruno Voigt provided an explanation of Santa Clara's formation. He stated that it was initiated by Marion residents to capture power plant tax revenue and it was promised that plant revenue would fund city operations; however, residents now face underfunded road maintenance. Mr. Voigt criticized the lack of transparency and the discontinued city newsletters. He expressed frustration with high spending on city security instead of infrastructure and reported that he thought a proposal to abolish the city in the next general election would be in the best interest of citizens. He made comments about the lack of a sufficient tax base, insufficient rooftops, and ongoing financial struggles. Mr. Voigt also highlighted past claims from Chief Marshal Airola of \$500,000-\$600,000 in plant revenue, but stated that was still inadequate for city infrastructure.
- Chief Marshal Jerry Airola stated that he wanted to clear things up since he was probably the reason there were a lot of people present at the meeting. Chief Airola reported that the County Attorney found it necessary to arrest him on Thursday. He stated that no one was told and the newspaper did not report that the County dismissed all former charges against him and that was on Judge Wright's desk waiting for signature. Mr. Airola explained that the agreement was that they would dismiss all charges and that he recently won in court in a jury trial against the County Attorney. Chief Airola stated that the week before that the County Attorney called his attorney and they would offer to drop all the charges if I would agree to not sue the County and plea to any misdemeanor and they would make that go away in six months. Chief Airola reported that his answer was no and the County's Attorney's response was that if he did not take the deal, they would reconvene the Grand Jury and indict him again. He stated that was exactly what they did. Chief Airola went on to report that he made a written offer to the City to resign his position and to retire. He stated that the offer was contingent because he did not want to see the City go without a Marshal's Office and did not want to see the deputies suffer. Mr. Airola

reported that growth in the area made a Marshal's Office necessary. He advised that the Sheriff's Office cannot enforce municipal codes and that the Sheriff said they would provide 911 service but if the city grows, there would be a bill to the city. Chief Airola also reported that whatever revenue comes from the Sheriff's Department's enforcement would go to the County, not the City.

- Barry Mercer advised that he wanted to give his time to Chief Marshal Airola and Mayor Grier and City Attorney Akers advised him that he could not do such.
- Thomas Perkins spoke regarding Councilmembers and the payment of taxes. He reported that there are some members that do not pay any taxes and some that pay very few. Mr. Perkins stated that he did not think they should be delegating how funds are spent. He explained that they got elected, but feels they should do the right thing. Mr. Perkins also stated that he feels that the City should be represented by people paying taxes.
- Constable Harvey Faulkner advised that he had been the Constable since 2017, before that 1989-1996 and has been in law enforcement for forty years. He reported that he has a problem with the libel, slander, and defamation of character taking place online. Constable Faulkner advised that one individual continues slandering Mr. Faulkner's employees on Facebook and he was tired of it. He read what the law says is a constable's duty and that is to serve civil process. Constable Faulkner reported that this all came about when Officer Herring had to service six papers when the Constable was under doctor's orders to not leave his house for twenty-four hours. He showed a check for \$540 from a law firm that was payment for service. Constable Faulkner shared details of an incident that occurred on Saturday night that began in the west end of the county by Cibola. He stated that the individual was going 116 mph down 78, 87 mph on N Santa Clara Road, 92 mph on Weil Road, 96 mph on Marion Road, and 91 mph on Engel Road. He reported that he chased the individual on I35 up to 124 mph when it got dangerous. Constable Faulkner stated that a call came in by a Santa Clara resident minutes later of a ghost gun being found at N Santa Clara Road and Weil Road. He concluded by saying that the City of Santa Clara needs a Marshal's Office or some kind of police officers.
- Danny Trammell stated that he would save his comments for the Marshal's vote.
- Dana Poole reported that she does not care if they pay taxes or not, they were voted in because people wanted them. Ms. Poole reported that Chief Marshal Airola is an embarrassment, and it is supposed to be about budget, but if you talk to anyone about the City of Santa Clara and his name comes up. She stated that she thinks they all need to be removed and let the County take back over.
- Carrie Itschner stated that she has lived in the area since 1993 and that out of all the years that she has lived here, she has been able to sleep nicely at night for the past five and attributed that to Chief Marshal Jerry Airola. Ms. Itschner reported that he has been there whenever she has called him and she knows he and his guys are out there looking around and making sure that things are okay in Santa Clara. She stated that she found out this was a drug running triangle after about a year of living in SC. She spoke of a personal experience regarding the trouble in the area and

