

## MINUTES FROM A REGULAR MEETING ON November 18, 2025

The Government Body of the City of Rio Hondo, Texas, met in a Regular Meeting on November 18, 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, Aaron Martinez – Parks, Miguel A Carriaga-Citizen, Sue Ann Taubert-REMAX, Santiago Munoz-Resident, Jose Munoz-GMES, Maria Elvia Santana-Citizen, Gilberto Santana-Citizen, Santiago Martinez-Citizen

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

Pledge of Allegiance to the United States

Invocation led by **Commissioner Diana Bustamante**

Regular Agenda:

### 1. Mayor's and Commissioner's Reports.

Commissioner Gallegos inquired about a utility trailer and a combine that is parked Paloma, she had a citizen call. Mr. Medina stated that he has talked to the Chief to look into what can be done with vehicles that have expired inspection stickers and license plates.

Commissioner Bustamante reported that Mr. Carriaga from Harris St had reached out to her. She also stated if there was space for a food pantry. Mr. Medina replied that the Senior Center can be used and also the churches have space.

Commissioner Garza stated that the City needs to be more responsive to outside agencies.

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

Mr. Medina reported on:

- Catherine Street stormwater construction is ongoing and on schedule.
- Mira Mar, Kinlinger St, and Harrolds St are almost complete we are just pending acceptance from Engineer and HUD
- Heywood/Roberto Garza storm water project needs more funds the bids are coming in over budget
- Outside light replacement will begin on Monday

- Power washing being done and should be completed by Monday
- Christmas decorations are being installed, Christmas tree is up
- Proposals for painting will be sent on Monday
- Christmas Parade and Toy Give-Away will be on Dec 13
- Proposals for street sweeping will be sent on Monday
- Proposals for Alternate Judge will be prepared
- Working with the people from Harris and the person on Colorado. This is more of a neighborly dispute. The ordinance does not cover backyard.

#### Parks Dept.

Aaron reported that they are doing well. However, a sink was removed at one of the restrooms at the park. Tractors are all running and we are up to date on cutting. This Department has received many compliments on job well done.

#### Sewer/Water Plant

Angel reported that improvements are being made. He stated they have been working on the violation list. TCEQ was concerned on the NTU's for water plant. New floats were installed and the numbers improved. Wastewater was having problems with pumps but we replaced 3 and they are working good.

Mayor said this was the 1st time he was given a number on the water quality.

#### Library Dept.

Alex introduced himself and gave his background.

- Angel Tree has 66 students
- Thanksgiving Food Drive is ongoing until November 25<sup>th</sup>
- 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 Thanksgiving meal to a family
- Christmas Story Time Meal & City Administrator Gifts for the special needs students.
- Christmas Food Drive and Christmas Meal donation in the works

#### Police/Fire Dept Report:

Chief Longoria presented the council a small packet that included:

1. Vision, Mission, and Core Values Statements
2. Rio Hondo Police Department Stats – October 2025

3. Rio Hondo – November 2025
4. Trusted Driver Proposal
5. Rio Hondo Volunteer Fire Department Stats – October/November 2025
6. 37 Tex Admin Code Sec. 211.16 “Continued Operation of an Appointing Entity” Rule Change
7. “Complaints or Compliments” Posting
8. Complaint Form

Chief Longoria presented his new vision, mission and core values statement. He is asking for the council’s approval.

Council Member Bustamante said that although she is faithful she does have a problem with Core Values Statement: Faith: We act with humility and compassion, guided by a higher purpose to serve others and putting it as Core Value Statement.

Commissioner Bocanegra stated that Chief is not mentioning any particular religion.

Commissioner Cavazos stated that on their units have “in God we trust”

Mayor stated that every Chief has made these type of changes in the past.

Chief reported for October & November 2025 (see attached)

Chief reported stats for October & November for RH Volunteer Fire Dept (see attached)

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.*

Mr. Carriaga addressed the Commission, stating that he placed a complaint over a year ago against Mr. Shiner for overgrown grass. Notices have been sent to him but nothing has been done. He wants a letter from council protecting him from wild animals. Mr. Medina stated that Parks & Wildlife wants to keep as native as much as possible. Mr. Shiner has trimmed. Mr. Carriaga wants letter to have a completion date.

Mr. Gilbert Santana complained about Mr. Medina stating he called him on October 24, 2025 regarding a speed bump. Mr. Santana asked who puts the signs on the road like for bike trails and so forth. He also stated that people drive very fast and he is requesting a speed hump.

Mayor explained that there is a process for speed humps.

Mr. Montes from 434 S. Harrold thanked the commission and Mr. Medina for the paving of the

streets the only complaint he has is his driveway is now too narrow. Mr. Medina stated that all these things will get repaired.

