



**AUSTIN CITY COUNCIL  
MINUTES**

**SPECIAL CALLED MEETING  
MONDAY, JUNE 13, 2016**

**The City Council of Austin, Texas convened in a Special Called Council Meeting on Monday, June 13, 2016, Palmer Events Center, 900 Barton Springs Road, Austin, Texas.**

**Mayor Adler called the Special Called Council Meeting to order at 12:40 p.m.**

**COUNCIL DISCUSSION**

**The Mayor Adler introduced the agenda for the June 13 meeting.**

1. Discuss policy priorities and goals for the Austin City Council.

The following topics were discussed:

- Welcome, Introductions, Overview, Purpose: Mayor Adler  
**Mayor Alder lead the year in review comments between the Council.**
- Strategic Retreat  
**Presentation was made by City Manager Marc Ott and Deputy Budget Director Kimberly Springer-Olivares**
- **Affordability**  
Council Member Renteria started the policy discussion on the topic of affordability. The following items are items of interest or concerns identified by the Council Members.
  - Geographically diversified housing stock
  - Fair housing
  - High capacity corridor housing
  - Standarding financing tools (bonuses, bonds, etc.)
  - Homestead Preservation Districts and Density Bonus Program
  - Creating a Strike Fund
  - Building housing available for residents below the 30% MFI
  - Fair Housing Symposium 2018
  - Adoption of a strategic housing plan
  - Adoption of a strategic plan for addressing homelessness
  - Funding for the Housing Trust Fund
  - Dislocation of family when land is purchased for redevelopment
  - Increasing access to parkland

- Definition of affordability
  - Monitoring of existing affordable housing
  - Childcare issues as it relates to affordable housing needs
  - Companies moving to the City taking advantage of existing workforce
  - Housing integration both within the City and within the Region
  - Analyzing budget decisions and their impact on affordability
  - Establishing goals for affordability housing including sources and amount of funding
  - Including market rate housing needs in the discussion
  - Reducing barriers and costs of housing development
  - Analyzing duplicate management structures that could release funding for affordable housing
  - Including employment development and training in the discussion in relation to its impact on citizens being able to afford
  - Personal housing costs and its relation to impact on affordability
- **CodeNEXT**

Council Member Casar started the policy discussion on the topic of CodeNEXT. The following items are items of interest or concerns identified by the Council Members.

    - Natural built environment, affordability, fiscal health of the city, mobility and land use
    - Addressing below market rate housing and market rate housing in the Code
    - Developing a plan for working with the public on the changes in the Code
    - Higher density and transit routes
    - Keeping communities of interest in-tack
    - Supporting neighborhoods within Central Austin
    - Development and permitting processes are transparent and user friendly
    - More housing stock that includes different sizes/types of housing in different locations
    - Common definition of affordability
    - Including public input from all aspects of the community
    - Deregulating housing, development and land use requirements
    - Policy that supports the development of the lowest cost for infrastructure
    - Concerns over missing the timelines established for CodeNEXT
    - Determining a social compact for the City
- **Austin Water**

Council Member Garza started the policy discussion on the topic of Austin Water. The following items are items of interest or concerns identified by the Council Members.

    - Upgrading or redesigning of the business model for Austin Water that balances costs/budget with conservation needs
    - Continuing programs for low income residents
    - Upgrading City infrastructure
    - Recommendations from the Flood Mitigation Taskforce
    - Impact of development downstream
    - Relationship between density and water resources and impact on flooding
    - Long-term integration water resource plan
    - Regional government plan for the management of water resources
    - Comparison of fees from Austin Water with surrounding communities
- **Public Safety**

Council Member Zimmerman started the policy discussion on the topic of public safety. The following items are items of interest or concerns identified by the Council Members.

