



February 29, 2024

Questions and Answers Report



Mayor Kirk Watson

Council Member Natasha Harper-Madison, District 1

Council Member Vanessa Fuentes, District 2

Council Member José Velásquez, District 3

Council Member José “Chito” Vela, District 4

Council Member Ryan Alter, District 5

Council Member Mackenzie Kelly, District 6

Mayor Pro Tem Leslie Pool, District 7

Council Member Paige Ellis, District 8

Council Member Zohaib “Zo” Qadri, District 9

Council Member Alison Alter, District 10

The City Council Questions and Answers Report was derived from a need to provide City Council Members an opportunity to solicit clarifying information from City Departments as it relates to requests for council action. After a City Council Regular Meeting agenda has been published, Council Members will have the opportunity to ask questions of departments via the City Manager's Agenda Office. This process continues until 5:00 p.m. the Tuesday before the Council meeting. The final report is distributed at noon to City Council the Wednesday before the council meeting.

QUESTIONS FROM COUNCIL

Item 5:

Approve issuance of a 5-year performance-based incentive to Starwood Capital Group LLC, for the installation of solar electric systems on eight of its facilities in the Austin Energy service territory, in an amount not to exceed \$2,142,861.70.

COUNCIL MEMBER ALISON ALTER'S OFFICE

1) *In backup for Item 5, the chart for the Proposed Performance-Based Incentive Projects (**Over 75 KW AC**) shows the 1st and 3rd project incentives to exceed the system costs. Is this accurate? If so, please provide information explaining why this is.*

The installed cost is not typical for these projects as the solar panels were purchased separately and in bulk. Normally the installed cost would include panels as well.

Item 6:

Authorize expenditures for annual renewals of professional dues and memberships in national and state associations and organizations related to the electric utility industry, in an amount not to exceed \$425,000.

COUNCIL MEMBER ALISON ALTER'S OFFICE

1) *Please describe the way Austin Energy works with these 3 organizations that supports the City's external engagement in climate change policy following instruction from the City's Climate Emergency Resolution that authorized staff to advocate for policies that reduce or mitigate the effects of climate change when participating with county, state, and federal organizations.*

This item provides the annual authorization of Austin Energy's membership dues in several industry trade associations. Those trade associations provide educational forums and policy advocacy regarding industry impact and response to climate change, as well as other issues. For example, the American Public Power Association (APPA) supports and advocates for congressional action to address climate change while maintaining affordability and reliability. The Large Public Power Council (LPPC) principles include the support for research, development, and demonstration to advance clean energy transformation. These LPPC policy principles recognize that environmental stewardship is a critical responsibility of the power sector, and that this responsibility includes the ongoing development of ways to deliver reliable and affordable electricity while also reducing CO2 emissions and minimizing other environmental impacts. The Texas Public Power Association (TPPA) is engaged in the Public Utility Commission of Texas's market re-design analysis and the potential impact to renewable resources. Advocacy by APPA and LPPC was directly responsible for the inclusion of "direct pay"

in the Inflation Reduction Act, which now allows municipally owned utilities to own renewable energy projects. Additionally, these trade associations have and continue to support electrification of the transportation sector.

Additionally, these trade associations offer training and support for Austin Energy employees, as well as mutual aid assistance, which can be essential to system recovery due to impacts of extreme weather events. Austin Energy's General Manager serves on the board of TPPA. Austin Energy's DGM, Regulatory, Communications, Compliance and Legal Services serves as the Vice Chair of the TPPA Governmental Relations Committee. Austin Energy's Director of Environmental, Health & Safety is the Chair of the Large Public Power Council Environmental Task Force. Additional staff are active in task forces and working groups of these trade associations to ensure that the City of Austin's climate goals are reflected in these advocacy efforts.

Item 7:

Approve an ordinance amending the Fiscal Year 2023-2024 Austin Resource Recovery Operating Budget Special Revenue Fund (Ordinance No. 20230816-008) to accept and appropriate \$4,000,000 in grant funds from the United States Environmental Protection Agency for a reuse warehouse project and amending the Fiscal Year 2023-2024 Austin Resource Recovery Capital Budget (Ordinance No. 20230816-008) to transfer in and appropriate \$4,000,000.

COUNCIL MEMBER VANESSA FUENTES' OFFICE

1) *Is there a proposed location for the reuse warehouse? Please share more details.*

The location of the future Reuse Warehouse has not been identified. The location of the warehouse is dependent on what properties within the Austin city limits are on the market within the next six months. The City is looking for a warehouse property with approximately 20,000 square feet of space.

Item 8:

Approve an ordinance amending City Code Chapter 2-2 related to campaign finance regulations.

