

MINUTES OF THE CITY COUNCIL

CITY OF AUSTIN, TEXAS

Special Meeting

June 26, 1967
7:30 P.M.

COUNCIL CHAMBER, CITY HALL

The meeting was called to order with Mayor Akin presiding.

Roll Call:

Present: Councilmen LaRue, Long, Nichols, Mayor Akin
Absent: Councilman Janes

Mayor Akin announced that the Special Meeting had been called to hear the feelings of the people in the Montopolis area regarding any circumstances or conditions that were not considered to be according to their wishes. He stated that the Council was particularly concerned with reports that it had not acted in good faith on some promises made to the citizens in the Montopolis area.

Mr. Ray Moncivais, spokesman for the group at the zoning hearing the preceeding Tuesday and Chairman of the Information Referral Center Advisory Committee, thanked the Council for calling a special meeting to discuss issues that surfaced at the June 21, 1967 meeting of the Zoning Committee. He felt that Montopolis had been neglected and he wanted to point out to the Council the areas of neglect.

Paving of streets was coming along too slowly, according to Mr. Moncivais. When he moved into Montopolis nine years earlier, only two streets were paved, and they both ran straight into the Austin Country Club. Since the people living on those streets had not initiated a petition asking for the paving, he thought that someone with influence had gotten the streets paved, at a cost to the Montopolis residents but for the benefit of the people using the Country Club. He claimed that Vargas Street had been paved only to please the owners of the drive-in theatre at its end. No people lived on that section of Vargas, according to Mr. Moncivais.

Montopolis Drive needed widening and paving because of the heavy traffic flow but, he said, the paving had been put off over and over. He thought that other parts of town had much better paving service and he resented the fact that

people thought the Montopolis residents shouldn't get paving because they didn't pay many taxes. He said the people would be glad to pay higher taxes if they could also be guaranteed higher salaries and better education to enable them to earn high salaries.

He also reported that Montopolis residents were not notified of zoning changes in their area. He said that many residents were home owners and wanted to protect their neighborhood.

He said that many people in Montopolis had horses in their backyards, creating a health hazard, but their neighbors did not know they could call the Health Department. He said that the Montopolis people were registering voters in an effort to become more involved in City policy-making but that many people were still ignorant of the political process.

He said that the Police Department had cooperated with the citizens by putting radar checks on Vargas Drive to catch speeders. He commended Chief Miles for his understanding. He also thought that installation of traffic lights would slow down speeders.

He concluded by asking the City Council to give the Montopolis area its fair share of attention and City services.

Rev. DeWitty appeared before the Council to support Mr. Moncivais' requests and stated that better bus service was also needed in that area. He said that he was out of the City limits but still had to pay the garbage fee on his electric bill, for service he did not receive.

Mrs. Mills Whisenant stated that she had been to see Mr. Malone of Austin Transportation Company, asking for bus service out to within a short distance of her home at 6106 Kasper Lane. She said she had gone from one office to the other, trying to get the added bus service. After a three month trial run on that line, the bus company took the bus off.

Mrs. Whisenant said she wanted paved streets, not dusty chuck-holes and dirt roads. She complained that there were many vacant lots, overgrown with weeds and loaded with trash and beer cans. She said that rats were a menace in much of Montopolis. She thought the area needed another school. Her next door neighbors had a septic tank, against City regulations but the owners of the property kept renting the house without hooking it up to the City sewer system. She also asked for sidewalks for the school children.

Mr. J. D. Culp stated that he had taken three children to the hospital after they had been hit by cars in the Montopolis area. He agreed that the traffic situation there was bad.

City Manager W. T. Williams replied to some of the requests from Montopolis residents. He said that Mrs. Whisenant's street was not within the City limits, and therefore the City Council could not provide paving for Maxwell Lane. He said

that work on Montopolis Drive was behind schedule because the City was involved in purchasing right-of-way for widening the street. He said that there had been considerable progress on the storm sewer work in that area, which had to come before street paving.

Mr. Williams then outlined the procedures for petitioning to have a street paved and for dedicating right-of-way to expedite the paving. Mr. Red Herring, Chairman of the Board, Friends of Montopolis Community Center, offered to coordinate the work of getting Montopolis residents to dedicate right-of-way for paving the street. Councilman Long pointed out that Montopolis differed from other parts of Austin in that the streets were much narrower.

Mr. Dick Lillie, Assistant Head of the City Planning Department, said that the Capital Improvement Program did not include paving for the Montopolis area until 1970. It was recommended by the Public Works Department for that year but the Council had not actually acted on the matter.

Father Underwood asked the Council if they were in the process of preparing a program to provide sidewalks. Mr. Williams said they were. Mr. Reuben Rountree listed all of the paving done by request of Montopolis residents. Mr. Doren Eskew, City Attorney, explained how to get a petition for paving started.

Mr. Joe Villareal said that the nearest fire station was five minutes away, but the closest back-up station was too far away to do any good.

Mr. Williams then gave the number of street lights installed in the Montopolis area. He said that it was in line with the number in other areas of Austin. Mr. Clifton Griffin requested Mr. R. L. Hancock of the Electric Department to put in lights on Kemp Street.

Councilman Long brought up the matter of notifying adjacent property owners of zoning applications. Mr. Eskew stated that notices were sent to the owner of record, and that if there was no record in the name of the current owner, the tax bill and other notices were sent to the name which appeared on the rolls.

Robert Mathes of the School of Architecture, University of Texas, discussed briefly a school project about the future of Montopolis called, "Look Ahead in Montopolis."

The Council then discussed getting city water to subdivisions on Hergotz Lane that did not conform to City requirements. A State law prescribed that the City could not serve water to unauthorized subdivisions. A representative of ENABLE stated that a water spigot had been put in that subdivision with the help of the County Commissioners but the people still did not have sewer facilities. Mr. Williams said the City would try to get the sewer lines to the people if there was a way that the people could pay their own way.

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Mayor Akin asked if anyone else wished to be heard. Councilman LaRue then moved the Council adjourn. The motion, seconded by Councilman Long, carried by the following vote:

Ayes: Councilmen LaRue, Long, Nichols, Mayor Akin
Noes: None
Absent: Councilman Janes

Councilman Long thanked all the people for coming to the meeting.

APPROVED:

Harry Akin
Mayor

ATTEST:

Grace Monica
Asst. City Clerk