

THE STATE OF TEXAS §
COUNTY OF FANNIN §

November 28, 2017

BE IT REMEMBERED THAT A Special Meeting of the City Council of the City of Leonard, Fannin County, Texas was begun and held in the Council Chambers of City Hall on November 28, 2017.

Members Present: *Steven Bolin - Mayor* *Leonard Phillips – Pro Tem*
 David Norman – Place 1 *Bob Pannkuk – Place 3*
 Jane Blackerby – Place 2 *Dion Pontius – Place 5*

Staff Present: *William Linn - City Administrator* *Shelly Griffin – City Secretary*
 Brian Meserole – Chief of Police *Christina Tillett – City Attorney*

**MINUTES
SPECIAL SESSION**

1. Invocation
The invocation was led by Bob Pannkuk.
2. Pledges of Allegiance to the United State and Texas Flags
Mayor Bolin led the Council in the pledge to the United States and Texas Flags.
3. Call to Order
Mayor Bolin called the meeting to order at 5:30 pm with a quorum of five councilmembers.
4. Proof of Posting of Notice of Meeting – City Secretary
Mayor Bolin notes the proof of posting of meeting by City Secretary Griffin.
5. Verification of Quorum
Mayor Bolin noted the quorum of five councilmembers.
6. Citizens Comments
Citizen Glenn Morris stated the Chief of Police is doing a fine job. He would like to see the city hire more staff, but understood the staffing issues due to outside issues, Council issues, and public reputation. Asked Council to consider incentives to get and keep officers.

Citizen Brenda Beck stated appreciation for the officer’s quick response, just stopping to check on her, and how Chief Meserole has quickly taken care of issues on her behalf. Has called the sheriff’s office when people threw eggs and knocked on door during late night and it took 30 minutes. She is very concerned about the safety in the town. Would like to see a curfew at midnight. Also stated concerns of speeding towards the school during the morning.

Citizen Kim Ochoa stated full support of the Leonard Police Department. There does seem to be a circulation of officers which shows there is a problem with upper management. The officers are very reliable and would hate to see anyone of them leave. Knows that it is hard to recruit new officers due to the reputation of this city and the department.

- 7. Action – Consider approval of Memorandum of Paid Up Oil and Gas Lease
Councilmember Dion Ponius made a motion for the Leonard City Council to approve the amendment to the lease as submitted; seconded by Councilmember Leonard Phillips.
All were in favor and the motion carried.**
- 8. Executive Session
Mayor Bolin announced the Council would convene into Executive Session at 5:41 pm under Texas Government Code, Section 551.074 (personnel matters) regarding Chief of Police and City Administrator.**

Mayor Bolin announced the Council came into Open Session at 7:57 pm as requested by Chief of Police Brian Meserole to discuss the hiring process for the Police Department.

Chief Meserole thanked the Council and Mayor for allowing this meeting so that he could inform them and the citizens of the difficult process for hiring for a Police Officer. The Texas Commission of Law Enforcement (TCOLE) requirements lay out the process to follow, required documentation and every officer must have a complete file for possible audit by TCOLE. He has been working diligently to find the right person for the city and be assured he wants to be thorough and not cut corners in the process. He is looking for a professional and intelligent people for these positions. But with the limited resources of the department, there is little time to get this done quickly. Advertisements have been made, calls to academies, etc. have been made, but still have very few applicants. But those that have been received, they are working on the background checks. With all that being said, the department has still been very busy right now taking care of citizens and businesses. He thanked the Council, Mayor and Citizens for their support for the department.

Councilmembers thanked Chief Meserole and the officers for their service to the city. They asked Chief Meserole to read the check list requirements, so everyone would understand better.

Chief Meserole stated as a new academy graduate is not licensed until 1 year after graduation and working with a department. The information required by TCOLE is L1/L2 which is the physical and drug screening, psych exam, criminal history, FBI finger printing, proof of citizenship, education (actual diploma), DD214 (if military), personal history statement. If any disposition through court, must have a copy of the disposition. If have worked for another department, will need a copy of the licenses, all appointments (F5), and if hired over 6 months, will need new physical, drug test and psych exam. All of this comes from the Texas Commission of Law Enforcement and if any item is missing from the file, the city can be fined \$1,000 per item per day. State rules these items must be in the file prior to employment.

Mayor Bolin stated there seems to have been miscommunications between the Police Department, Council and Citizens because he was unaware of these rules until today.

Chief Meserole wanted to make sure everyone knew the Council did not prohibit the Police Department from hiring. This information is valuable for all to understand. Also wants everyone to know that the Police Department's first priority is to the safety of the citizens, to answer calls of those who need them. So the hiring of new officers are then put on hold. The Department has been told to hire and given an unreasonable deadline. We don't want the wrong person hired, we need to follow the guidelines, and we need to keep the citizens protected.

Mayor Bolin stated his appreciation for the job Chief Meserole is doing and there is not enough good people around like him. On a personal level, he is always gone to bat for Chief Meserole.

Chief Meserole stated he is working all the time possible to get this hiring done. Wants Council to appreciate the process of hiring.

9. Reconvene out of Executive Session and Action to be determined

Mayor Bolin announced the Council reconvene out of Executive Session at 8:12 pm.


No action was taken.

10. Adjournment

Mayor Bolin announced there being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:12 pm.



THE CITY OF LEONARD, TEXAS

By: 
Steven Bolin, Mayor

ATTEST:

By: 
Shelly Griffin, City Secretary