City Council Special Called Meeting Transcript – 11/17/2026

Title: ATXN-1 (24hr)
Channel: 1 - ATXN-1
Recorded On: 11/17/2026 6:00:00AM
Original Air Date: 11/17/2026
Transcript Generated by SnapStream
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[11:03:20 AM]

It's 11:03 A.M. And I will now call to order the special called meeting of the Austin city council for Tuesday, November 17th, 2026. It is 11:03 A.M. We are meeting in the Austin city council chambers, which are located in city hall at 301 west second street in Austin. We have a quorum of the Austin city council present members. There are four items on the agenda other than the executive session items. Since there is a necessary quorum under state law. Let me also point out that under state law, only two council members are necessary for a quorum to canvass an election, and we have more more than that here with us today, we're going to take up item number one to approve a resolution canvasing the results of. No, no, no, I'm sorry. I talk for a living in November 3rd, 2026 bond election. In the bond election, the returns of the election show that there were 222,003 votes for. And 142,337 votes against proposition a. There were 217,143 votes for and 145,491 votes against proposition B. Before we take up any motion on this item, let me ask if there are speakers that are signed up.

[11:04:41 AM]

>> Thank you mayor. There are two speakers for item one, Sean Dickerson, will Dupuy.

[11:04:48 AM]

>> If your name has been called, please come forward. Please call the names again.

[11:04:58 AM]

>> Sean Dickerson, will Dupuy.

[11:05:01 AM]

>> Sean Dickerson, or will Dupuy. We're on a we're on a completely different agenda item in a different meeting.

[11:05:09 AM]

>> So correct. I signed up for the wrong.

[11:05:12 AM]

>> Signed up for the wrong one. Well, we're glad you're here.

[11:05:15 AM]

>> I'm glad to be here.

[11:05:16 AM]

>> Thank you.

[11:05:17 AM]

>> We'll miss you. Paige. By the way, have a good one.

[11:05:20 AM]

>> Thank you. Anyone else signed up on item number one?

[11:05:26 AM]

>> No.

[11:05:26 AM]

>> Mayor members, I'll accept a motion to approve the resolution. Canvasing and accepting the returns for the November 3rd, 2026 bond election. Declaring propositions a and B are adopted. Councilmember Fuentes makes the motion. It is second by councilmember

[11:05:41 AM]

>> Zo qadri. Is there any further discussion? Yes. Councilmember Fuentes.

[11:05:46 AM]

>> Yes. I just want to say thank you to the voters of Austin for approving these bonds, helping us ensure that the values of Austin are amplified, that we continue to invest in our parks. I'm really pleased to see austinites have confidence in their city council in approving these measures, and I just want to give a special thank you on the parks bond for the leadership of mayor pro tem vela, councilmember Ryan alter, councilmember Siegel for bringing that item forward. I'm really pleased to know that all of our districts will benefit from the increased investments in parks bond, and a special thank you on the libraries bond. To councilmember Ellis. You have been a fierce advocate for your district and getting the improvements for your library. And of course, councilor harper-madison for your continued advocacy for colony park. I'm really excited to see both of those libraries move forward. So just wanted to give some gratitude.

[11:06:38 AM]

>> Thank you councilmember. There being no further discussion on item number one. Without objection, item number one is adopted and the motion passes on a vote of 11 to 0. And for the record, councilmember Laine is present virtually and is voting with the 11. Thank you. Members will now take up item number two to approve a resolution canvasing the results of the no. Well, I can't get over the word November. I'm. Maybe it was just such a good day, I don't know. November 3rd, 2026. General election. In the general election, the returns of the election show that there were in the district one race. There were 3573 votes for Stephen brown, 3949 votes for Alexandria Anderson, 10,191 votes for amber K Goodwin, 855 votes for Michael Nahas. 987 votes for Porsha Riggins and 10,121 votes for Michelle Ramos, with amber Goodwin and Michelle Ramos receiving the highest number of votes, but neither receiving a majority of all votes cast for city council member district one in the district three race. There were 2649 votes for Eduardo lolito Romero, 2106 votes for Brock Skinner, 10,391 votes for Jose Velasquez, 1375 votes for Gavin Fernandez Jr and 5420 votes for nihar shah, with Jose Velasquez and nihar shah receiving the highest number of votes but neither receiving majority. A majority of all votes cast for the city council member.

