

MINUTES OF THE WORK SESSION MEETING OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF JERSEY VILLAGE, TEXAS, HELD ON FEBRUARY 12, 2025, AT 6:00 P.M. IN THE CIVIC CENTER, 16327 LAKEVIEW, JERSEY VILLAGE, TEXAS.

**A. CALL TO ORDER AND ANNOUNCE A QUORUM IS PRESENT**

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Warren at 6:01 p.m. with the following present:

Mayor, Bobby Warren	City Manager, Austin Bleess
Council Member, Drew Wasson	City Secretary, Courtney Rutherford
Council Member, Sheri Sheppard ( <i>Arrived at 6:07 p.m.</i> )	
Council Member, Michelle Mitcham	
Council Member, Connie Rossi	
Council Member, Jennifer McCrea	

Staff in attendance: Robert Basford, Assistant City Manager; Jennifer Brown, Finance Director; Abram Syphrett, Director of Innovation and Technology; Taryn Modisette, Jordan Kettler, and Laura Capp, Human Resources.

Mayor Warren stated that he was going to allow Merriman, Holt, Powell Architects to give their presentation on the City Campus before taking Citizen Comments.

Jose Fernandez with Merriman, Holt, Powell Architects then gave a presentation on the City Campus concept options.

He gave a brief presentation on a master plan with different options for the City Campus located at Jersey Drive and Rio Grande Street. They first met with staff to understand their needs, goals, and how to improve the building for maximum use for staff and residents. The goal is to provide a consolidated facility for City Hall Offices, Public Works, Dispatch, and Emergency Operations Center. Provide an easily accessible Community Gathering Space separate from the Council Chambers and Court. The City would also like indoor and outdoor recreational spaces for the Community.

They also met with staff to see what their needs are and would be in the space including offices, meeting spaces, and storage.

He presented three options Option A, B, and Option C, which would include completing the campus in two (2) phases. Both options maintain the outside pavilion.

**Option A**

This concept would see Building A converted into municipal offices. It would house administration, court, finance, community development, and IT. We would have some hoteling space. Hotelling space in this context refers to a flexible workspace arrangement where employees do not have assigned desks or offices. Instead, they reserve workspaces as needed, similar to booking a hotel room. This approach would be helpful for staff, like the police or fire chief or golf course staff, that need a place to dock their computer to get things done between meetings in City Hall.

Building B and C would be demolished and new buildings constructed along with a plaza area that would help frame the entrance to the buildings. A new building would be constructed to house Council Chambers and Municipal Court. A lobby area would have direct access to the Council Chambers and the Administrative offices.

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There would also be a large conference room, like the municipal meeting room today, and an EOC room that would do dual duties as a conference room and executive session room. There would also be smaller conference rooms and storage rooms here.

Building D would be turned into a parks and recreational space with Emergency Dispatch on the second floor. We could have a 5,000 sq foot gym (similar to what exists currently). This could be used for community events as well, similar to what our civic center is used for today. There would be 3 meeting rooms that could be rented out. These rooms could also be used for recreational programming. Offices for parks and recreation staff and recreation storage would be here as well. To meet ADA requirements an elevator would be put in as well.

Building G would be turned into public works, parks and recreation, and utilities. Having the public works in this building would allow for access to the building from Tiny Lane, which would keep the equipment out of site of the residential area as it goes in or out of the buildings.

Building I would be demolished and fenced in yard space would be there for some outside storage. The fence would be a nice picket fence or masonry to block the views.

This option has approximately 41,000 square feet of renovated space and approximately 8,420 square feet of new construction. The schematic layouts for this option are on the next pages along with a 3D rendering.

**Option B**

This option would see building A converted into community space. There could be a 5,000 square foot space that could be divided into quadrants for smaller groups. This building could also keep the existing classrooms that are there, making 5 additional rooms for various civic groups and recreation activities to utilize throughout the week.

Building B and C would be demolished and new buildings constructed along with a plaza area that would help frame the entrance to the buildings. A new building would be constructed to house Council Chambers and Municipal Court. A lobby area would have direct access to the Council Chambers and the Administrative offices.

There would also be a large conference room, like the municipal meeting room today, and an EOC room that would do dual duties as a conference room and executive session room. There would also be smaller conference rooms and storage rooms here.

Building D would be turned into the main city hall buildings. This would include utility payments, building permits, along with finance, community development and parks and recreation offices on the first floor. On the second floor there would be offices for the city manager, city secretary, assistant city manager, IT department, HR, Dispatch, and the EOC. A breakroom for the building would also be on this floor.