COUNCIL MEMBER ALISON ALTER'S OFFICE

1) *How will these adjustments be conveyed to current candidates?*

Candidates will be informed through the Candidate Packet scheduled to become available this summer. The packet will highlight when there is a change, for example "NEW PROCEDURE." Upon passage of the ordinance, we will look at adding language to the elections page regarding the deadline to file the voluntary contract.

Item 44:

Approve an ordinance accepting Federal Emergency Management Agency Public Assistance grant funds from the Texas Department of Emergency Management and amending the Fiscal Year 2023-2024

Operating Budget Special Revenue Fund (Ordinance No. 20230816-008) to appropriate funding in the amount of \$2,127,895 for COVID-19 and Winter Storm Uri expenses.

COUNCIL MEMBER ALISON ALTER'S OFFICE

1) *Can staff please provide details on outstanding requests for FEMA reimbursements related to disasters? Please include the amounts requested, the related event name and date, and when the reimbursement request was submitted.*

Please see the [attached spreadsheet](#).

Item 45:

Approve an ordinance amending Exhibit A to the Fiscal Year 2023-2024 City Fee and Fine Ordinance (Ordinance No. 20230816-007) to remove the non-resident library card fee for residents of the City's limited purpose and extraterritorial jurisdictions.

COUNCIL MEMBER VANESSA FUENTES' OFFICE

1) *Will the loss of revenue impact the library operating budget or the General Fund?*

The loss of revenue will impact the City's General Fund, not the Library Department's operating Budget.

Item 51:

Approve an ordinance amending the Fiscal Year 2023-2024 Austin Public Health Department Operating Budget Special Revenue Fund (Ordinance No. 20230816-008) to accept and appropriate \$4,967,319 in grant funds from the Texas Division of Emergency Management for COVID-19 lab diagnostics.

COUNCIL MEMBER ALISON ALTER'S OFFICE

1) *Were these COVID reimbursements of \$4,967,319 included in the totals shared with us during the FY24 Budget Update Briefing? See page 7.*

Yes, this COVID reimbursement of \$4,967,319 was included in the total of \$16.4 million of COVID reimbursements received to date in FY24 that was included in the FY24 Budget Update Briefing.

Item 61:

Approve a resolution initiating amendments to City Code Title 25 (Land Development) to amend the Lamar Boulevard/Justin Lane Transit Oriented District (also known as the Crestview area).

COUNCIL MEMBER RYAN ALTER'S OFFICE

1) *An RFQ was recently issued regarding the City's property at 6909 Ryan Drive. Was the proposal in Item 61 considered in the RFQ and will it have any impact on it if passed?*

The RFQ states that Austin Housing Finance Corporation (AHFC) expects the project to likely use Affordability Unlocked (AU), which would get the current height limit of 60 ft potentially up to 120 ft which would be the same as the regulating plan density bonus amendment that is being

considered. AU would offer additional entitlements that the density bonus program does not so AHFC does not expect Item 61 to impact the development goals for the site.

Item 69:

The Mayor will recess the City Council meeting to conduct a Board of Directors' Meeting of the Austin Housing Finance Corporation. Following adjournment of the AHFC Board meeting the City Council will reconvene.

COUNCIL MEMBER RYAN ALTER'S OFFICE

1) Please provide the number of PSH units and the number of CoC units committed by each development proposed on this AHFC agenda.

Of the nine developments currently under review by the Austin Housing Finance Corporation (AHFC) Board, four will provide housing for individuals exiting homelessness:

- Balcones Terrace, a hotel-conversion project owned by AHFC and managed by Foundation Communities, will provide 123 supportive housing units, 50 of which will be occupied by individuals from the Continuum of Care.
- Cairn Point, a partnership between Family Eldercare and TSAHC, will provide 50 units dedicated to the Continuum of Care.
- Seabrook Square II, by Integral Care with a ground lease from AHFC, will provide 60 PSH units, all dedicated to the Continuum of Care. Real Gardens, a Family Eldercare property, will provide 60 units of PSH dedicated to the Continuum of Care.
- Mary Lee Square will defer acquisition costs for Foundation Communities and secure a ground lease by AHFC. AHFC will work with the developer to identify units for the Continuum of Care as the multiple properties within this portfolio acquisition redevelop over time.

COUNCIL MEMBER QADRI'S OFFICE

1) Please provide an update on the City's progress towards fulfilling Resolution No. 20230816-017: Approve a resolution relating to funding for permanent supportive housing funded with the 2022 Affordable Housing Bonds.