4. Consideration and Action to approve October 28, 2025, City Commission Minutes.

Commissioner Bustamante made a motion to approve the minutes of October 28, 2025.  
Commissioner Gallegos seconded the motion; all voted "aye" to approve; motion carried.

5. Consideration and Action to approve the sale of the city-owned building at 200 Colorado Blvd, known as Fred's Drug Store.

Mr. Medina addressed the council regarding the sale of Fred's Drug Store. He stated that there is an offer on the table for \$115,000 and Ms. Taubert from REMAX is in attendance for any questions. Mayor asked what it will be used for. Ms. Taubert replied it will be a satellite office. Their main office is in Monterrey. Asking for A/C to be repaired along with the glass on door.

Commissioner Garza asked what is the market value of the property. Ms. Taubert replied that last appraisal was \$125,000. Mr. Garza stated the appraisal district had it appraised at \$156,000 last year; this year it's appraised at \$132,000. Ms. Taubert replied that the property is a mess. Ms. Taubert recommends it be sold, this way the City starts getting some money back in the form of taxes.

The Mayor remembers when it was purchased for \$92,000 and he just doesn't want for whoever buys it to set up a business that is not appropriate for Rio Hondo.

Commissioner Garza asked how long has it been on the Market and where it is listed. Mr. Medina replied that it has been on the market since August and it's listed in Harlingen MOS & Brownsville MOS, the internet and multiple places.

Mayor asked what will happen to furniture. Mr. Medina replied all furniture will be removed and placed at the old High School.

Commissioner Bocanegra asked if it's possible for the buyer to come in to present his plans for this building.

Mayor addressed the council that he understands how everyone feels but this committee is not an Economic Development where we are giving incentives and if we wanted to know what type of business or what plans the owner has for this building then Mr. Medina and realtor should have been instructed to ask these questions since the beginning.

Commissioner Garza feels the offer is low.

Commissioner Cavazos stated he is ok with fixing the glass but not the A/C and is ok with selling

instead of waiting and the building deteriorates more.

Commissioner Cavazos asked what is percentage. Ms. Taubert replied it will be 8%.

The Mayor stated that the longer the building remains on the market is money that the city is losing.

Allison asked if a Chapter 380 was considered. She explain that this allows some Economic Development incentives but you don't have to obtain fair market value. You can sell for less than market value in exchange for certain obligations to be undertaken. Authorizes municipalities to give incentives.

Commissioner Bocanegra made a motion to approve the sale of the City-Owned building at 200 Colorado Blvd, known as Fred's Drug Store. Commissioner Cavazos seconded the motion. Commissioners Bocanegra, Gallegos, and Cavazos voted "aye"; Commissioners Garza and Bustamante voted "nay"; motion carried.

#### 6. Consideration and Action of the de-annexation petition for Rio Hondo Estates Subdivision.

Mr. Medina stated that anyone that wishes to be de-annexed needs to submit a petition it becomes effective after 45 days. This is a de-annexation from the ETJ. They are asking for this petition be signed by the Mayor and the County.

Commissioner Garza asked that if anyone within the ETJ can do this. Allison replied "yes" if they meet certain criteria.

The Mayor along with Commissioner Garza stated either we approve now or it will be approved within 45 days.

Commissioner Cavazos made a motion to approve the de-annexation petition for Rio Hondo Estates Subdivision. Commissioner Bocanegra seconded the motion, all voted "aye" to approve; motion carried.

#### 7. Discussion regarding de-annexation petitions legislation and proposed housing subdivisions.

Per Mr. Medina explained the de-annexations and proposed housing subdivisions. The Mayor stated that as a city we need to think of ways to provide services and based on statute anyone can be de-annexed. He also added who wants to pay taxes without services. Allison added this

interferes with City's long range planning. The legislature has given the power to the private sector.

8. Consideration and Action on Ordinance 2025-06 regarding the application and the setting of fees for the issuance of a de-annexation petition.

Allison stated that the proposed fee of \$2,500 was very high. Administrative fees must tie in to how much it actually costs to administer.

Commissioner Cavazos made a motion to approve Ordinance 2025-06 with correction on dollar amount to be \$400. Commissioner Bustamante seconded the motion, all voted "aye" to approve; motion carried.

9. Public Hearing and Action approving the preliminary plat for Parkway Estates (Rio Hondo Park Block 35, 1 acre, and Rio Hondo Park Block 35, 4 acres.

Mr. Medina asked for this item to be tabled.

Commissioner Garza made a motion to table this item. Commissioner Gallegos seconded the motion, all voted "aye" to approve; motion carried.