For building D there would likely be foundation work required and some other structural items that could be necessary. The costs of this, while still unknown, could be quite large. If that is the case, it could make the proposal for this building unfeasible.

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Building G would be turned into public works, parks maintenance, and utilities. Having the public works in this building would allow for access to the building from Tiny Lane, which would keep the equipment out of site of the residential area as it goes in or out of the buildings.

The schematic layouts for this option are on the next pages along with a 3D rendering.

**Option C**

Option C is very similar to Option A, but with a phased approach. Phase 1 is proposed to be the following:

This concept would see Building A converted into municipal offices. It would house administration, court, finance, community development, and IT. We would have some hoteling space. Hotelling space in this context refers to a flexible workspace arrangement where employees do not have assigned desks or offices. Instead, they reserve workspaces as needed, similar to booking a hotel room. This approach would be helpful for staff, like the police or fire chief or golf course staff, that need a place to dock their computer to get things done between meetings in City Hall.

Building B and C would be demolished and new buildings constructed along with a plaza area that would help frame the entrance to the buildings. A new building would be constructed to house Council Chambers and Municipal Court. A lobby area would have direct access to the Council Chambers and the Administrative offices.

There would also be a large conference room, like the municipal meeting room today, and an EOC room that would do dual duties as a conference room and executive session room. There would also be smaller conference rooms and storage rooms here.

Building G would be turned into public works, parks and recreation, and utilities. Having the public works in this building would allow for access to the building from Tiny Lane, which would keep the equipment out of site of the residential area as it goes in or out of the buildings.

Building I would be demolished and fenced in yard space would be there for some outside storage. The fence would be nice picket fence or masonry to block the views.

Phase 2 would be building D. Building D would be turned into a parks and recreational space with Emergency Dispatch on the second floor. We could have a 5,000 sq foot gym (similar to what exists currently). This could be used for community events as well, similar to what our civic center is used for today. There would be 3 meeting rooms that could be rented out. These rooms could also be used for recreational programming. Offices for parks and recreation staff and recreation storage would be here as well. To meet ADA requirements an elevator would be put in as well.

In this phased approach the current civic center could remain and used for community events as it is today.

**Cost estimates**

For cost estimates we assume a cost of remodeling at \$300 - \$350 per square foot (with the cost going down for the larger spaces).

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Building G for example has a cost estimate of \$60 per square foot, as we don't need to do a lot to that building.

Construction of new space is estimated at \$650 a square foot for a 4,250 square foot new council chambers.

If we put a second story across all of building D that will require some reinforcement of the slab that currently only has 1 story. The estimated cost for that is \$200 per square foot, at 5,000 square feet for a total of \$1,000,000.

If we were to look at construction of a new 20,000 square foot building the architects suggest a price point of \$500 per square foot. That would be \$10,000,000. If that idea was considered we would recommend demolition of building B, C, and D. City offices and Council chambers would be in the new building, and parks and recreational activities along with extra classrooms and meeting space would be in building A.

It's important to note that those costs are construction costs only. There are also soft costs such as the architecture fees, allowances for things like Mechanical, Electrical, and Plumbing, civil engineering and site work. There are things like Audio Visual systems, IT cabling, and furniture. All of those items are estimated to be about 15% of the construction costs. A more detailed breakdown for each option is attached. It is important to note that these are just projections, and we would need to get a contractor on board to help us come up with an accurate price.

## **B. CITIZENS' COMMENTS**

Citizens who have signed a card and wish to speak to the City Council will be heard at this time. In compliance with the Texas Open Meetings Act, unless the subject matter of the comment is on the agenda, the City staff and City Council Members are prevented from discussing the subject and may respond only with statements of factual information or existing policy. Citizens are limited to five (5) minutes for their comments to the City Council.

**John Hacker, 16414 Cornwall St., Jersey Village, Texas** stated that he was impressed with options A,B and C and likes that the city is considering keeping the gym and rec center. He would like to see Pickle Ball incorporated in the outside space. He does like the plans presented.

**Rachel Beazley, 14910 Lakeview Drive, Jersey Village, Texas** stated that she agrees and thinks the designs look great. She is here to represent the children and is concerned that other projects like the pool and park are being out on hold for this facility. She doesn't think this is a priority at this time.

Mayor Warren stated that due to property tax income coming in this is the time of the year that city needs to be fiscally smart and wait for that revenue to come in. Some projects are on hold temporarily due to revenue.

**James Singleton, 16522 DeLozier St, Jersey Village, Texas** stated that he is interested in the multiple phase project. He has also been in this current building over the last 22 years and knows that staff need new office space. He would suggest developing the Community Center and Council Chambers at a later date. He would prioritize community space over Public Works, but he understands that financially it is better to do it now.