The City has exceeded the goals established in Resolution No. 20230816-017, which directs the City Manager to dedicate \$10 million in 2022 GO Bonds for Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) projects in FY2023-2024. At the November 30, 2023, Austin Housing Finance Corporation (AHFC) meeting, the AHFC board authorized funding for two PSH projects, Cady Lofts and the Lancaster. Those awards included more than \$2.3 million in 2022 GO Bonds. At the February 29, 2024, AHFC meeting, the AHFC board will consider authorizing two additional PSH projects, Cairn Point Montopolis, and Seabrook Square II. Those projects include more than \$7.7 million in 2022 GO Bonds. In addition, later in the fiscal year, the AHFC board will consider funding (including 2022 GO Bonds) for additional projects, including successful 9% Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) projects, which may involve PSH units.

Item 99:

Authorize negotiation and execution of a contract for pre-construction and construction services for the Barbara Jordan Terminal Optimization - Phase 2 project with The Whiting-Turner Contracting Company, in an amount not to exceed \$150,000,000.

COUNCIL MEMBER RYAN ALTER'S OFFICE

1) The City's updated Green Building Policy requires a rooftop solar feasibility analysis for all new construction projects. Please confirm that a feasibility study has been completed for this facility expansion and provide the study's recommendations for solar capacity or solar readiness. If the feasibility study has not yet been completed, please confirm that the scope of services for this pre-construction and construction contract includes achieving the City's green building expectations, including a solar installation.

The City's updated Green Building Policy requires a rooftop solar feasibility analysis for: 1) all new construction projects, and 2) major renovations, as applicable to the scope. Although the project described in Item 99 is considered a major renovation, the overall scope of this project concerns the interior of the building, including the replacement of passenger boarding bridges and other infrastructure improvements within the existing terminal facility and does not include any changes or modifications to the terminal rooftop. As a result a rooftop solar feasibility analysis is not applicable in this case.

All new building projects comprising the Airport Expansion and Development Program will undergo rooftop solar and other feasibility analyses as required under the City's current Green Building Policy. This project will meet the City's Green Building Policy through the limited scope path of the application of all relevant Austin Energy Green Building Rating measures as determined by the project team and AEGB.

FEMA Disaster #	Disaster	Project	Project Amount Submitted	Project Submission Date	Reimbursement Received	Advance Received	Notes
4485	COVID-19 2020-2022	Expedited Citywide Vaccinations	\$ 4,157,361.99	06/30/21		\$ 20,952,216.59	Advance received on March 31, 2021
			\$ 3,517,013.70	09/30/21			
			\$ 1,277,394.29	12/30/21			
			\$ 2,493,224.95	03/04/22			
			\$ 2,506,737.23	06/11/22			
			\$ 2,474,720.47	07/30/22			
			\$ 2,195,164.19	11/07/22			
			\$ 2,048,253.78	03/17/23			
			\$ 534,500.00	06/27/23			
4485	COVID-19 2020-2022	Systemwide Lab Diagnostics v1	\$ 4,967,319.38	12/27/22			Obligated by FEMA. On Council agenda for acceptance 2/29/2024
4485	COVID-19 2020-2022	Citywide Testing v1	\$ 8,671,000.00	12/27/22			Not yet obligated nor awarded by FEMA
4485	COVID-19 2020-2022	Non-Congregate Sheltering - Protective Lodges	\$ 5,489,086.31	07/07/22			Not yet obligated nor awarded by FEMA
4485	COVID-19 2020-2022	Non-Congregate Sheltering - Protective Lodges (10/1/2020-7/1/2022)	\$ 14,797,500.00	12/28/22			Not yet obligated nor awarded by FEMA
4485	COVID-19 2020-2022	COVID-19 Citywide Emergency Response	\$ 7,068,874.91	12/26/22			Not yet obligated nor awarded by FEMA
4485	COVID-19 2020-2022	Citywide EPMs 90% Cost Share	\$ 561,883.67	11/07/23			Obligated by FEMA. On Council agenda for acceptance 2/29/2024
4485	COVID-19 2020-2022	Safe Opening and Operation	\$ 5,537,257.77	12/30/22			Not yet obligated nor awarded by FEMA
4586	Winter Storm Uri 2021	Citywide Emergency Protective Measures	\$ 1,802,442.85	06/15/22			Obligated by FEMA. On Council agenda for acceptance 2/29/2024
4586	Winter Storm Uri 2021	City of Austin Management Cost Project	\$ 90,122.15	06/16/22			Obligated by FEMA, not yet accepted by Council.
4705	Winter Storm Mara 2023	5 Projects	\$ 54,887,894.83	02/16/24			Not yet obligated nor awarded by FEMA