- Innovative approaches to solving property crime including establishing a goal of a 50% clearance rate for property crimes
- Creating a public disturbance taskforce including Austin Code and Austin Police
- Merging of Austin Fire and Emergency Management Services
- Moving Police Monitor under the Council and provide Council with subpoena powers
- Allowing the public to clear public lands that back up private properties to reduce the wildfire risks
- Increasing community policing
- Establishing the sobriety center
- New facility for municipal court and the downtown court
- Resolving the crime lab issues
- Location for Medic 3 near new medical school
- Determining the right staffing needs (both sworn and civilian)
- Additional fire stations
- EMS worker fatigue
- Ensuring public safety services can be provided to recently and future annexed areas
- Including the root causes of crime in public safety strategic discussions
- Creative ways to promote and support public safety such as sobriety center, etc.
- Recruitment and retention of African American Firefighters
- Absorption of ESD #4
- Security issues in the campus area
- Root causes of the recidivate rate
- Cost of special events

- **Economy**

Council Member Troxclair started the policy discussion on the topic on the economy. The following items are items of interest or concerns identified by the Council Members.

- Growth of city and job development
- Future of and the expansion of the convention center
- Maintaining the music industry and economy
- Impact of property tax and regulations on small businesses
- Developing a strategic plan for the music industry
- Retaining fiscal constraints in a booming economy
- Efficient and effective use of the Hotel Occupancy Tax
- Streamline the Code Department processes
- Impact of “grandfathering” in the development area
- Focus on the barriers faced by small businesses
- Palmer Auditorium and the Travis County Expo Center
- Economic development east of Hwy 183
- Expanding the economic development to include other areas other than event/tourism
- Developing quality jobs and wages
- Impact of affordability pushing lower income out of the city limits

- **Equity and Equality**

Council Member Houston started the policy discussion on the topic of equity and equality. The following items are items of interest or concerns identified by the Council Members.

- Defining the terms: equity and equality
- Listening to what the community needs are and not what we believe them to be

- Evaluating who is being impacted by the decisions made by Council
- Making economic development opportunities equitable
- Placement of infrastructure should be equitable
- Tailoring solutions and outreach to the community
- Legacy contracts vs. new cultural contracts
- Operationalizing the Equity Office
- Spirit of East Austin
- Immigration inclusiveness
- Geographic equity index
- Language access audit including a multi-language plan to assist all of Austin's diverse population
- Diversity of economic opportunities
- Education and its impact on ability to get find employments with good wages
- Addressing our population having criminal backgrounds and its impact on finding employment and housing.
- Operationalizing environmental and social justice within the City

**Mayor Adler recessed the meeting at 3:00 p.m.**

**Mayor Adler reconvened the meeting at 3:30 p.m.**

- **Environment**

Council Member Pool started the policy discussion on the topic of the environment. The following items are items of interest or concerns identified by the Council Members.

- Increasing budget for parks
- Including parks in affordable housing projects
- The needs of the City pools and trails
- Support for the Children in Nature Collaboration Program
- Continuing to provide support for the City's climate protection plan
- Including parks in the Spirit of East Austin
- Using undeveloped areas or parks in East Austin as additional usable parkland
- Edwards Aquifer and SH-45
- Preserving open space and habitats
- Master plans for Decker Lake and Walter E. Long Park
- Connectivity of trails
- Master plans are developed in isolation
- Exploring use of school district facilities as a source of additional recreational opportunities
- Muny
- Appropriate use (capacity) of park facilities for special events
- Erosion along river downstream from Longhorn Dam
- Including the City nature preserves in the parks discussions
- Maintenance and safety of the Greenbelt
- Impact of environmental issues on affordability
- Impact of open space being used by the homeless

- **Health and Human Services**

Council Member Garza started the policy discussion on the topic of needs relating to health and human services. The following items are items of interest or concerns identified by the Council Members.

- Under funding of health and human services programs

- Assistance by City to help the public find private assistance opportunities
  - Adopting age friendly policies that allow senior residents to age in place
  - Need to comprehensively address the homelessness in the City
  - Zika and other communicable diseases
  - Overcrowding and sterilization policies at the Animal Shelter
  - Resources needed by public safety personnel to respond to calls that involve mental and social issues as first responders
  - Removing barriers placed on non-profit and private organizations that provide social services
  - Identifying innovative ideas for dealing with the homeless such as hiring them as day laborers for cleaning parks, etc.
  - Output based decisions vs. outcome based decisions
  - Identifying overall goals for the various health and human services programs
  - Funding of the ECHO Community Wide Assessment on Homelessness
  - Quality of life initiatives
  - Need for the City to maintain a role in programs funded by health and human services contracts
  - Relationship between the City and schools on the types of services provided by each entity
  - Brainstorming on ideas of how to maximize the amount of funding available for social service needs
  - Focus on the quality of the programs not just the quantity of the program
- **Austin Energy**

Council Member Gallo started the policy discussion on the topic relating to Austin Energy. The following items are items of interest or concerns identified by the Council Members.

