

DRAFT

MINUTES CITY COUNCIL WORKSHOP May 7, 2024

A City Council Workshop was held by the Schertz City Council of the City of Schertz, Texas, on May 7, 2024, at 5:00 p.m. in the Hal Baldwin Municipal Complex Council Chambers, 1400 Schertz Parkway, Building #4, Schertz, Texas. The following members present to-wit:

Present: Mayor Ralph Gutierrez; Mayor Pro-Tem Paul Macaluso; Councilmember Michelle Watson; Councilmember Tiffany Gibson; Councilmember Robert Westbrook; Councilmember Allison Heyward; Councilmember Tim Brown

Absent: Councilmember Mark Davis

Staff present: City Manager Steve Williams; Deputy City Manager Brian James; City Attorney Daniel Santee; Assistant City Manager Sarah Gonzalez; City Secretary Sheila Edmondson; Deputy City Secretary Sheree Courney

Call to Order

Mayor Gutierrez called the meeting to order at 5:04 p.m.

Discussion and Action Items

1. **Minutes** - Consideration and/or action regarding the approval of the Council Workshop minutes of April 2, 2024. (S.Edmondson/S.Courney)

Mayor Gutierrez asked for a motion to approve the Minutes from the April 2, 2024, Council Workshop.

Moved by Councilmember Tiffany Gibson, seconded by Councilmember Tim Brown

AYE: Mayor Pro-Tem Paul Macaluso, Councilmember Tiffany Gibson, Councilmember Allison Heyward, Councilmember Tim Brown

Passed

Workshop

2. Workshop on the Onboarding of newly elected Councilmembers (R. Westbrook/S. Edmondson)

Mayor Gutierrez opened the floor to Council for discussion.

Councilmember Heyward stated that what is in the packet is sufficient. She doesn't feel it needs to remain as a Workshop item, just bring it to Council on an as-needed process.

Mayor Gutierrez explained it is a technical process but agreed to remove it from the Workshop agenda and bring it back on an as-needed basis.

3. Workshop to discuss the implementation of a Women's History Month program (R. Westbrook/S. Williams/S. Gonzalez)

Mayor Gutierrez stated this item was brought forward by Councilmember Westbrook who was not present at the time. He asked if there was any information to share. City Manager Steve Williams stated there was nothing new. This item had been discussed at the last Workshop but not every Councilmember had had an opportunity to speak due to time constraints.

Councilmember Heyward stated it needed to be removed from the Workshop Agenda Items. She felt that at the last meeting there was a consensus to allow the Library to continue to promote Women's History Month.

Mayor Gutierrez stated that this item was closed.

4. Workshop on potential modifications and enhancements to Movin' on Main (R. Gutierrez/S. Williams/S. Gonzalez/L. Shrum)

Mayor Gutierrez recognized City Manager Steve Williams who stated this item was brought forward to discuss ways to potentially enhance or improve the program.

Councilmember Brown asked if there had been a public survey on this item. He felt feedback from the public would be helpful to ensure they were offering suggestions that were in line with their expectations.

Mr. Williams recognized Parks and Recreation Director Lauren Shrum to address the survey question. Ms. Shrum stated that they had done polls on social media, but not a formal survey mailed out to residents. They sent surveys after the event to vendors and food trucks to see what worked well, what wasn't working, etc. Councilmember Brown stated he wasn't looking necessarily for a statistically valid survey but getting feedback necessarily, so the Council has some ideas to start with that aren't generated by Council. Ms. Shrum replied that they don't have anything open-ended. However,

they do talk about it at the Parks Board who have brought stuff forward over the years. Councilmember Brown stated that they have all talked to residents at or after the event and it's always popular, always positive feedback. But there's also always things that people ask like why we can't do it on Saturday vs Sunday, and why do we have to do it in the middle of the day. Ms. Shrum explained that the timing was determined at the time the mayor and the YMCA had inaugurated that event it was modeled after the San Antonio

Mayor Gutierrez stated that it is easier to close down Main Street on a Sunday because there is less activity on Sundays.

Councilmember Brown added that next year, there's a good possibility Main Street will be under construction.

Mr. Williams added that there could be significant hurdles hosting the event on Main Street next year altogether because of the construction.

Councilmember Heyward stated that the bars along Main Street should be permitted to open and serve. Individuals should be permitted to purchase a cup and have alcohol outside on the street during an event. She stated she likes how it's laid out, having things for the kids is a good thing, but perhaps it would be better on a Saturday or possibly later in the day when it's not so hot.