[11:08:27 AM]

District three in the district five race. There were 5693 votes for Liz brink, 9298 votes for David Weinberg, 16,967 votes for Ryan alter and 3573 votes for Farrah Abraham, with David Weinberg and Ryan alter receiving the highest number of votes, but neither receiving a majority of all votes cast for city council member. District five in the district eight race. There were 12,336 votes for Jeffrey Bowen and 22,275 votes for Celina Xia, with Celina Scheer receiving a majority of all votes cast for city council member district eight in the district nine race. There were 10,122 votes for rich Heyman, 7151 votes for Katy cam 21,019 votes for zohaib zo zo qadri 779 votes for Dave thadani and 1838 votes for Kaya Wong, with zohaib zo qadri receiving a majority of all votes cast for city council member district nine. Is there anyone signed up to speak on this motion?

[11:09:49 AM]

>> Yes, mayor, we have one speaker, Elizabeth Davis.

[11:09:53 AM]

>> Miss Davis.

[11:09:54 AM]

>> I signed up for the wrong.

[11:09:56 AM]

>> Okay.

[11:09:59 AM]

>> No other speakers.

[11:10:00 AM]

>> Thank you. Members, we are on item number two. I move, I ask for a motion to approve the resolution. Canvasing and accepting the return for the November 3rd, 2026 general election. Declaring Salinas shia in district eight is elected and declaring zohaib zo qadri in district nine is elected, declaring that a runoff election between amber Goodwin and miss ale Ramos is necessary for district one, declaring that a runoff election between Jose Velazquez and Nia shah is necessary for district three, declaring that a runoff election between Weinberg and Ryan alter is necessary for district five. The motion is made by council member Siegel. It is seconded by council member duchen. Is there discussion with regard to item number two? Hearing none without objection, item number two is adopted. Council member zo qadri is not voting with regard. He abstains from voting with regard to the motion that impacts him, councilmember alter is abstaining from that aspect of the motion that involves him.

[11:11:13 AM]

>> How's that?

[11:11:14 AM]

>> Oh, you won't vote. I'm teasing you. Yeah. I'm just I was just saying. Council member Velasquez is also abstaining from the vote as it applies to him. So? So item number two is adopted. We will now move and take up item number three, which is a resolution canvasing the results of the November 3rd, 2026

special election. In the special elections, the returns of the election show that there were 2000 230,917 votes for, and 107,753 votes against proposition C, 124,030 votes for and 218,960 votes against proposition D, 93,613 votes for and 240,289 votes against proposition E, 242,379 votes for and 85,507 votes against proposition F, 260 206. Let me say that again. 206 8882 votes, 206,882 votes for and 117,071 votes against proposition G, 212,373 votes for. And 114,259 votes against proposition H, 155,750 votes for and 189,750 votes against proposition I, 238,914 votes for and 91,474 votes against proposition J.

[11:13:09 AM]

Are there any speakers?

[11:13:11 AM]

>> Yes, mayor. We have two speakers, starting with remote speaker Jennifer Robichaud.

[11:13:18 AM]

>> Good morning council. My name is Jen Robichaud. I've spent a decade in customer service and user experience, and I have serious concerns about the city's service to local voters. Many voters believe that they had a fair choice, but on the propositions, many of them did not. The city has published ballot language looked informative, while the governing text was buried in. Voter guides were inaccurate, most voters never knew what they were missing. Voters who visited the city's website during the election were sent to a voter resource page, which redirected to speak up. Austin for more information about the charter amendment, speak up Austin voters found ballot language with the full text of the city initiated charter amendments in the ordinance the council passed was not posted to speak up. Austin. Given that the charter is essentially the city's constitution, the exact wording of the amendment matters because small changes can have lasting consequences. Voters also found in official looking facts and information guide about the efficiency assessment. Given that city leaders told voters that the audit ordinance is enough, the contents of the ordinance matters. Voters wanted to find this language were sent on a disorienting journey. Keyword searches on the city's website yield thousands of results, but not the actual charter amendment language or city's ordinance. The full text of the documents live on council agendas. Anyone who found these documents would have discovered that prop J. S non-substantive corrections are, in fact, substantial. They also would have found that the city's facts and information guide about the audits is inaccurate.