Mayor Warren asked about the difference in cost for the renovations. Christ explained that it is based on renovation versus new construction.

**C. City Campus Concept Designs.** *Austin Bleess, City Manager*

City Manager, Austin Bleess, briefly reviewed funding for the project.

**Funding**

Funding for this project will come from a combination of the sale of the land on the south side of US 290, and the sale of the current public works building (if we move them to this campus). We would want to keep an estimated \$1,000,000 to \$2,000,000 from the sale of properties to help replenish our reserves.

We can also allocate some funding for this project in the FY26 budget.

If we move Dispatch and EOC operations over to this new building, we could use some Crime Control Prevention District funding for those portions as well. This could cover about \$1,000,000.

There is possibly grant funding that is an option for some of this, but the timing of grants may not line up well with the timing of the construction. There is also no guarantee for grant funding.

**Action Items**

Mr. Bleess explained that tonight, staff needs City Council to provide guidance on which option they like and want to pursue further. We will take the feedback and make refinements to the proposals and begin the process of finalizing the concepts.

We are currently looking for a contractor to help us with the Construction Manager At Risk (CMAR) method of this project. Getting this group on board as we get into the design stages and construction drawings will help us in the process refine the prices and value engineer the project as we go along. A contract for these services will be to Council at the March meeting.

**Conclusion**

Each of the options has pros and cons. But each option works to achieve the goals that have been set for this project. Our new campus is more than just a building, it's a cornerstone of the community's future. It's an opportunity to craft a space that embodies our shared values and aspirations, where creativity, connection, and pride thrive. This project isn't just about walls and windows; it's about creating a legacy that invites people to come together, work with passion, and experience a city that feels alive and full of possibility. By designing a space that sparks joy and innovation, we're not just shaping a place, we're shaping the stories that will unfold here for generations to come.

There was discussion among City Council and staff regarding the different options, the possibility of selling the property and tearing down the current city hall and rebuilding it there. Some of the concerns with rebuilding in the current location is that there isn't room to bring over Public Works or add additional recreational space.

Mr. Bleess asked Council which option they would prefer staff to move forward with.

Council Member Rossi is leaning towards Option A.

Council Member McRea stated that she likes Option A. She thinks it is better with the gym.

Council Member Mitcham is leaning towards Option A keeping the gym and she likes the layout best. She would like to look at additional lighting for the outside pavilion for pickle ball and outside recreational use.

Council Member Wasson supports Option A with a phased approach. He likes the thought and design that went into the presentation.

Mayor Warren stated that he agrees and prefers Option A. He also has concern about adding a second story over the gym. He stated that it looks like it will be a better use of space versus the current City Hall. He would like to focus on getting staff moved to the new facility.

Council Member Sheppard stated that she is in favor Option A. She likes that the design has a cohesive look for the outside and ties all the buildings together.

*Mayor Warren recessed the Work Session at 7:20 p.m. and reconvened at 7:28 p.m.*

**D. Discuss water meter fees and provide direction to staff for possible changes to be considered at a later date.** *Austin Bleess, City Manager*

City Manager, Austin Bleess, gave some background information as follows:

The City Council has expressed interest in doing away with meter fees for second meters. Currently each meter is charged a \$15 fee. A fee for each meter has been the standard practice in Jersey Village for a long time. We currently have approximately 1,480 residential homes that have one meter and 750 that have a home meter and an irrigation meter. Currently each meter has a fee of \$15 per month.

Our utility fund handles all water and sewer-related expenses. Our budget for the current fiscal year has a budget of \$6,551,000 for revenues, and an operations expense budget of \$5,730,119 and a Capital Improvement expense budget of \$2,318,000.

Some cities have a base fee for water usage. Spring Valley Village for example has a base fee for all users. Some cities have a base fee and include some amount of water usage in that base fee, Deer Park is an example of this. For several other cities it is not immediately clear if their base fee is for all meters or if each meter has its own base fee.

**Possible Changes**

The Council asked me to look at some options that could be implemented if a move away from a meter fee for each meter was implemented. There are four options that have been looked at and found to be the easiest.

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One option is to change from a meter fee and call it a base fee with the base fee going to \$20.05. This would mean every residential property would have a base water fee of \$20.05 no matter how many meters they have. Currently each meter is \$15. In this scenario approximately 1,480 would see a monthly increase and 750 would see a decrease.

Another option that was looked at was to increase the usage rates for water used for irrigation. This would keep the costs that are being decreased still being paid by those that are seeing the decrease from the monthly meter fee. These rates would keep the annual revenue essentially flat.