Councilmember Gibson concurred with Councilmember Heyward regarding allowing businesses to participate in the event. She asked how they track the number of people who attend the event. Are we having issues with attendance? What is the purpose of having it on the Workshop agenda?

Mayor Gutierrez stated it is an after-action type of thing. Looking for feedback on how the event is perceived and whether it can be improved. Do they need to change it?

Councilmember Gibson stated she thinks we should change it. Families don't want children getting overheated and if we are going to bring in music that brings in local talent. That changes the game. It brings in their followers, which promotes the City of Schertz. It would be a great way to provide a shining light on the City of Schertz.

Mayor Gutierrez stated that if they do change the hours to make it later in the day, then they would need to move it to a Saturday. They can make it a music festival and alternate it every year.

Councilmember Brown stated that they needed to focus on this being a family-oriented outdoor event. Either Council keeps that theme and makes some changes to it, or they move away from it. You can work in a band into the late afternoon, but you should also have something that keeps them moving, such as a Bike Rodeo for the kids or a 5K to kick off. If you're going to keep the same theme and that family orientation, you don't want to start it off at 6:00 p.m. Another option is to just go back to the Party in the Park.

Ms. Shrum stated that this sounds like a different type of event, a music festival, which they've talked about previously. Perhaps an event geared towards adults. We do everything aimed at the family. Perhaps something like they did for the 60th anniversary with music and alcohol. Like the Saegerfest just held in New Braunfels. Integrating the bars and music is a possibility, but it would be a break from Movin' on Main, because it was a health and wellness event. She went on to state that events have a lifespan. People get tired of the same old thing. They want something new and fresh. It's fine to retire an event. It is a good time to try something new since the street is going under construction, and it will be difficult to host Movin' on Main there for the next two years.

Mayor Pro-Tem Macaluso concurred with Councilmember Brown. It sounds like we are veering away from the original purpose of the event. Not that it's a bad thing to move away, but there is still an appetite for these types of events. He believes brainstorming on new ideas is worthwhile. There are opportunities we can build from.

According to Ms. Shrum, utility work is slated to start in late Fall/early Winter. It is possible it will be completed by April, but not guaranteed. Upon completion of the utility work, work will begin to replace the water lines, which will have the streets dug up. Looking at construction on Main Street for two to three years. She recommended pausing the event during the construction process.

Councilmember Heyward stated that since the street will be torn up, the event should be paused, do something else in the interim, then bring Movin' on Main back, so it's fresh in a fresh area. She would like to put more into Holidazzle. She would like to see a multi-day event.

Ms. Shrum agreed that pausing the event would be best because people would be excited about Movin' on Main with the new look and feel after the renovations are done.

Councilmember Brown agreed that shifting away from Movin' on Main until Main Street construction is complete is a great concept. Celebrate the end of construction by bringing it back. In the meantime, he suggested having Party in the Park for a couple of years and changing it to an adult theme.

Councilmember Gibson stated she agreed 100% with changing it and putting Movin' on Main on pause. She suggested gathering statistics from attendees to determine if we are gaining momentum with our residents or just doing whatever. She wants to ensure it's worth their time, and they want to see it come back, and whether it's worth the staff's time and energy. Get some numbers behind it to make sure we are moving in the direction our city wants us to.

Mayor Gutierrez stated he is very concerned about the construction on Main Street. He doesn't want to push the contractor and have anything overlooked. He thinks Movin' on Main should be postponed or have a Party in the Park.

Ms. Shrum asked for clarification on Party in the Park. She stated that staff had provided a long list of creative ideas to Council and asked if they could do that again.

Mr. Williams stated that the direction being given by Council is that, for starters, they need to pause Movin' on Main because of the construction for at least a couple of years. As far as what they replace it with, they'd like the opportunity to go back and regroup as a staff and bring Council some ideas and a recommendation on what they can do. If they do come up with another event, they will address it as part of the budget process.

5. Workshop to Highlight Domestic Violence and related services that are managed through our Crime Victim's Liaison office through collaborative relationships with other Law Enforcement Agencies, the tri-County District Attorney's Offices, and other Non-Governmental Organizations that includes an assortment of services mandated by law and otherwise (M./Watson/S.Williams/J.Lowery)

Mayor Gutierrez recognized Councilmember Watson, who brought this item forward. Councilmember Watson stated she was concerned about a recent post she had seen from an individual reaching out through social media for assistance. She wanted to have a discussion on what the City could do through the budget to get more information out there.

