REGULAR MEETING OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PORT NECHES

4:00 P.M.

May 7, 2026

MEETING

The regular meeting was called to order at 4:00 p.m. by Mayor Arnold at Port Neches City Hall, 1005 Merriman Street, Port Neches, Texas with the following members in attendance to wit:

Robert Arnold, Mayor
Jim Wallace, Councilmember
Paul Lemoine, Councilmember
Heather Burton, Councilmember
Terry Schwertner, Councilmember

Also present:
Andre' Wimer, City Manager
Stephen Townsend, City Attorney
Holly Alexander, City Secretary

Absent:
Adam Anders, Mayor Pro Tem

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE AND INVOCATION

Mayor Arnold led the Pledge of Allegiance and Councilmember Wallace the invocation.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Councilmember Lemoine made a motion to approve the minutes of the regular meeting held April 23, 2026, seconded by Councilmember Wallace. **MOTION PASSED BY UNANIMOUS VOTE.**

PROCLAMATIONS

There were no proclamations.

AGENDA ITEM 7 - DISCUSSION REGARDING REGULATIONS OF E-BIKES IN THE CITY OF PORT NECHES.

The City Manager explained that this agenda item was for discussion regarding the possibility of establishing regulations governing the operation of e-bikes within the City. He stated that the City's legal counsel and Chief Griffith had been researching potential options within the parameters established by State law. The City Council was provided with a list of possible regulatory options, along with two (2) draft ordinances for consideration.

Mayor Arnold stated that he wanted staff to address what the City could and could not regulate before taking comments from citizens. He explained that staff and legal counsel had been researching what actions the City could legally take in conjunction with State law requirements and emphasized the importance of adopting an enforceable ordinance.

City Attorney Stephen Townsend stated that the discussion remained consistent with the previous meeting. He explained that, under State law, e-bikes are considered bicycles so long as they do not exceed 28 miles per hour, meaning they are generally permitted anywhere bicycles are allowed. He further explained that e-bikes exceeding 28 miles per hour would be classified as electric motorcycles and subject to separate enforcement requirements. Mr. Townsend stated that, after reviewing ordinances from other cities and applicable State statutes, he found that some municipalities had adopted regulations beyond what State law permits. He explained that several ideas had been considered and discussed, and he believed the City could legally regulate helmet usage, establish sidewalk speed limits, prohibit reckless stunt driving, and require individuals cited under the ordinance to complete a safety training course. He stated that the proposed approach focused on enforceable regulations, education, and safety training.

Chief Griffith stated that the Police Department would enforce the ordinance with a zero-tolerance approach. She explained that officers had issued numerous warnings over the past year. She further stated that the Court Clerk had identified safety training programs that would be required for individuals receiving citations and that the Municipal Judge was in support. Chief Griffith also noted that voluntary community safety training would be offered in June, with the possibility of additional sessions in the future if the program proved successful.

Mayor Arnold questioned whether parents could be cited under the proposed ordinance, and Chief Griffith confirmed that they could.

Councilmember Burton stated that it was important to emphasize that the City was not opposed to e-bikes, recognizing them as a valuable form of transportation, but that the Council wished to take a proactive approach focused on education and community safety.

Councilmember Schwertner stated that some children were operating e-bikes responsibly while others were not.

Councilmember Wallace stated that he did not believe an eight-year-old child should be riding an e-bike alone.

The City Manager addressed the issue of whether e-bikes should continue to be permitted on sidewalks, and the consensus of the City Council was to allow their continued use on sidewalks due to concerns that prohibiting them could force riders into traffic and create additional safety risks.

Gloria Arceneaux, 1519 Heisler, addressed the City Council and questioned whether the City could adopt regulations exceeding State law requirements.

The City Manager informed her that the City could not exceed the authority granted under State law.

Ms. Arceneaux further questioned whether parents could be held liable in the event of an accident involving an uninsured e-bike.

Mr. Townsend explained that such incidents would generally be handled in the same manner as other accidents and that parents could potentially be held liable.

The City Manager informed the City Council that staff and legal counsel would prepare the proposed ordinance revisions for consideration at the next meeting.

NO ACTION TAKEN.

AGENDA ITEM 8 - DISCUSS AND TAKE ACTION REGARDING THE APPROVAL OF A PURCHASE REQUISITION FOR THE REPAIR OF FIVE (5) TRICKLING FILTER PUMPS AT THE WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANT, 2025 CERTIFICATES OF OBLIGATION.

The City Council was provided with the purchase requisition and supporting documentation for review. The City Manager explained that Clint Fore has requested authorization to repair five (5) trickling filter pumps at the Wastewater Treatment Plant. He stated that staff evaluated the feasibility of replacing the pumps, however, repair is the more cost effective and timely option. He noted that staff obtained two (2) quotes, the lower being PEMSCO at a cost of $48,325; remaining funds from the 2025 Certificates of Obligation will be utilized to fund this work.

Councilmember Schwertner made a motion to approve the repair of five (5) trickling filter pumps at the Wastewater Treatment Plant utilizing PEMSCO at a cost of $48,325, seconded by Councilmember Wallace**. MOTION PASSED BY UNANIMOUS VOTE.**

AGENDA ITEM 9 - DISCUSS AND TAKE ACTION REGARDING THE APPROVAL OF THE SECOND READING OF RESOLUTION 2026-04, AUTHORIZING THE PORT NECHES ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION TO GRANT FUNDS TO THE AVENUE COFFEE AND CAFÉ.