Irrigation Use		
	Current Price per thousand	Price per thousand with irrigation increase only
0—6,000 Gallons	\$9.60	\$12.62
6,001—19,000 Gallons	\$12.02	\$15.62
Over 19,000 Gallons	\$18.01	\$22.62

If the rates for residential only water usage were to increase, with no change in the base fee, each category would have to go up by 80 cents. Rates for residential use only would go up 80 cents in each category. Here is what those changes would look like:

Usage Rate	Current Price per thousand	Price per thousand with 80 cent increase
0-3,000 Gallons	\$6.29	\$7.09
3,001—6,000 Gallons	\$7.87	\$8.67
6,001—12,000 Gallons	\$9.60	\$10.40
12,001—25,000 Gallons	\$12.02	\$12.82
Over 25,000 Gallons	\$18.01	\$18.81

If the rate amounts were split evenly between residential use and irrigation use all rate levels would have to go up 64 cents each. If you split it up between both usage rates all of them would have to go up 64 cents.

Residential Use		
	Current Price per thousand	Price per thousand with 64 cent increase
0-3,000 Gallons	\$6.29	\$7.09
3,001—6,000 Gallons	\$7.87	\$8.67
6,001—12,000 Gallons	\$9.60	\$10.40

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12,001—25,000 Gallons	\$12.02	\$12.82
Over 25,000 Gallons	\$18.01	\$18.81

Irrigation Use	Current Price per thousand	Price per thousand with 64 cent increase
0—6,000 Gallons	\$9.60	\$10.24
6,001—19,000 Gallons	\$12.02	\$12.66
Over 19,000 Gallons	\$18.01	\$18.65

**Examples of Impacts**

Included as exhibits to this are how 10 different households would have been impacted based on their usage over the past 12 months. The tables show what they paid over the last 12 months and what those same 12 months payments would be at the options presented. Five of the homes have irrigation water meters and five do not.

The homes that do not have an irrigation meter would pay more under each scenario, except where only irrigation water rates are increased.

For the homes that do have an irrigation meter three homes see a decrease in every scenario, but two see an increase in scenario where only irrigation water rates are increased.

**Other Considerations**

A concern that has been expressed is that people were unaware that a base fee would be applied to their irrigation meter. The application form states that the basic monthly service fee applies if there is water usage or not. The webpage for the FAQ on water rates and the benefits of irrigation meters lists the monthly fee on there as well. City staff have done what we can to give people all of the information they need to make an informed decision about how an additional meter would impact them.

As Council will recall from the budget discussions back in July 2024, we have approximately \$20,500,000 in CIP projects on the horizon for FY25-FY28. I’ve been working hard to find grants that we can go after for water and sewer projects. We do anticipate \$1,000,000 from the Congressional Community Project Funding by working with Congressman Hunt. But that federal budget needs to be approved. When the opportunity comes to ask for more funding, we will certainly ask for more.

I have submitted a letter of interest for Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding for projects at the Castlebridge wastewater treatment plant. But as of this writing I have not heard if we will be invited to submit a full application for that project.

We have approximately \$5,185,000 in water and sewer funding bonds that have not yet been issued but was approved by the voters in the fall of 2023. That amount was earmarked for water and sewer projects in the ETJ. However, since the city has moved away from a mixed-use



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development in that area it is unlikely that expansion into the ETJ would be worth the costs the city would incur. That debt could be issued for water and sewer projects in the city limits.

**Next Steps**

No formal action is required tonight, but Council needs to provide direction for what they want us to do next. It is imperative that any changes to our water rate structure be revenue neutral at worst. Our utility fund is the backbone of our water and sewer services, and a decrease in revenue is not a viable option. We must ensure that our decisions today do not compromise the financial stability of our utility fund, which is necessary for the ongoing maintenance and improvement of our infrastructure.

We face many challenges coming at us over the next few years. As we look to the future, we must meet these challenges head on. The decisions we make now will shape the future of our community and how we are able to keep up with the pressing needs that are ahead.

There was discussion that there is not one solution that will benefit everyone. The base fee is to help maintain the system that provides the water and sewer services and are based on the cost to maintain the water and sewer system.

There was discussion regarding the base rate and if the base fee should be removed from the irrigation meter and then increase the base rate on all accounts.

Council directed staff to bring an ordinance to the March 17<sup>th</sup> Council meeting to change the water base fee of \$20.05 per household and remove the base fee of \$15 on the irrigation meters with an effective date of April.

**E. ADJOURN**

There being no further business on the agenda, the meeting was adjourned at 8:53 p.m.

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Courtney Rutherford, City Secretary