

**City of Alpine**  
**Regular City Council Meeting**  
**Tuesday, January 4, 2018**  
**5:30 P.M.**  
**Minutes**

1. Call to Order, Invocation and Pledge of allegiance to the flags. – Mayor Ramos called the meeting to order. The meeting was held in the Council Chambers at 803 West Holland in the City of Alpine, Texas. Lana Covington gave the invocation. Mayor Ramos led the pledge of allegiance to the flags

2. Determination of quorum and proof of notice of the meeting. – Councilor Curry, Councilor Olivas, Councilor Fitzgerald, Councilor Escovedo, Councilor Stephens and Mayor Ramos were present. City Secretary Cynthia Salas reported that the meeting notice had been posted at 4:00 P. M. on December 21, 2017. City Manager Jessica Garza, Assistant City Manager/Finance Director Antrim, and Abel Hinojos were also present.

3. Presentations, recognitions and proclamations. – (A. Ramos, Mayor) – NONE

4. Reports –

City Mayor’s Report – (Andy Ramos, Mayor) – NONE

City Manager Report – (Jessica Garza, City Manager) –

A. Meetings with Council, Departments, and City Organizations – Jessica welcomed the Honorable Mayor, Council and members of the community in the audience. Jessica’s official first day was December 1, 2017 with her first day in the office being December 4, 2017. Jessica reported that during her first couple of days here, Alpine experienced a severe snow storm, which caused rolling brown outs throughout the city. The concern over no electrical services led to numerous calls from concerned citizens citing the need to have continuous service of dialysis and breathing machines. It was during this time that it was noted that the City of Alpine and Brewster County did not have access to generators to assist these residents. It was through the help of a local business owner and a Dr. that these residents were able to be assisted with the use of generators. Jessica noted that the City of Alpine does not have a formal Emergency Operation Plan or an Emergency Management Plan for Evacuations. She stated that she had spoken to the Emergency Management Coordinator and that a plan would be in place to assure that the citizens of Alpine know where to go for assistance and what resources are available should an emergency occur. Jessica spent her first week meeting with her executive team; the Assistant City Managers, City Secretary, Mayor, Members of the Council and other department heads. Jessica expressed her appreciation to former City Manager, Eric Zimmer, who was in Alpine during her second week and was kind enough to introduce her to numerous people to include individuals from the library, hospital, and citizens of Marfa and Presidio. She stated she was fortunate to meet people from a large range of organizations while in Erik

Zimmers presence. Jessica also met with the Texas Ranger who provided some insight into the past issues regarding the city and a history of the office itself. During her third week, Mrs. Garza continued meeting with other departments and public stake holders and reaching out to various community members. She was also in attendance at a P&Z meeting. It was also during this week that she met with Chris Ruggia and discussed putting together an Alpine experience to promote Alpine and different type of experiences offered here. Whether Art and History, indoor or outdoor activities or just plain shopping, it should be used to continue to draw people to the area. Mrs. Garza also met with numerous officials such as county Judge Eleazar Cano, County Commissioner Hugh Garrett, Councilman Fitzgerald as well as the City Secretary to go over some of the issues with the Fire Department and Emergency Services. Mrs. Garza compared the movement forward to taking a spider web and trying to untangle it. Mrs. Garza advised that three pot holes reported and fixed during the same week could be attributed to either good timing or the new City Manager. Jessica jokingly stated she would take the credit for it either way. Jessica stated she does not want to encourage the community to call her to report pot holes, but stated that she and J have been talking about a plan to start addressing the issue faster. Jessica states she plans on meeting with J regularly. A process to follow through with the work orders to make sure they are complete and are signed off before being reported as complete was also discussed. Jessica provided the Council with a list of issues and priorities that were discussed and urged the Council to visit with her in regards to any questions and/or concerns. The issues and items were ones that came up during her meeting with the different stake holders as well as with the Council. Some of the issues have been revisited once or twice since the initial meeting and she will initiate a plan to address them or at least bring Council up to date on any progress that is being made and what the options, if any, are. Councilor Fitz asked who were the people that donated the generators were and voiced a desire to have them publically acknowledged. The were reported as being Bob Ward from True Value and Dr. Audie Coggins for Coggins Chiropractic. Councilor Stephens inquired into the City Manager's priorities of the items on the list she provided. The City Manager stated that something of great importance to many was employee relations and moral. She stated that this is definitely a priority and getting more complete policies for the employees to follow is of great importance. Jessica stated the policies needed to be precise and not vague so as not to be left to interpretation so employees do not feel like they are being singled out or left out. Jessica noted that something of great confusion to her was the on call issue. She stated that although all departments have individuals on call, there is confusion as to what is defined as being on call during the holidays. Jessica stated she had about 4 to 5 employees during the holiday come in during the Christmas holiday stating they were on call and asking for guidance. The City managers feels this is an opportunity to work with the employees to find out what they feel, as an organization, could be done better for them or what is lacking. She voiced a definite need for training programs and her desire to require all employees to have at least 40 hours of training yearly and use this as a requirement for all employees to be eligible for merit

