



CITY OF JAMAICA BEACH

16628 San Luis Pass Road
5264 Jamaica Beach
Jamaica Beach, Texas 77554
PH (409) 737-1142 FAX (409) 737-5211
www.jamaicabeachtx.gov



CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

December 14, 2023
6:00 P.M.

CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL OF MEMBERS:

Mayor Sharon Bower called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm

The following Council Members were present:

*Mayor Sharon Bower
Mayor Pro Tem Gil Madray
Alderman Sherwood Green
Alderswoman Lorraine Jones
Alderman Russell Rupertus*

The following Council Members were absent:

Alderman David Welch

The following staff were present:

*Director of Operations – Robert Quintero
Finance Clerk - Ester Abrego
Water Clerk – Tina Sifuentes*

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE U.S. AND TEXAS FLAGS

INVOCATION: Chaplain Donna Williams

SPECIAL PRESENTATION: None

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Mayor Bower announced that the Polar Plunge will be held on January 6, 2023 and encouraged everyone to come out and support the cause.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Zachary Strickland spoke on the short-term rental ordinance. He supports the occupancy options proposed.

Robin Harris spoke on the short-term rental ordinance. He supports the maximum occupancy of two persons per bedroom plus four additional persons. He believes the ordinance in place now should be used for the problem houses now.

Jerry Montgomery spoke on the short-term rental ordinance. He supports the maximum occupancy of two persons per bedroom plus four additional persons. He feels STR owners will sell and the families will go with them.

Brandon McDermott spoke on the short-term rental ordinance. He supports the maximum occupancy of two persons per bedroom plus two additional persons. He is against making any changes to the current ordinance.

Betty Montgomery spoke on the short-term rental ordinance. She supports the maximum occupancy of two persons per bedroom plus four additional persons. She feels the ordinances in place should be enforced to keep party house rentals in compliance.

David Dillman spoke on the short-term rental ordinance. He supports the maximum occupancy of two persons per bedroom plus two additional persons. He thanked the city council for doing the hard thing. He is against making any changes to the current occupancy ordinance.

Andrea Spiering spoke on the short-term rental ordinance. She supports the maximum occupancy of two persons per bedroom plus two additional persons. She would like to suggest that there be an age limit for the occupants.

Diana Charron spoke on the short-term rental ordinance. She supports leaving the ordinance as is and not changing anything. She knows they mean well, but not everyone tells the truth. For every heartwarming story, there is a bad story.

Aaron Renik spoke on the short-term rental ordinance. He supports the maximum occupancy of two persons per bedroom plus two additional persons. He thanked the council for doing the work they do. He would like to keep the ordinance the way it is. Suggested to stop allowing the call in callers.

REPORTS FROM DIRECTORS, POLICE, AND FIRE:

- Chief of Police, Garivey – Attached – No Questions
- Director of Operations, Quintero – Attached – No Questions
- Fire Chief, Baden – None

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Mayor Sharon Bower presented the minutes for November 16, 2023

*Motion made by Alderwoman Jones to **approve**, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Madray*

VOTE

4 AYES (Green, Rupertus, Jones, Madray)

1 ABSENT (Welch)

0 NAYS

0 ABSTAIN

MOTION PASSED

ALDERMAN REPORTS:

Mayor Pro Tem Madray: No report

Alderman Green: No report

Alderwoman Jones: Thank you, Mayor. I have a very short report tonight. My partner, Jay passed away last Sunday. I want to thank our Mayor, Gil, and Chief, and many others for being so kind during a difficult time.

Alderman Rupertus: No report

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Discussion, consideration, and take action to approve Ordinance 2023-15. The three options include:

- A. Take No Action (Do not amend Ordinance 2023-11). The owner shall grant permission to the City with ten (10) days written notice to perform an on-site inspection of the short-term rental to determine accuracy of the Short-Term Rental Application information or if there has been a written complaint to the City from occupants about the safety of the Short Term Rental.

- B. Approve amendment as follows:
Change ten (10) days written notice to 30 days written notice.
- C. Approve amendment as follows:
Eliminate paragraph 14 on Page 4 to eliminate the on-site inspection.

Mayor Bower read the above caption. Alderwoman Jones stated she agrees with option B, to provide a written 30 day notice.