Mayor Gutierrez recognized Lt. LaCour of the Schertz Police Department, who introduced Ms. Heather Davis, Schertz Police Department Victim Liaison, to provide information on resources and services currently provided to victims and the process that is followed by the police department. Ms. Davis provided statistics on domestic violence and the process of her involvement for Schertz PD, which is either from a call for service or directly from officers called to a domestic violence incident. Once she is notified, she reaches out to the victim to provide services. When officers become involved with the victims, they go over the incident form and provide them with a packet. There is also a client log sheet that she reviews. During telephone conversations with victims, she reviews crime victim compensation, the criminal justice process, so they are aware of what occurs after law enforcement becomes involved. It goes to the detective, the police officer, and then to the district attorney's office. The District Attorney is the entity that determines whether charges are filed. If there are, then the victim becomes a witness for the state. She also goes over protective orders. On the scene, an emergency protective order can be issued, but she assists with the final protective order. She provides the applications and directs them to the appropriate county for filing. Other services are safety planning referrals to counseling services, scheduling forensic interviews, property returns, and case status with the courts.

Councilmember Watson stated she understands the intake process. She would like to increase awareness of available resources for victims through social media. She stated she was asked if Schertz had a church or anything like that, and she didn't think we did. She wanted to know what else was needed, possibly through the budget for social media for more awareness. Lt. LaCour responded that they could absolutely provide more awareness of the services they offer for victims of domestic violence and where

to find resources.

Ms. Davis provided information on shelters, crisis centers, and district attorney's offices for Bexar, Comal, and Guadalupe Counties that she works with. Thriving Hearts in Guadalupe County is one of the main agencies in the area that also has a shelter. If a victim lives in Comal or Guadalupe County, and they want to relocate to get away from the suspect, the Family Violence Center in Bexar County is a great resource.

Councilmember Westbrook asked what the program might be missing that could be addressed through the budget process. Ms. Davis responded that a great shelter in the area for emergency women's shelter would be wonderful.

Councilmember Watson asked if the current shelters were overcrowded. She was told that a victim was seeking shelter and there was no availability. Ms. Davis responded that part of that is true. Sometimes it is because of the location the victim is requesting because they want to keep the children in the same school. This contributes to the challenge especially in Schertz because there is no shelter in Schertz.

Mr. Williams asked what resources are available, where they are located, and what their current capacity is. Ms. Davis directed Council to the pamphlets provided. Thriving Hearts facilities are in Guadalupe, Gonzalez, Karnes, and Wilson counties. Family Violence is in Bexar County. Another one is in Comal County. A lot of it is where the victim wants to go. You don't want to re-victimize them by forcing them to relocate. Unfortunately, sometimes there's an assault, a strangulation, that forces them to.

A lot of the contact is done over the phone, but she has a packet that she can provide if she meets with them in person that includes the shelter information, the protective order application, a crime victim compensation application, the Abuse Wheels which explains how the process works, a checklist, a safety plan, emergency documents to take with you, and other resources.

Councilmember Heyward stated that she understood there is never enough space available, and asked what is being done when they are at capacity or if they aren't moving victims. What options are available if you can't move them or do an emergency relocation. Ms. Davis said there is always some place for victims to go if they will go. Not all are the best places, but there are places.

Councilmember Westbrook asked about training and education. Are SROs trained? Is it a problem in high school? Lt. LaCour responded that SROs and other police officers receive domestic violence training as part of their basic peace officer training, and they receive continuing education training courses. There is not a course specific to high school at present, but it is incorporated because family violence can be as young as 12.

Mayor Gutierrez asked what the capacity of Thriving Hearts in Guadalupe County was. Ms. Davis responded that there are 11 rooms, so three of the rooms are family rooms, and they can hold up to 5 or 6. Four rooms are single, with the remaining rooms

for double or triple.

Mr. Williams provided a recap. The direction that Council provided is to increase social media awareness in terms of resources and to re-evaluate shelter options. If we are considering a city-run shelter, we would want to look through our Capital Improvement Program process, as well as our operating budget. This would be considered during the normal budgeting process, but the social media awareness could be addressed right away.

Councilmember Heyward also suggested adding information to the Schertz Magazine because a lot of people get that in the mail and not everybody goes on social media.

6. Workshop on the second phase of the Skate Park.(P.Macaluso/S.Gonzales/L.Shrum)

This item was postponed to a future Workshop due to time constraints.

Adjournment

Mayor Gutierrez adjourned the meeting at 5:45 p.m.

Ralph Gutierrez, Mayor

ATTEST:

Sheila Edmondson, City Secretary