



# City of League City, TX

300 West Walker  
League City TX 77573

## Meeting Minutes City Council

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Monday, January 25, 2016

6:00 PM

Johnnie Arolfo Civic Center  
400 West Walker Street

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### Council Work Session

The City Council of the City of League City, Texas, met in a work session in the Johnnie Arolfo Civic Center at 400 West Walker Street on the above date at 6:00 p.m.

**Mayor:**

**Tim Paulissen**

**City Council Members:**

**Dan Becker  
Vacant  
Heidi Hansing  
Todd Kinsey  
Geri Bentley  
Keith Gross  
Nick Long**

**City Manager:**

**Mark Rohr**

**Deputy City Manager:**

**John Baumgartner**

**Asst. City Manager/Director of Finance:**

**Rebecca Underhill**

**City Attorney:**

**Nghiem V. Doan**

**City Secretary:**

**Diana M. Stapp**

**Chief of Police:**

**Michael Kramm**

**Director of Engineering:**

**Earl Smith**

**Director of Human Resources/Civil Service:**

**Queenell Fox**

**Director of Parks & Cultural Services:**

**Chien Wei**

**Director of Planning & Development:**

**Paul Menzies**

### 1. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL OF MEMBERS

Mayor Paulissen called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. and called the roll. All members of Council were present except Mr. Gross and Mr. Long.

Absent    2 -    Mr. Keith Gross and Mr. Nick Long

Present    5 -    Mayor Tim Paulissen, Mr. Dan Becker, Ms. Heidi Hansing, Mr. Todd Kinsey and Ms. Geri Bentley

2. **PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION REGARDING THE LEAGUE CITY ANIMAL SHELTER**

John Baumgartner, Deputy City Manager said we have David Duman here from Quorum Architects. He has worked on over thirty animal shelters within the state and comes with pretty good history of animal shelters. We've worked with the group from the police department animal shelter personnel, Kim Schoolcraft, Gary Ratliff and Chief Kramm as well as the animal shelter volunteers and Friends of the Animal Shelter. I'm going to have David go through the concept design, what was done to get to this point.

David Duman said I appreciate the opportunity to be here this evening to review our findings with you. As John mentioned, the reason we were hired was not only based on our experience with animal shelter type facilities all across Texas but also because of the situation that your current shelter is in and has been in for a number of years. Based primarily on the population increase that the city has experienced, from about 40,000 to right at 100,000 now, obviously there are some needs to be addressed in many of your facilities including the animal shelter. There are so many changes in the animal control industry since your original facility was built. I'll run through a few of those in a few minutes. Generally animal shelters have progressed from the old dog pound, to animal shelter, to animal shelter/adoption facility which a lot of communities are in right now, but so many are even moving beyond that to an animal shelter/adoption facility/clinics/retail areas and adjacent boarding areas. There are so many things that are coming that I want you to be aware of. The third reason that we're here to look at your facility is just the general pressure from public across the nation, not only in Texas but from the animal advocates and the desire for more humane animal care. I don't know how much you are facing right now but it seems like every city I go to it's becoming a more and more dominant discussion so we want to try to head that off and make a good faith effort to address the needs of your shelter today and into the future. My intent is to show you a few slides, for those of you that haven't been there lately, of what your existing facility is and some of the challenges that they're currently facing over there. From there we'll progress into some just concepts of modern day facilities and how that might apply to some concept designs for you. Your existing facility consists of two buildings at about 3,000 square feet each. It was originally designed to occupy around 45 dogs, right now there are many days there are 90 dogs and the capacity sometimes stretches beyond that based on needs. So you are doubling up in a lot of areas, there is a lot of things that are happening that aren't in line with industry standards but you are getting by with a lot of volunteers. The lobby is less than 50 square feet and at any given time on a busy day there could be up to 50 people in your facility. The primary advantage of the addition was for a sally port but you are unable to use it today because of the need for the shelter to extend into it over the years. All of the rooms are being multi-used, for example the breakroom doubles up as a get-to-know area. The workrooms are being used as storage area. I just want you to see some of the challenges that the staff has to deal with on a daily basis.

In the addition where the quarantine kennels where built you now have paint peeling from the floor and it doesn't meet the state standard. Kim Schoolcraft is in the process of making some changes because they can't use those cages now. At the end of the presentation I will have some recommendations for some corrections to this area if necessary. In the normal kennels there are often 2 dogs in each one making the cleaning process difficult and very inefficient. The problem with reconditioning an existing shelter is you need to pull out all of the kennels, sandblast the entire floor and recoat it. Even with your best effort it probably won't stick well enough.