emphasized that it is worse at night. Ms. Itschner reported that she hated the divisiveness that exists between the people. She provided examples of why she thinks the City needs to retain the Marshal's Office.

- Esther Henningsen thanked the road crew and Mayor Grier for the work they have been doing on the roads, especially Youngsford Road.
- Commissioner Stephen Germann reported that he did not sign up, but that he would speak. Mr. Germann's name was recorded on line ten of the sign-up sheet for public comment. Mr. Germann spoke of the pipeline that would be coming through Santa Clara, headed to the power plant and going to San Antonio. He requested signatures on the petition and urged the citizens to take the pipeline seriously. Mr. Germann stated that his gut feeling is that CPS Energy wants to buy the power plant and stated that if they do, the city cannot tax it anymore and it would be a loss of a significant revenue source for the city. Commission Germann discussed the devaluation to the value of Precinct 4 and the blast area of the pipeline.
- Mandy Moore thanked everyone for their work on the roads, highlighting the repairs on N Santa Clara, but stated that there is still more work to be done. She reported that she understands and hopes everyone else understands that the budget must be there, to do the work.

D. CONSENT AGENDA

1. July 28, 2025 – City Council Regular Meeting Minutes

Councilmember Carty made a motion to approve the July 28, 2025 City Council Regular Meeting Minutes. Councilmember Desormeaux seconded the motion. All voted in favor, and the motion carried.

2. An ordinance appointing Interim City Attorney Floyd Akers as City Attorney.

Councilmember Carty made a motion to approve the ordinance. Councilmember Desormeaux seconded the motion. All voted in favor, and the motion carried.

E. DISCUSSION ONLY

1. Discussion regarding the Kingfish Development.

Rob Killen, attorney for Kingfish was present representing the developers for the project, Jeff Czar and Shad Schmid was present to provide information and answer any questions regarding the development. Mr. Schmid stated that they are working on a forty-seven-acre tract, just south of City Hall, on N Santa Clara Road. He reported that the property is about 4,000 feet north of FM 78. Mr. Schmid reported that they wanted to talk to the city about a Development Agreement and creating a Public Improvement District (PID). He explained that the development would have two hundred thirty-nine lots (40x110) valued at \$250,000-\$300,000 and a park. Ms. Schmid reported they would not be going into the floodplain and sewer and water would be provided by Green Valley SUD by dragging a twelve-inch water line down from Wild Persimmon Trail and a thirty-six-inch sewer line would be on the far west end of the property. He stated that they want to annex into the city with the homeowners paying city taxes and create a HOA with a PID.

He advised that the streets within the community would be maintained by the community, preventing them from being a financial burden to the city. Mr. Killen reported that they are looking for direction from Council to work with the attorney and staff to begin working on the details. He stated that the property is outside of the city limits, in the ETJ, and they would do a Development Agreement that would allow the City to annex the property and put it on the tax rolls and talk about the development standards that apply. A PID would then be created that would pay for only public improvements (streets, water, parks, etc.). Mr. Killen explained that nothing would come out of the tax dollars and homeowners would be assessed to re-pay the PID. City Attorney Akers advised that since it was a Discussion Only Item, that no action would be taken, but that the City Council could put it on a subsequent agenda and look at their offer. Mayor Grier asked for clarification on "Establish level of developer contribution to improvements on Santa Clara Road based on Project's roughly proportionate share." Mr. Killen acknowledged that any new development would have an impact on public roads around it, so they would work with the City Engineer to determine what that level of impact would be and make contributions to road improvements outside of the project. There was discussion regarding the PID structure and proposal.

F. DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION ITEMS

Items listed under this heading are for discussion and possible action.

1. Scheduling a public budget hearing on the 2025-2026 FY Proposed Budget.

The Public Hearing on the Proposed Budget date and time (09/15/2025 at 6:30 PM) from the revised budget and tax rate calendar was announced to City Council. Two Councilmembers reported that they would be unavailable. Council was advised that the calendar would need to be revised and a new date would be provided during the meeting. This item was revisited following the Executive Session and item # 3. A new date of 09/18/2025 was provided to Council for a Special Meeting. Council decided the meeting would take place at 6:30 PM.

2. Discussion and possible action to set the Proposed 2025 Tax Rate and scheduling a public hearing.

This item was moved further down the agenda while new dates were calculated. This item was revisited following the Executive Session and item # 3. A new date of 09/25/2025 was provided to Council for a Special Meeting. Council decided the meeting would take place at 6:30 PM. Councilmember Carty advised that the topics on the agenda were intense, in part due to the budget being so tight and there are things that must get done as a community because of the amount of impact that is happening from development. She stated that unless taxes are raised significantly higher for the people in the city, things cannot be afforded. Ms. Carty expressed frustration at not being able to have their cake and eat it too or rob from Peter to pay Paul. She explained that Council does not want to go above the voter approval rate but she does not know how the City is supposed to afford things. Councilmember Atkins

provided the current tax rate. Councilmember Atkins made a motion to set the proposed 2025 tax rate to not exceed 0.1992. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Schoenefeldt. A record vote was taken with Councilmember Henningsen voting yay, Councilmember Atkins voting yay, Councilmember Schoenefeldt voting yay, Councilmember Desormeaux voting yay and Councilmember Carty voting yay. The motion passed with five votes in favor.

3. An ordinance to repeal ordinance 2024-005 which will eliminate the Marshal's Office and the position of City Marshal due to budget concerns, repealing all ordinances in conflict and establishing an effective date.

Councilmember Schoenefeldt stated that if they got rid of the Marshal's Office, they might as well close the city off. The City Council entered in to Executive Session at 7:02 PM. The City Council reconvened in to Open Session at 7:58 PM. No action was taken. Councilmember Desormeaux made a motion to amend the ordinance on the agenda to add the effective date for September 30 at midnight to abolish the Marshal's Office. Councilmember Henningsen seconded the motion. Councilmembers Henningsen, Desormeaux, and Atkins voted in favor. Councilmember Schoenefeldt voted against the motion and Councilmember Carty abstained. Councilmember made a motion to approve the ordinance that repeals the Marshals. Councilmember Atkins seconded the motion. Councilmembers Henningsen, Desormeaux, and Atkins voted in favor. Councilmember Schoenefeldt voted against the motion and Councilmember Carty abstained. Mayor Grier explained that this ordinance was not yet effective. He stated this was the first reading and there would be a second reading at the next meeting.

4. Discussion and possible action regarding the Marion Road speed limit.

Mayor Grier reported that the current speed limits are 30 MPH and 35 MPH and previously it was 45 MPH all the way through. He advised that currently the 30 MPH signs are north of the intersection of Weil Road and Marion Road and then it changes to 35 MPH at the top of the hill. He said that when you are headed south towards the high school, as soon as you get past the second entrance of Harvest Hills it goes from 30 MPH to 35 MPH. Mayor Grier stated that now that Marion Road has been repaired and is drivable, he thinks it should be increased to 45 MPH, except in front of Harvest Hills and Lantana, where it should be 35 MPH.