The City Council was provided with attached proposed Resolution No. 2026-04 for review. The City Manager stated that this document authorizes the Port Neches Economic Development Corporation (PNEDC) to expend funds in an amount not to exceed $69,957 to The Avenue Coffee and Café, 1226 Port Neches Avenue; the PNEDC approved the expenditure at their March 24, 2026 meeting. He explained that State statute requires that a City Council approve, by Resolution, any potential economic development expenditure in excess of $10,000.00 that is awarded by an Economic Development Corporation. He noted that two (2) readings of the Resolution are required, the first of which occurred at the April 23, 2026 meeting and this agenda item constitutes the second required reading.

Councilmember Wallace made a motion to approve the second reading of Resolution No. 2026-04, authorizing funding The Avenue Coffee and Café, seconded by Councilmember Burton**. MOTION PASSED BY UNANIMOUS VOTE.**

AGENDA ITEM 10 - DISCUSS AND TAKE ACTION REGARDING THE APPROVAL OF RESOLUTION NO. 2026-05, APPROVING THE SUBMISSION OF A GRANT APPLICATION FOR A BRIC GRANT THROUGH FEMA FOR GENERATORS.

The City Council was provided a memorandum from Chief Vega and proposed Resolution No. 2026-05 for review. The City Manager explained that the application period for the Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC) program has been announced and staff is working to prepare the necessary submission documentation. He stated that with this potential project, the City would be requesting funding to purchase seven (7) generators to replace equipment originally installed in 2008; the various locations are noted in the memorandum. He informed the City Council that the estimated cost for the generators is $500,000 and, if awarded, the City would be required to fund 25% of this expense, $125,000, with the grant providing $375,000. He noted that the City would only be requesting funds to purchase the generators themselves, however, installation would be contracted separately by the City.

Councilmember Lemoine made a motion to approve Resolution No. 2026-05, authorizing submission of an application to the Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities 2025 grant program for generators, seconded by Councilmember Burton**. MOTION PASSED BY UNANIMOUS VOTE.**

AGENDA ITEM 11 - DISCUSS AND TAKE ACTION REGARDING THE APPROVAL OF RESOLUTION NO. 2026-06, APPROVING THE SUBMISSION OF A GRANT APPLICATION FOR A BRIC GRANT THROUGH FEMA FOR BULKHEAD CONSTRUCTION.

The City Council was provided a memorandum from Chief Vega and proposed Resolution No. 2026-06 for review. The City Manager explained that the application period for the Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC) program has been announced and staff is working to prepare the necessary submission documentation. He stated that with this potential project, the City would be requesting funding to construct a bulkhead along the portion of the riverfront owned by the City; from the existing bulkhead by The Wheelhouse to the Indian Pointe subdivision. He further stated that the City has previously sought funding for this project with other grant programs, but was not successful. He noted that the estimated cost is $3,000,000 and, if awarded, the City would be required to fund 25% of this expense, $750,000, with the grant providing $2,250,000.

Councilmember Burton made a motion to approve Resolution No. 2026-06, authorizing submission of an application to the Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities 2025 grant program for bulkhead construction, seconded by Councilmember Lemoine**. MOTION PASSED BY UNANIMOUS VOTE.**

AGENDA ITEM 12 - DISCUSS AND TAKE ACTION REGARDING THE APPROVAL OF APPOINTMENTS TO THE PORT NECHES IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT.

The City Manager explained that the City Council previously approved the creation of the Port Neches Improvement District (PNID) in 2017 through the legislative process. He stated that the PNID Board of Directors includes seven (7) members who serve two (2) year terms. The terms of four (4) of the members expire on June 1, 2026: David LeJeune, Leslie Symmonds, Olin Clotiaux, and Doug Savant and all four (4) individuals (Mr. LeJeune, Mrs. Symmonds, Mr. Clotiaux, and Mr. Savant) have expressed an interest in remaining on the Board for another two (2) year term that would expire on June 1, 2028.

Councilmember Schwertner made a motion to appoint David LeJeune, Leslie Symmonds, Olin Clotiaux, and Doug Savant to the Port Neches Improvement District Board of Directors for two (2) year terms expiring on June 1, 2028, seconded by Councilmember Wallace. **MOTION PASSED BY UNANIMOUS VOTE.**

AGENDA ITEM 13 & 14 – EXECUTIVE SESSION AND RECONVENE

Mayor Arnold requested this item on the agenda be postponed at this time.

Councilmember Wallace made a motion to postpone this item, seconded by Councilmember Schwertner. **MOTION PASSED BY UNANIMOUS VOTE.**

AGENDA ITEM 15 - DISCUSS AND TAKE ACTION REGARDING THE PENDING LITIGATION OF CAUSE NUMBER 25DCCV1021, 136TH DISTRICT COURT, JEFFERSON COUNTY. THE CITY OF PORT NECHES V. BALLOW BUILDERS INC. AND GEORGE BALLEW D/B/A GB DUMPSTERS A/K/A GB RECYCLING.

The Public Works Director provided the City Council with an update regarding the GB Dumpsters debris removal and reported that the Public Works Department has removed approximately 1,329 loads of debris to date. He stated that the C&D and mulch have been removed, and staff is currently working on the dirt containing large amounts of trash. He further stated that the project has progressed to the point where the City can return the rented grapple trucks and continue operations using dump trucks only. He also noted that volunteers have taken some of the concrete materials.

The City Manager stated that no action was necessary at this time.

Library Director, Mark Durham, informed the City Council that Library staff are currently organizing the June 30th Patriotic Bash and welcomed the City Council's participation.

AGENDA ITEM 16 – ADJOURN

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned 4:47 p.m.

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Robert Arnold, Mayor

ATTEST:

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Holly Alexander, City Secretary