Today's modern day shelters are designed with well-lit bright lights and plazas out front. Adoption events can be held throughout the year out front before you even get into the building. There are get-to-know areas and courtyards where the visitors can socialize with the animals. A big lobby that could hold 30-40 people includes a large reception desk so that many activities can take place at one time. The cat and small dog displays are in front. A lot of the current day shelters are designed for field trips, for students and scouts, to help educate the public on animal care and welfare with adoptions. The outside areas include a special field turf that is designed for animal shelters, to be disinfected with chemicals. There are special drain systems that these facilities require. The facilities are built to be warm and inviting, you are trying to attract the public in to adopt an animal. The design philosophy is to keep the public out of the animal areas and circulate around the corridors but viewing into the animal rooms. It is quieter, conditioned/heated, with no odors so the public will stay here longer. We are trying to create a pet shop environment. A key reason for this type of environment is for the public and animals' health and safety. It prevents the spread of illness among the animals and the risk of the public getting bit. When the public sees a pet they like the staff can bring it out to them in one of the get-to-know rooms, or outside courtyard areas. There is a clear separation between the dogs and cats. We also try and incorporate a quiet area (breakroom) for the staff because caring for these animals can be stressful. The challenge to designing an animal shelter is maintaining efficiency; it has to flow from the front to the back for the public but equally as important from the back to the front for the staff bringing in animals.

So now that we have introduced some of the design philosophies, we met with staff and were assigned different sites throughout the City to see what might work best. Our recommendation, and staff agreed, was the site currently owned by the City adjacent to the Public Safety building. It is a 6 acre site and allows for expansion. It was the only site that met all the criteria that we had listed: centrally located in the City for efficient service to the citizens; high traffic area with the recreation center, library and public safety building; within a residential area; easy access off of a major thoroughfare; room for expansion; and most importantly city-owned so you don't have to purchase it. The proposed concept plan includes a parking area, entrance into a large lobby at the front. The staff would bring in animals through a sally-port at the other end of the facility. We have designated a separate drop-off for the public that are dropping off animals.

There is a get-to-know courtyard near the front. The dog pods are designed with indoor/outdoor kennels. The flow of the floor plan would begin with the public coming into the front receptionist area and lobby. There is space for the volunteers and the manager's office. The public can circulate unescorted through the cat areas, get-to-know areas and through the indoor kennel areas. From the sally-port and drop off areas you flow through a check-in area at the back of the facility that is outside the general public view. There are quarantine and isolation areas for the stray and sick animals brought in. There is a small breakroom and offices for the manager and volunteers. This facility as designed includes a medical room but is not specifically designed for spay and neuter.

When we met with staff we talked about some things that would make the facility unique. We designed the floor plan for options to offset some of the construction costs with lease spaces, such as a clinic, boarding and grooming or any number of things. Going through the process with staff we projected needs through 2030, based on an opening in 2020, and wanted to leave enough room for additional expansion into 2040 or 2050. This one is designed to hold 240, roughly 136 dogs and 104 cats. The great thing about creating pods is for easy expansion. Generally the additional need that you will have will be a sally-port if you are bringing in more animals. The cat area could be expanded for increased capacity of 114. The maximum capacity under the current 2040 projection is 354. The challenging question is how much animal control changes between now and 2050. Even in the last couple of years we have seen with a facility like this you will increase adoptions right away and your hold times will go down. We will look at utilizing this space for a 2050 build out and if we find there is not enough room we can look at what would happen with expanding other areas. One thing that we have done is provide a natural daylighting in every animal area, to maintain the animal's behavior status quo as much as possible. If there is not a direct outside window there is indirect natural light or there is special lighting similar to a skylight. The outdoor air units are monsters but would have the proper HVAC to turn over the air in all the animal areas. Durable finishes and materials include glaze blocks throughout, stainless steel cages and kennels – all the things that you don't currently have in your shelter that will make this one last 30, 40 or 50 years. The biggest number one comment outside of animal areas that we get in all our facilities is public education, volunteer training so we have designed a meeting room in the front lobby. We even have a small retail area that is common in all the facilities now which has turned into a profit center for the facilities. There is some lease space available for a spay/neuter clinic, check in boarding/grooming if that is what the City is interested in to help offset some of the cost.

The key question is how much does it cost and why does it cost so much. Animal shelters as I have found talking to Councils across Texas cost more than just about any other building they are going to do. Natatoriums are high on that but it is just as I said, starting with the HVAC system, other than a natatorium you won't have a more expensive system in any of your buildings unless it is a rec center with a swimming pool.