Councilmember Schoenefeldt asked why the Mayor wanted to spend money on new signs when there wouldn't be anyone to enforce it. The mayor advised that the city still had the previous signs. Councilmember Atkins made a motion to restore the speed limit to 45 MPH, with the exceptions noted at 35 MPH. Councilmember Carty seconded the motion and all voted in favor. City Attorney Akers reported that he would bring an ordinance to Council because the City needs to be more specific than that.

5. Discussion and possible action regarding the Lantana Development Agreement.

Mayor Grier reported that Patti Wiatrek was present as the representative for the Lantana Development across from Harvest Hills at Marion Road and Weil Road. He advised that there was an agreement written out and signed by the developer awaiting approval from the

Council. Mayor Grier explained that it was a Development Agreement allowing them a couple of things after a stop work order has been issued on the work taking place in the City. Mayor Grier reported that a meeting took place and the agreement came because of that meeting. He stated that original offer was a two-inch mill and overlay on Weil Road from Marion Road to the intersection at N Santa Clara. Mayor Grier advised that the problem with that is that it would still be wavy, but a little less bumpy. He reported that #3 was changed to "Perform a bladed level up adding asphalt to the existing surface and apply a chip seal treatment to approximately 19,393 square yards of Weil Road from the North Santa Clara Road intersection to the Marion Road intersection" and they would do that when they start paving for their unit one. Mayor Grier reported that he was not sure how long that would take and Ms. Wiatrek stated they were about three months out. Mayor Grier explained why he had the agreement change to the current version and discussion ensued regarding who would inspect the road after repair. Ms. Wiatrek stated that they would have their on-site inspectors (Terradyne) that they use inspect the roadway. City Attorney Akers reported that the City could make a motion to amend the contract requirements to have an inspection from the developer from a certified inspector that it is done to Santa Clara road standards and they would just have to provide you with a letter because they are not going to risk their license. Councilmember Schoenefeldt made a motion to approve the Development Agreement as amended. Councilmember Atkins seconded the motion and all voted in favor.

6. Nomination and acceptance of one Planning & Zoning member.

Mayor Grier advised Council that there was a vacancy on the Planning & Zoning Commission and that it was Councilmember Atkins's turn for a nomination. Mayor Grier reported that if he did not have anyone in mind, the item could be tabled. Councilmember Atkins made a motion to table the nomination and acceptance of one Planning & Zoning member. Councilmember Schoenefeldt seconded the motion and all voted in favor.

7. An ordinance creating a three-way stop at N Santa Clara Road and Weil Road.

Mayor Grier advised that a subdivision was going to be built at that location and there would eventually be a four-way intersection at N Santa Clara Road and Weil Road. Councilmember Schoenefeldt asked why the city would not allow the developer to make those changes and Mayor Grier reported that he agreed but that Planning & Zoning thought it should go to Council. There was discussion regarding possibly providing advanced notice and potential developer involvement. Councilmember Desormeaux made a motion to table item # 7 to a later date. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Schoenefeldt and all voted in favor.

8. An ordinance amending the City of Santa Clara Subdivision Ordinance pertaining to designed storm water runoff retention facilities, repealing all ordinances in conflict and establishing an effective date.

Councilmember Carty made a motion to approve item # 8. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Desormeaux and all voted in favor.

G. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mayor Grier announced that there would be a Public Budget Hearing on 09/18/2025 and on 09/25/2025 there would be a Proposed Tax Rate Public Hearing. Both would be at 6:30 PM at City Hall. He also asked that if anyone knows anyone who would like to be on P&Z to

attend the next P&Z meeting.

H. EXECUTIVE SESSION

The City Council retired into executive session at 7:02 PM to discuss litigation pursuant to Chapter 551.071 of the Texas Government Code. The City Council reconvened into open session at 7:58 PM. No action was taken.

I. ATTENDANCE BY OTHER ELECTED OR APPOINTED OFFICIALS

J. ADJOURNMENT

Councilmember Ernest Schoenefeldt made the motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:23 PM. Councilmember Amanda Desormeaux seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Mayor: Chase Grier



City Secretary: Michelle Pack