increases and/or promotions. Jessica stated the City's mission statement states quality service and if we are not doing regular training, then we are not providing quality service and that the least we can do for our residents is to make sure we do our part to ensure our employees know the best, safest practices and are able to provide them. To Conclude, Jessica provided Councilor Stephens with the following priorities. 1. Human Resources 2. Emergency Services and as a whole, Emergency Management Planning 3. Drawing clearer lines between the Fire Department and the ambulance service. This also includes our relationship with the County and the agreements entered into with them. A recent issue in regards to this matter occurred with First Flight and in looking at what parameters they work under with us and how to better improve our working relationship to benefit our residents.

**City Staff Updates – NONE**

**5. Public Hearings – NONE**

**6. Consent Agenda – (Minutes, Financial Reports, Department written reports, board appointments etc.) – Notice to the public – The following items is of a routine and administrative nature. The Council has been furnished with background and support material on each item, and/or it has been discussed at a previous meeting. All items will be acted upon by one vote without being discussed separately unless requested by a Council Member, in which event the item or items will immediately be withdrawn for individual consideration in its normal sequence after the items not requiring separate discussion have been acted upon. The remaining items will be adopted by one vote –**

**A. Approval of minutes from City Council meeting on December 5, 2017. (Jessica Garza City Manager) –**

Motion was made by Councilor Stephens, by Resolution 2018-01-01, to approve the consent agenda as written. Motion was seconded by Councilor Olivas. Motion unanimously carried.

**7. Information or Discussion Items –**

**A. Discuss the traffic situation on 6th and Lockhart. (M. Curry, City Council) – Councilor Curry stated she received an email from a resident that lives on 6<sup>th</sup> and Lockhart about the traffic increase due to the right turns on Sul Ross and 5<sup>th</sup>. The residents reported an increase in drivers driving really fast through the area. The resident was asking if council could consider an alternative to make the area safer. Another email sent to city hall complaining about the same issue was reported stating that people are driving fast and dangerous. The Mayor stated that he lives two blocks from there and traffic has gotten horrendous and that patrons from Morrison True Value have added to the situation. The Mayor states he has addressed the issue about the speeding regularly in the newspaper, but to no avail. The Mayor states he has spoken to some AP personnel about the need for increased patrol in the area but realizes he is not their boss and that his request may not have been given the attention needed. The Mayor states that**

there is a lot of speeding throughout the day through Holland and Avenue E and all other streets. Councilor Stephens stated that looking into the matter would be worthwhile since he has gotten numerous complaints about people speeding in Ward 5. Council Stephens stated that perhaps a traffic study could be considered if enough traffic was noted. It was reported that Chief Scown put a camera on 5<sup>th</sup> and Sul Ross as a way to start gathering data. It was noted that a workshop could be considered to see what options are available would be beneficial. The Mayor stated that between Lockhart and 5<sup>th</sup> Street, whenever there is church on Wednesdays and Sundays, there are blind spots. Council Stephens recommended that our City Manager visit with Chief Scown and figure out what options may be available. Council Stephens stated this was like a good news, bad news story. The good news is that our sales tax are up, our HOT funding is up, and there are more people coming into town. The bad news is that we have more people coming into town.

**B. Review and discuss the schedule of reports to be presented for the year. (R. Stephens, City Council)** – Councilor Stephens thought it would be worthwhile to put together a list of departments that report to Council. He stated that there are a total of 27 departments, including Board & Commissions, that report to the council on a yearly basis. He voiced a desire to determine which reports could be sent to the council in written format versus verbal reporting as should be done by the Code Enforcement, along with department that handle safety issues such as the Fire Department and Police Department.