*Motion made by Mayor Pro Tem Madray to **approve**, seconded by Alderwoman Jones*

VOTE

4 AYES (Green, Rupertus, Jones, Madray)
1 ABSENT (Welch)
0 NAYS
0 ABSTAIN
MOTION PASSED

2. Discussion, consideration, and take action to approve Ordinance 2023-16. The three options include:

- A. Take No Action (Do not amend Ordinance 2023-11). The maximum occupancy shall remain two (2) persons per qualified bedrooms, plus two (2) additional persons.
- B. Approve occupancy as follows:
The Maximum Occupancy shall be whichever is less: Either A) Two (2) persons per qualified bedroom, plus four (4) additional persons OR B) Galveston County Appraisal District Living Area square footage divided by 150 square feet, rounded up.
- C. Approve occupancy as follows:
The Maximum Occupancy shall be two (2) persons per qualified bedroom, plus four (4) additional persons.

Mayor Bower read the above caption and elaborated that the hybrid option gives more leeway. Alderman Green motioned to leave the ordinance and the motion died. Alderman Rupertus stated that the city has restrictions in place that are not being enforced. Mayor Bower stated that there is a study on the breakdown of the allowed downstairs living space, and she is making everything uniform. Building permits are also being closely monitored, and the first step on the path forward is to not allow advertising for higher occupancy. Mayor Pro Tem stated he agreed with the occupancy changes. Mayor Bower stated that there were technical issues with the phone system, so residents were not allowed to be heard. She believes everyone should be heard and will continue to let them be heard. She encouraged all residents to make the call and make a complaint so that the city can document and keep record for legal.

*Motion made by Alderwoman Jones to **approve**, seconded by Alderman Rupertus*

VOTE

3 AYES (Rupertus, Jones, Madray)
1 ABSENT (Welch)
0 NAYS
1 ABSTAIN (Green)
MOTION PASSED

3. Discussion, consideration, and take action to approve the City Administrator Employment Agreement with Kendal Francis.

Mayor Bower read the above caption and there was no discussion.

*Motion made by Mayor Pro Tem Madray to **approve**, seconded by Alderwoman Jones*

VOTE

4 AYES (Green, Rupertus, Jones, Madray)
1 ABSENT (Welch)
0 NAYS
0 ABSTAIN
MOTION PASSED

MAYOR'S REPORT:

Wishing everyone a very merry Christmas and a happy new year. Reminder that the next Council meeting will be on January 12th. Special thanks to Sandy Denby and her crew for the fabulous Christmas party. Another special recognition to Seaside Church for sponsoring the hot chocolate, cookies and popcorn. They are such an important presence in our community.

The golf cart parade was well attended with amazing decorations. Same for the boat parade.

The recognized winners were all deserving, and I don't know how the judges could make a choice. We also recognized the best decorated houses. It's amazing how our city sparkles during the holidays. As usual, our community has been exceptionally generous in supporting various toy drives in our area. Thank you to all.

1. And A special thank you to JBIC for the beautiful lights in the Buccaneer esplanade.

Infrastructure update:

2. Bayside lift station had some electrical issues that are scheduled to be fixed this Thursday and the pumps will be started up following the installation of the new pump seal failure protection modules. The temporary (and loud and smelly) portable pump will be removed.
3. The wastewater treatment plant has 2 sides, "trains". One has been down for many years; I have heard it's been down since Hurricane Ike. As Branch has extra time, they have been cleaning out the nonoperational side. The prognosis for repair is better than originally expected. We are now getting quotes to replace the rusted-out components. We'll keep you updated. Russell is also working on putting the timeline and cost estimates together to get all the lift stations fully operational.

I apologize for the error in the water bill this month. Hopefully most of you have seen the update on the city website. The bills were digitally corrected the next day. So, if you pay via bank auto draft, the correct amount was drafted. If you pay online, the amount reflected online is correct and your payment will be correct. If you come to city hall to pay your bill, the amount provided by staff will be correct. If you mailed in the amount on your bill, the overbilled amount would show as a credit on your next bill.

And finally, a great big welcome to Kendal Francis. He is going to be a much-needed asset for our city.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: None

ADJOURNMENT:

Motion made by Alderwoman Jones to **adjourn**, seconded by Alderman Rupertus. Meeting adjourned at 7:01 p.m.