[11:14:42 AM]

The guide says that drafts and working papers, quote, must be made public under the current ordinance. The ordinance does not say that it requires only that final assessments be made public on behalf of voters. I'm asking for two things. First, amend the ordinance so that drafts and working papers must be public. The city has already said that the ordinance does this. Second, for future charter elections, provide permanent links to full amendment texts, and publish plain language comparisons that pass the fact check. Serving voters means making information findable, complete and honest. Thank you for your time.

[11:15:18 AM]

>> We also have Leland bickers for item three.

[11:15:27 AM]

>> Good morning. Hello, mayor and council. I am Leland bickers. I'm here both as the here, both as the treasurer and a resident of. Well, save Austin now and a resident of district nine. Save Austin now collected almost 25,000 signed petitions for a charter amendment. More than 21,100 were triple validated by our volunteers for Austin voters who simply wanted to place proposition I on the ballot for the November 3rd general election. Over 155,000 of your constituents who voted in favor of the measure, asking for one thing an honest, independent performance audit of how the city spends our money and to hold city hall accountable by omitting an independent audit into the city's charter. But what we got from those who represent us in your political allies was a campaign of accusation or false accusations and fiction. Six of you held a rally right outside the building, alongside with a former council member and sitting us congressman, and told Austin that prop I would close our libraries and parks.

[11:16:34 AM]

You told austinites that this initiative was duplicative and said that this was a consultant giveaway that would cost the taxpayer 5 to $25 million. Your own audit costs over 15 million, which is ten times more than what Houston's outside audit costs, and they are four times the size of Austin. Where did your estimate come from? Nobody ever answered that question because you couldn't, Andrew told Austin again and again that out of state, that out of state right wingers and billionaires like Elon Musk and Joe Lonsdale funded the campaign to vote in favor of the charter amendment, and that this effort was that this was an effort to dodge Austin. That was the biggest lie of all. This effort by save Austin now was entirely funded by the citizens of Austin. Less than 4% of our donations came from outside Austin. There was no money from Elon Musk or Joe Lonsdale.

[11:17:29 AM]

>> Thank you sir mayor.

[11:17:31 AM]

>> All speakers have been called.

[11:17:33 AM]

>> Thank you very much. Members, I'll entertain a motion to approve the resolution. Canvasing and accepting the returns for the November 3rd, 2026 special election. Declaring proposition C, F, G, H and J are adopted. Is there a motion? Motion made by councilmember duchen, seconded by councilmember harper-madison. Any discussion? Hearing none. Without objection, the motion is adopted. Members that will now take us to item number four on the special meeting agenda, and that relates to an ordinance ordering a runoff election to be held in the city of Austin on December 12th, 2026, for the purposes of purpose of electing a city council member for districts one, three and five, providing for the conduct of the election and declaring an emergency. Is there a motion? Motion made by councilmember zo qadri, second by council member Ellis. Is there any discussion? Hearing none. Without objection, item number four is adopted. Members. Without objection, the city council will now go. Now go into a closed session to take up two items pursuant to section 55107, one of the government code, the city council will discuss legal issues related to item number five. That is, discussion of legal issues related to the appointment of the city attorney as a consultation with our with the with council and pursuant to section 551074 of the government code, the city council will discuss personnel matters related to. Six discussion of personnel matters related to the appointment of city attorney. Is there any objection to going into executive session on the items that I've announced? Hearing none. The council will now go into an executive session at 11:19 A.M. We are headed into executive session for the public. I don't anticipate this is a very long executive session. We'll come back and adjourn this meeting and immediately go back into the work session. Thank you all for being here.

[11:53:20 AM]

>> It is 11:52 AM. We are out of closed session. In the closed session we discussed legal issues and personnel matters related to item 5 and 6, respectively. Members, we have concluded the agenda for the special called meeting of the Austin City Council on November 17, 2026. So without=t objection, we

will adjourn the special called meeting of the Austin City Council. Hearing no objection, the special called meeting of the Austin city council for November 17, 2026 is adjourned at 11:53 A.M.