

MINUTES FROM A REGULAR MEETING ON December 16, 2025

The Government Body of the City of Rio Hondo, Texas, met in a Regular Meeting on December 16, 2025 at 6:00 pm in the Commission Chambers at City Hall, with Mayor- Gustavo Olivares Presiding and present, and Commissioners Juan Garza- Present, Diana Bustamante-Zavala – Present, Esteban Bocanegra- Present, Olga Gallegos- Present, and Jose Cavazos- Present.

ALSO PRESENT: Ben Medina- City Administrator, Ana Hernandez - Assistant City Administrator, Lucy Garza – Finance Director, Robert Drinkard - City Attorney, Julian Longoria – Police Chief, Alex Garza – Library, Anaya Casas – Library, Angel Flores – Water Dept

Call meeting to Order (Mayor) at 6:00 pm

Pledge of Allegiance to the United States

Invocation led by Commissioner Juan Garza

Regular Agenda:

1. Mayor's and Commissioner's Reports.

Commissioner Garza stated that he had submitted some agenda items but due to the time frame for posting, items will not be on this agenda.

Mr. Drinkard stated that Agenda has to be posted 3 business days before meeting. In order for an item to be on the Agenda Mr. Medina has to have it by Monday. Mr. Drinkard added that this is an adjustment for all Cities.

Mayor congratulated the City on the Parade, Toy Drive, and all the festivities. He thanked the Police Department and all the staff.

2. Reports: Administrator, Library, Parks, Public Safety, Utilities:

Mr. Medina reported on:

- Christmas Parade big success
- Toy drive provided 250 gifts; gifts ran out but we got names & numbers and gifts will be picked up
- Getting very close to second water crossing; waiting on contractor to inspect the well. This project took 2 years to get permits from Corp of Engineers. Before that it took us 1-2 years to do the design the way they wanted it. Even after submittal they still had comments and review of the plans. It took them 2 years to give us the plans. The pipe which is hcp type has been bought. Mr. Medina gave the background of this project. He

stated that the pipe will be pushed under arroyo, it has to be below the bottom of the arroyo 34 feet below the bottom.

Mr. Medina also explained the importance of this line.

- Water Plant Improvements will be done with grant funds from the TWDB

In addition to Administrator's report Commissioner Garza submitted some questions for Mr. Medina to address.

- Provide a status update on the MDD/EDC, including a timeline for establishing the committee and an anticipated date for beginning regular meetings.

RESPONSE: The City Commissioners and the Mayor are the members of the MDD, and I will meet with the Mayor to schedule a meeting. Mayor asked what would be some of the projects to consider under the MDD. Mr. Medina replied that it would be any projects that involve Economic Development, acquisition of land, downtown improvements, business incentives. Mayor instructed Mr. Medina that moving forward he needs to set up either monthly or quarterly meetings for all the upcoming projects. Mayor proposed also forming a different committee but wants to be a part of it. Commissioner Garza stepped down from being part of the MDD Committee to give the opportunity to a member of the community.

- Provide a status update on the Veterans Committee, including the committee formation timeline and projected date for regular meeting to commence.

RESPONSE: Will meet with Commissioner Bocanegra, who has volunteered to chair the committee, to confirm the meeting schedule, and the staff is ready to provide support.

- Provide an update on the City-owned RHISD school building, including the current status of building usage, long-term vision, plans, and the timeline for implementation.

RESPONSE: The RHISD school building is vacant, with power available. The Police Department would like to relocate to the North wing, and the museum to the South wing. The timeline is determined by available funding, which is not currently in place. This project and the Central Business District will be discussed as a component of the Comprehensive Plan update in May 2026. The Mayor added that he discussed the idea with Mr. Medina of moving the Police Dept to this building rather than spend money in repairing downstairs. The Mayor along with the Chief would like to bring other businesses and charge them at least to cover the electricity and water. The Mayor would also like to have an EOC in this building.

- Provide an update on the CORH lot at Colorado/FM106 (Old LJ's gas station). What plans are in place for this lot? If the food truck park is still being considered, please include a projected timeline for a grand opening.

RESPONSE: The project has started with the lighting, installation, and power boxed for the food trucks. Water and sewer services are pending, and a stage, cover, asphalt laying, and bathrooms. A funding request will be presented to the City Commission in January

- Provide an update on the Spotted Sea Trout Boat Ramp, including the solar light previously discussed for the South side of the park and the entrance cards. Please include projected completion timelines.
RESPONSE: The cards will arrive in the next week, and the lighting fixture price and funds request will be presented on in January 2026.
- Provide and update on the sale of Fred's Drugstore and information regarding planned use of the proceeds.
RESPONSE: The Drug Store transaction is closing, and the title company is finalizing the insurance. The use of proceeds will be determined by the city commission, with the recommendation to be used for paving the food truck park. The sale closes on December 22, 2025.
- Provide and update on the dog catcher position, or the possibility of assigning these responsibilities to an existing employee as previously discussed.
RESPONSE: Mr. Osvaldo Garcia, the interim Public Works Director, has been the dog catcher for the last few years. His duties also include assisting in the sewer and water plant.
- Provide an update on the Public Works Director position recently vacated due to retirement.
RESPONSE: The City Commission appointed Mr. Osvaldo Garcia as the interim Public Works Director and will recommend him for hire as the Public Works Director, who will oversee animal control services.
- Provide an update on the sewer grinder pumps for South Arroyo.
RESPONSE: The contractor has started his preliminary work and will finish late next week.
- Provide and update on the appointment of a backup judge
Response: Have prepared a request for qualifications and have mailed it to possible candidates. We should have a candidate for approval at the February meeting. Mayor added that this item should be left alone for now and revisit closer to May.