    - Establishing a positive and productive relationship with the new general manager
    - Remembering to listen to the experts within Austin Energy
    - Expecting Austin Energy to run efficiently
    - Evaluating the current transfer policy and funding of non-utility programs
    - Reviewing the rate making process
    - Reviewing the affordability goals of Austin Energy
    - Reviewing the need for a new business model
    - Analyzing the potential to keep the existing gas power plant
    - Expanding community solar programs
    - Reviewing rates more often than every five years
- **Mobility**

Council Member Kitchen started the policy discussion on the topic of mobility within the City. The following items are items of interest or concerns identified by the Council Members.

    - Expanding transportation options throughout the City
    - Thinking about mobility as a service and not only as an infrastructure
    - Completing the strategic plans such as a strategic mobility plan, integrating transportation into the land development code, establishing a transportation impact fee, coordinating transportation improvements with Cap Metro's Connections 2025 Plan, etc.
    - Funding immediate transportation needs
    - Expanding the sidewalk system
    - Expanding the first and last mile needs to assist residents in getting to and from transportation network hubs
    - Exploring and implementing other options such as teleworking.

- Identifying less costly methods to build sidewalks
  - Analyzing the impact of safety and affordability relating to transportation
  - Expanding the bicycle system
  - Understanding that one size does not fit all and the need to ask the community what works for them
  - Reducing speeds
  - Job Works Taskforce
  - Improving major road connections that converge together
  - Establishing a vision that encourages transportation other than a single car/driver
  - Increasing the frequency and reliability of bus service
  - Reviewing the impact of converting traffic lanes into bicycle lanes
  - Smart corridor conversions
  - Becoming more aggressive about getting state transportation funds
  - Revisiting the master plan to ensure input is included from all areas of the city
  - Supporting Cap Metro and the 2025 Plan
  - Prioritizing public transit
  - Analyzing mobility issues for the senior community.
- **City Operations**

Mayor Pro Tem Tovo started the policy discussion on the topic relating to city operations. The following items are items of interest or concerns identified by the Council Members.

    - Expectation is that public want consistent, predictable, user friendly, reliable and innovated services
    - Remembering the connection between policy decisions and operational impacts
    - Using and aligning performance measures to policy decisions to better understand their impact
    - Continuing the existing City retirement systems
    - Minimizing the privatization of city services
    - Providing career development opportunities for staff
    - Acknowledging a talented and energized workforce
    - Operationalizing the City's Performance Office
    - Affordability audit
    - Expanding the open data portal
    - Expanding technology
    - Using internal technology experts more by establishing cross departmental workgroups
    - Improving implementation of projects by focusing on the product rather than the process
    - Improving collaboration between departments
    - Streamlining customer contact with departments
    - Reducing the amount of time staff spend waiting during council meetings, etc.
    - Unreasonable time constraints/deadlines established by council and the impact on staff
    - Improving the management of the agenda during meetings to better identify when items would be taken up during a meeting
    - Value of staff attending Council town hall meetings
    - Discussing the impact on 10-1 on staff and the how the City staff's a 10-1 system.
    - Using a variety of methods to ask questions of staff (in-person, email, Q&A, etc.)
    - Establishing policies that are difficult for staff to enforce
  - **Undesignated topics**

Mayor Adler started the policy discussion on the topics that had not previously been discussed. The following items are items of interest or concerns identified by the Council Members.

- Evaluating and establishing a consistent budget process
- Recommendations from the Community Engagement Taskforce
- Sustainability
- A vibrant economy
- Rebuilding trust with communities

**Mayor Adler recessed the meeting at 5:05 p.m. for a dinner break**

**Mayor Adler adjourned the meeting at 5:49 p.m.**

**The minutes were approved on this the 23<sup>rd</sup> day of June 2016 on Council Member Zimmerman's motion, Mayor Pro Tem Tovo's second on an 11-0 vote.**