The sound control, the efficiency and design, the plumbing and disinfection that is needed; so many of these things you see in one or two of your building but not all of these requirements in one building: HVAC, plumbing, expensive electrical, synthetic turf, commercial grade washer/dryers and dishwashers, stainless cages are designed to last forever, epoxy floors. All of this in one facility and depending on the size of your facility could drive the cost \$300 - \$500 per foot. If you have a small facility, 2,000, 3,000 or 4,000 square foot it is going to be \$500 per foot. In your case our floor plan as presented is almost 24,000 square feet without the lease space. Our preliminary cost projection is \$7.8 million, around \$330 per foot. Of that \$5.25 million is for the building. Everything else is site work, general conditions and contractor fees and their profit. Be that as it may we are at \$7.8 for construction cost today in 2016. Generally for a project this size you allow around \$1 million for soft cost primarily for engineering design, geotechnical work, FF&E, security systems, access control. All of those things that add up at the end of a project that sometimes are not budgeted. So that leaves you \$8.8 construction with soft costs without the lease option. The lease option is around 7,000 square feet, a shell which is normal in a lease space at \$100/foot, between \$700,000 and \$1 million depending on what type of finish you put in there. If you are able to lease that out at about \$25 per foot, which is generally the going rate for a clinic, in 5 years your payback is about \$875,000. So you should be able to pay for the shell in 5 years and anything after that could be applied towards debt or operation and maintenance of your facility. Just something to consider, the plan works with or without it. In wrapping up, we know the design and construction funding for facilities like this takes a while. Every time we met with staff they wanted to know how they could take care of the current problems. We made some recommendations to accommodate you at what we hope would be a minimal cost for a few years while you are designing, funding and constructing a new facility. To start we recommend bringing in two trailers, for office/adoption areas and storage areas. This would free up your sally-port. We estimate this at \$10,000 - \$12,000 per year. In addition to that we looked at other improvements that need to be made, specifically repairs to the floors to keep the state from writing you up. Clean the plumbing systems, there is an odor and backup that is occurring there. The other thing this does is allows you to close off the door between the dog and cat area, creating a new door into the cat area through the lobby. We are looking at about \$125,000 - \$150,000 investing into the current facility to Band-Aid fix to get you through from today to the point of time you are ready to open a new facility. It starts with creating additional space.

3. **DISCUSSION ON THE CITY OF LEAGUE CITY COUNCIL GOVERNANCE POLICY AND RULES OF PROCEDURE**

Nghiem Doan, City Attorney, said this item is for the city council to do its annual review of the governance policy. The existing policy as we have right now adopted by council has a provision that annually it's to be review and readopted. Last year that was done in May of 2015. This year I started the project a little earlier than that. I felt that the existing set of rules had a lot of room for improvement so when I went to review the policy and the rules I did not want to simply come to council and say I see a huge need for improvements without giving you guys actually a proposed set of rules at least to look at and consider. I felt that if I'm going to say that what we have now is I don't think is good, I'm going to give you an option, at least something to look at and review versus just having council try to throw things at me. So that's what we have right now. I sent that out to all the council. I hope that everyone has had a chance to look at it and review it and bring forth input and feedback for me tonight. If you would like I could walk through real quickly my drafting philosophies when I went to draft the document that I did, along with the priorities that I felt needed to be addressed. I had three drafting philosophies. First, I felt that the rules of procedure needed a more coherent way of being organized versus kind of hopping around so I reorganized different rules into logical articles that I felt flowed better. Number two, I took out any rules that were simply restatements of state law, charter, or ordinance. I didn't see any point for simply restating something already in the law. Thirdly, I also either removed or refocused rules that were aimed at non-council if you will. These are rules for the city council so these rules ought to speak to the conduct and behavior of city council members so I did that as well. So that left me with really just four priorities that I tried to hit. First one was to clarify the equality of the various members of the city council. All eight are members of city council and in the charter and ordinances, everyone's treated the same with the exception of a very few powers given the mayor's office to preside over meetings and that's stated in there as well. Number two, I strengthened rules regarding the keeping of confidential information, keeping that information confidential. That certainly can be a challenge and want to make sure that that's not something that hampers the city's operations. Thirdly, I flushed out and strengthened rules regarding how the members of council interact with the professional staff, to clarify that such communication and contact ought to be funneled through the city manager's office for that clear line of command. Lastly, something that we have seen fairly recently, I wrote a set of rules to create a procedure, a mechanism, to allow the council to discipline one of its' own for violation of these rules or other types of rules that was something lacking in what we had.

The Council requested that the item be placed on the next work session agenda so the absent members could have opportunity to participate in discussion.

4. **CONDUCT A WORK SESSION OF THE CITY COUNCIL TO RECEIVE INFORMATION CONCERNING AGENDA ITEMS APPEARING ON THE MEETING AGENDA FOR THE JANUARY 26, 2016 MEETING OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF LEAGUE CITY.**

**NO VOTE OR ACTION WILL BE TAKEN ON ANY ITEM UNDER CONSIDERATION**

5. **ADJOURNMENT**

At 7:25 p.m. Mayor Paulissen said there being no further business this meeting is adjourned.

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**TIMOTHY PAULISSEN**  
**MAYOR**

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**DIANA M. STAPP**  
**CITY SECRETARY**

**(SEAL)**

**MINUTES APPROVED:**