THIS ITEM WAS TABLED

10. Public Hearing and Action on Ordinance 2025-07 for the annexation of Rio Hondo Park Block 35, 1 acre, and Rio Hondo Park Block 35, 4 acres, for Parkway Estates and approving the service Plan.

Mr. Medina asked for this item to be tabled.

Commissioner Cavazos made a motion to table this item. Commissioner Bocanegra seconded the motion, all voted "aye" to approve; motion carried.

THIS ITEM WAS TABLED

11. Consideration and Action on Ordinance 2025-08 amending Ordinance 2024-06 by adding a business annual pass fee of \$150.00 and an individual annual pass fee of \$75.00.

Mayor asked for this to be added to the agenda because the first ordinance did not include these fees.. Mayor and Commission want cards despite the cost.

\$50 inside city	\$25.00 Veterans Inside City
\$75 outside city	\$37.50 Veterans Outside City
\$150 for commercial	

Commissioner Cavazos made a motion to approve Ordinance 2025-08 amending Ordinance 2024-06 by adding an annual pass fee of \$50 inside city, \$75 outside city, \$150 commercial, \$25 Veterans Inside City, \$37.50 Veterans Outside City. Commissioner Bocanegra seconded the motion, all voted “aye” to approve; motion carried.

12. Public Hearing and Action on Ordinance 2025-09 amending Ordinance 407 setting the fees for after-hours drinking water re-connections.

Mr. Medina explained after the 10<sup>th</sup> of the month, customers get charged a 10% late fee. If not paid by the 25<sup>th</sup> they get disconnected and charge \$25 reconnection fee.

Mr. Medina wants the fee to be raised to \$75 for after-hours reconnection fee.

After much discussion it was agreed that the after hour fee will be set at \$50.00

Commissioner Cavazos made a motion to approve Ordinance 2025-09 amending Ordinance 407 setting the fees for after-hours water reconnection fees to \$50.00. Commissioner Bocanegra seconded the motion, all voted “aye” to approve; motion carried.

13. Public Hearing and Action on Ordinance 2025-10 approving the City of Rio Hondo subdivision application and development fees.

Mr. Medina asked for this item to be tabled

Commissioner Bocanegra made a motion to table this item. Commissioner Cavazos seconded the motion, all voted “aye” to approve; motion carried.

THIS ITEM WAS TABLED

14. Consideration and Action rejecting all bids and re-bidding the street and drainage improvements for Heywood Street.

Mr. Medina introduced our Engineer Mr. Munoz who addressed the council stating that bids were opened on October 9. There was 7 bidders. All the bids came in high even the lowest bidder is above the estimated construction costs. His recommendation is to reject all bids and rebid project.

Commissioner Bocanegra made a motion to reject all bids and rebid the streets and drainage improvements for Heywood Street. Commissioner Garza seconded the motion, all voted "aye" to approve; motion carried.

15. Consideration and Action regarding the procurement of two sewer grinder pumps for two lots along South Arroyo Street.

Mr. Medina stated that there is a new house built on S. Arroyo. The neighbor was having problems with sewer especially when it rained when trying to connect the new house the city realized that the sewer line is too high above the ground. The solution is to buy 2 grinder pumps to push the sewer forward.

Commissioner Garza made a motion to approve the purchase of two sewer grinder pumps for two lots along South Arroyo Street. Commissioner Bustamante seconded the motion, all voted "aye" to approve; motion carried.

16. Acknowledgement of the Republic Services solid waste fees for October 1, 2025 to September 2026.

Mr. Medina presented the new fees set by Republic Services effective October 1, 2025 to September 2026. No action needed.

17. Consideration and Action calling for the City's General Election on May 2, 2026 for the offices of Mayor, Commissioner Place 2, and Commissioner Place 4.

Mr. Medina stated that this is to call the Election needs to be posted.

Commissioner Bocanegra made a motion to call for the City's General Election on May 2, 2026 for the offices of Mayor, Commissioner Place 2, and Commissioner Place 4. Commissioner Gallegos seconded the motion, all voted "aye" to approve; motion carried.



18. Executive Session

Commissioner Bocanegra made a motion to go into Executive Session at 8:34 pm.

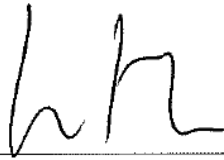
Commissioner Gallegos seconded the motion, all voted "aye" to approve; motion carried

Commission came out of Executive Session at 9:25 pm

No Action was taken on items discussed in Executive Session

19. Adjournment

Approved:



Gustavo Olivares, Mayor

Date:

1/27/2024

Attest:



Ben Medina, City Administrator/Secretary

Date:

1/28/2024