**C. Review and discuss the status of the Alpine Vision Plan and the next actions going forward. (R. Stephens, City Council)** – Councilor Stephens voiced a desire to bring this issue back into focus. Councilor Stephens stated he felt that the push for a vision plan was not for the City to tell everyone what to do, but to use the small business development center to facilitate discussion amongst community members and community organizations. It was their responsibility to determine what areas needed effort and activities. He also felt that these activities needed to be aligned so that when it comes to the City, the Chamber, the Downtown Association, the University and other organizations, a determination into investments could be made. He questioned on how to go and drive that in a way that makes sense. As the one that brought this together and introduced it to Council, when it was apparent that Erik was leaving, Councilor Stephens made a conscious decision to back off until our new City Manager came on board. Council Stephens feels that having the City facilitate and coordinate this effort would be an important element associated with this project. Councilor Stephens felt the need to give some background and some thoughts about how to proceed down the path. The Small Business Development Center along with the University of Texas in San Antonio drafted a plan focused on improving the downtown district and tourism potential. The plan was drafted in 2016. Council reviewed the 89 page report that came out and was presented to Council about 15 months ago. There were 6 key recommendations. 1<sup>st</sup> was to increase tourism in Alpine, 2<sup>nd</sup> to improve the historic buildings and encourage reuse in Alpine downtown district, 3<sup>rd</sup> to develop a special event center and farmers market, 4<sup>th</sup> to enhance sidewalks and street crossing for pedestrians, 5<sup>th</sup> increase parking options and 6<sup>th</sup> was to look at connecting the City. There was a workshop held June of 2017 where approximately 70 people

attended and 35 people signed up that they wanted to be continually involved and participating on all of the recommendations. The actions that were taken from the meeting in June 2017 was for council to continue to support the discussions, 2<sup>nd</sup> to host more meetings for those individuals that wanted to engage, 3<sup>rd</sup> make sure that downtown association is engaged and the 4<sup>th</sup> that there is a line up with City management on all options that come up with any budget items. He felt that it was probably worthwhile to bring back those 35 people. Several individuals voiced a desire to lead the plan and sit down and get it lined up. Jessica and Councilor Stephens will have a discussion to make sure she is up to speed on this project. This is just to keep the dialogue ongoing. This item will be reintroduced at least once a quarter. It will be important to have the discussion with the City Manager about how she wants to engage and the approaches particularly with item #1 which is increase tourism in Alpine. It was noted that HOT funding is not only tied into the Alpine Visitor Center and the Downtown Association. The notion about sidewalks, street crossings and parking options are also important. Councilor Stephens voiced the importance of keeping the City Manager up to speed and engaged as Council thinks about the appropriate city resources. Councilor Stephens' feels that there will be individuals that will invest, as will organizations, but the possibility of grant monies also being used would necessitate the city's involvement. He feels that we have a City Manager who has some real brain power in that area and expertise. The Mayor stated that Chris Mallory from the Holland Hotel should be included in this dialogue; Mr. Mallory is planning a trip into Mexico to bring tourism to Alpine. Chris Ruggia stated that Cliff Mallory has been working directly with the Holland and is beginning a hotel property hospitality association and might be a good contact as well. Councilor Olivas agrees that the City Council should take an active supportive role to continue discussions regarding the vision plan, but they need to also strategize on getting the word out to as many of the residence in Alpine as possible. In Ward 2, Councilor Olivas has talked to various individuals and asked them if they were aware of the vision plan for Alpine. He also asked them about the emphasis and focuses regarding recognizing the restructuring and promotion of downtown and most didn't know. Most had not ever heard about it, didn't know anything about it and would like to get more information on it. Councilor Olivas stated the residents were asking why only downtown and why not the outlining Wards. He stated that in the plan itself there was an emphasis to connect downtown to the other fragments of the City, but getting the people involved so that they could help to make the connections was important. Councilor Stephens offered to visit with Councilor Olivas to figure out how to reach the folks. Councilor Stephens reminded councilor Olivas that it has been on the radio, the newspaper and that there had been town hall meetings. Council Stephens urged councilor Olivas to provide information on how to reach the residents, as the intent has been to pull as many people as possible.