Library Dept.

Alex reported.

- Angel Tree had 74 students
- Received \$278.01 which was used to buy more gifts
- Thanksgiving Food Drive went well
- Adult Art Class meets monthly every second Saturday
- Dungeons & Dragons club meets every Saturday
- Sisters in Christ meet every Thursday
- Partnering with Twin Palms to provide a Christmas meal for 2 families
- Christmas Story Time Meal & City Administrator Gifts for the special needs students will be on Dec 17th at 10 am. There will be a total of 45 students participating.
- Looking to add a food pantry

- Looking to add a manga section, comic book section, brail section, and a maker's space
- Visits are down from 511 in October to 375 November; factor include holidays, weather, power outages,

Commissioner Bocanegra would like to see a proposed budget to see how much these additions will cost.

Police/Fire Dept Report:

Chief Longoria reported the following:

1. November 57 Traffic Stops
2. November 99 Public Contact
3. November 108 Business Checks
4. As of Right now for December 26 Traffic Stops
5. Collected over \$3,000
6. December 27 – Public Contact
7. December – Calls for service 10
8. Fire Dept has gone to 3 brush fires in November
9. December 1 – fire and have gone 6 times to one
10. Received at \$25,000 grant through Texas Forestry Service
11. Received another grant for officers to work inside the city through STEP it is a TXDOT Grant. – for 4 weeks during Holidays.
12. Various agencies helped out during Christmas Parade.

Mayor asked status on water hydrants. Chief replied they haven't completed this task but he will continue to work on this project. Mayor asked what was the procedure if a water hydrant was not working. Mr. Medina stated that the fire hydrants that are not working will get checked again to make sure they are indeed not working and then from that point we will call the contractor to repair.

Public Works/Water Plant

- Public Works is working with 4 full time employees
- All equipment is working
- Have been assisting water
- Assisted during parade
- Sewer plant has another pump
- Parks are cut and clean

Mayor asked about potholes. Angel stated they ran into some problems but they are getting fixed.

3. Public Comment Period. Please note – *The Public Comment Period is designated for hearing concerns regarding City of Rio Hondo Public Policy or City of Rio Hondo business that is or is not on the agenda or items on the agenda.*

NO PUBLIC COMMENT

4. Consideration and Action to approve November 18, 2025, City Commission Minutes.

Commissioner Cavazos had a question on item 11. He thought the fee for commercial had been set at \$125. It was clarified that fee was set at \$150.

Commissioner Garza made a motion to approve the minutes of November 18, 2025, City Commission Meeting. Commissioner Gallegos seconded the motion; all voted “aye” to approve; motion carried.

5. Consideration and Action on Resolution No. 2025-13, submitting the City of Rio Hondo votes for the election of the Cameron County Appraisal District Board of Directors.

There was discussion amongst the Commission as to who should get the City’s votes. Mayor Olivares reminded everyone that County Commission Garza has always helped the City when needed. Some opted to give both votes to Jessica Gonzales, our Municipal Court Judge.

Lucy Garza addressed the Council to vote for a person not only because they know them but someone who knows what they are doing.

Commissioner Garza feels that we should give our votes to Commissioner David Garza and Judge Jessica Gonzales as they have proven to have a vested interest in our community.

Commissioner Garza made a motion to give one (1) vote to David Garza and one (1) vote to Jessica Gonzales. Commissioner Bustamante seconded the motion, all voted “aye” to approve; motion carried.

6. Consider Approval of the Financial Statements for October 2025 of the General Fund and Utilities Fund.

Mr. Medina & Lucy Garza presented financial statements for October 2025 of the General Fund and Utilities Fund.

Commissioner Cavazos made a motion to approve the Financial Statements for October 2025 of

the General Fund and Utilities Fund. Commissioner Bocanegra seconded the motion, all voted “aye” to approve; motion carried.

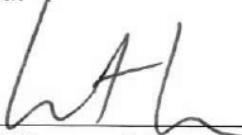
7. Executive Session pursuant to Texas Local Government Code Section 551.074, to discuss the appointment, employment, evaluation, reassignment, duties, discipline, or dismissal of the City Administrator/City Secretary.

Commissioner Gallegos made a motion to go into Executive Session at 7:58 pm. Commissioner Garza seconded the motion, all voted “aye” to approve; motion carried

Commission came out of Executive Session at 10.05pm

8. Adjournment

Approved:



Gustavo Olivares, Mayor

Date: 1/27/2024

Attest:



Ben Medina, City Administrator/Secretary

Date: 1/28/2024