- D. Appointment of Troy Sheldon for Building & Standards for Alternate for Ward 1. (M. Curry, City Council.) – Councilor Curry shared her recommendation of Troy Sheldon and requested action at the next meeting. Councilor Stephens inquired into Troy Sheldon's background since he doesn't know him. Councilor Curry stated that Troy Sheldon had his own construction company.

Action items should be accompanied by a brief statement of facts, including where funds are coming from, if applicable. (Action items limited to (up to) 10 per meeting). (Citizens are allowed to comment –

limited to 3 minutes – after being called upon by Mayor or Mayor Pro Tem. Citizens are required to state their name and the Ward in which they reside. Priority will be given to citizens of Alpine and those who own businesses or property in the City. Individuals who do not live in, own a business or property in the city limits of Alpine, will be allowed to speak if there is time available.) -

8. Discuss and consider taking action on updating check signatories for the City of Alpine checking account. (L. Escovedo, City Council) – Motion was made by Councilor Escovedo by Resolution 2018-01-02, to add City Manager, Jessica Garza and remove J Horry. Motion was seconded by Councilor Fitzgerald. Motion unanimously carried.
9. Discuss and consider approving the “Fiesta Del Barrio” request for June 30, 2018 funding of \$3500.00 and additional support. (R. Olivas, City Council) – Motion made by Councilor Olivas to discuss and consider approving the “Fiesta Del Barrio request for \$3500.00 for the June 30, 2018 festivities. Motion seconded by Councilor Stephens to continue discussion. Motion was made by Councilor Olivas, by Resolution 2018-01-03, to table this item. Motion was seconded by Councilor Fitzgerald. Motion unanimously carried.
10. City Councilmember Comments and Answers – No discussion or action may take place.

Councilor Stephens –Glad we were all able to come back and Jessica it is great to have you on board and I appreciate your priorities on people and Emergency Services. Councilor’s assumption was that there are plans in place and clearly wanted to express them.

Councilor Escovedo – Glad that everyone came. Glad that former Councilor Gonzales attended and Ms. Bermudez also attended the meeting. Glad that Fiesta Del Barrio came up and hopefully Council can do something to help them. I doesn’t think that everything electronically works all the time. Glad Chris Ruggia came and explained things. Thank you so much.

Councilor Fitzgerald – Thank you everyone for showing up especially my contingents in Ward 3 and hope everyone had a good holiday. We had a very busy holiday; I must remember when I goes to my daughters that I am 71 and not 31.

Councilor Olivas - “Happy New Year” certainly hope that all your wishes, desires, objective, goals, whatever you would like to call them are met for the year and looking forward to some new activities.

Councilor Curry - Meeting was good, glad that everyone came up with some nice discussions and it was a great meeting.

Mayor Ramos – Thank you all for coming this evening. Chris thank you for your insights which will probably solve Fiesta Del Barrio issues. Let’s get this issue resolved so that we can move forward. It is a worthwhile benefit for the City to get a lot of tourism. Jessica, we want to thank you for coming on board and quickly taking reins. We will have our quarterly meeting with TML on February 2, 2018

11. Executive Session – NONE

**12. Action after Executive Session - None**

**13. ADJOURNMENT – There being no further business, meeting was adjourned.**

**NOTICE: The City Council reserves the right to adjourn into Executive Session at any time during the course of this meeting to discuss any of the matters listed on the posted agenda, above, as authorized by the Texas Government Code, Sections 551.071 (consultation with attorney), 551.072 (deliberations about real property), 551.073 (deliberations about gifts and donations), 551.074 (personnel matters), 551.076 (deliberations about security devices), and 551.086 (economic development.)**

**I certify that this notice was posted at 4:00 P.M on December 21, 2017, pursuant to Texas Open Meetings Act. (Texas Vernon’s Annotated Civil Statutes, section 551.043, Texas Government Code.) This facility is wheelchair accessible and accessible parking space is available. Requests for accommodations or interpretive services must be made 48 hours prior to this meeting. Please contact the City Secretary’s Office at (432) 837-3301 or fax (432) 837-2044 for further information.**

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**Andres “Andy” Ramos, Mayor**

**Attest:**

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**Cynthia Salas, City Secretary**

**I, Cynthia Salas, City Secretary, do certify that this notice was posted at 4:00 P. M. on December 21, 2017, and remained so posted continuously for at least 72 hours proceeding the scheduled time of said meeting.**

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**Cynthia Salas, City Secretary**