

A regular meeting of the Groves City Council was held June 9, 2025, in the Groves City Council Chamber with Mayor Chris Borne, Councilmember Mark McAdams, and Councilmember Brandon Holmes in attendance. Councilmember Rae Shauna Gay and Mayor Pro Tem Pete Konidis were not in attendance. Mayor Borne called the meeting to order and welcomed the attendees and news media. A representative from VFW 4820 then led the prayer and pledge of allegiance.

Mayor Borne asked for reports, and there were none.

Mayor Borne then asked for citizen comments. Dawn Buffington of 3739 Franklin Avenue stated that she had conducted a door-to-door poll on Franklin Street, Boyd Street, and Lay Street concerning the possible development of apartments. Ms. Buffington then presented a letter to the Council listing concerns about building an apartment complex at 5500 39th Street, and this letter had 22 signatures from citizens around that area. Concerns of overburdening the infrastructure, increased traffic congestion, noise pollution, a strain on public services, and more crime. Ms. Buffington then stated they are not against something going up there; they don't want something that big.

Matti Bearden of 3701 Franklin Avenue stated that she did not fully understand what the possible building of the apartment complex was all about. Ms. Bearden then spoke about the other apartments in the area that started as luxury apartments and are now Section 8.

Bill Hartje of 4105 Roosevelt addressed the Council regarding golf carts. Mr. Hartje said he would like the Council to adopt laws allowing licensed people to drive golf carts.

Terry Allen of 4535 Roosevelt is also concerned about the golf cart issue. Mr. Allen stated that he is 77 years old, and his wife is 82, and they use their golf carts to go to the store. Mr. Allen understands that the City is concerned about safety, but he thinks it should be limited to adults driving and that safety features should be installed on them.

Marlon Carter of 4948 Bellaire also addressed the Council regarding golf carts. Mr. Carter stated that he purchased his golf cart about a year ago, and it has lights, a horn, brake lights, pretty much everything a car has except a license plate. His family likes to ride, and they always use seat belts.

Mark Crouch of 3148 Canal Avenue has had his golf cart, for which he has liability insurance, for a while. He likes to drive it around with his dog. Mr. Crouch also spoke about the need for tar when filling potholes. □

Johnny Hunt of 6454 Madison stated that he is in the same boat as the other people here regarding golf carts. Mr. Hunt noted that he has blinkers, seatbelts, and a license plate and is fully insured. Mr. Hunt would like the City to adopt a policy allowing golf carts to be driven on the streets.

DELIBERATE AND ACT TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MAY 27, 2025, CITY COUNCIL MEETING: Councilmember McAdams made a motion to deliberate and act to approve the minutes of the May 27, 2025, City Council Meeting, and Councilmember Holmes seconded. There was no discussion, and the motion passed unanimously.

DELIBERATE AND ACT TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MAY 27, 2025, JOINT PUBLIC HEARING: Councilmember Holmes made a motion to deliberate and act to approve the minutes of the May 27, 2025, Joint Public Hearing, and Councilmember McAdams seconded. There was no discussion, and the motion passed unanimously. □

RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE MAY 27, 2025, PLANNING AND ZONING MEETING: Mayor Borne stated that all the Council members have received a copy of the May 27, 2025, Planning and Zoning Meeting minutes.

RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE JUNE 2, 2025, PLANNING AND ZONING MEETING: Mayor Borne stated that all the Council members have received a copy of the June 22, 2025, Planning and Zoning Meeting minutes.

HEAR INTRODUCTION AND SWEARING-IN OF NEW DEPUTY MARSHAL: Marshal Christopher Robin introduced Deputy John Becerra-Silva, who joined the department in January but took his TCOLE later than the Deputy introduced two weeks ago. Marshal Robin then read a bio and a personal statement from Deputy Silva. Marshal Robin then swore in Deputy Silva.

DELIBERATE AND ACT ON ORDINANCE 2025-10, AMENDING CODE OF ORDINANCES CHAPTER 25 – TRAFFIC, TO ADD ARTICLE IX. – TEMPORARY GOLF CART ORDINANCE: Councilmember Holmes made a motion to deliberate and act on Ordinance 2025-10, amending Code of Ordinances Chapter 25 – Traffic, □

to add Article IX. – Temporary Golf Cart Ordinance. Councilmember McAdams seconded. Mayor Borne asked Marshal Robin if the following statements are correct: Groves has never had an ordinance allowing or prohibiting golf carts. Marshal Robin stated that this is correct. Only the State Law that prohibited them was intact; Marshal Robin noted that it was also correct. The State Law had an asterisk stating that if you had a golf course, you could ride carts within 2 miles of the golf course. Marshal Robin noted that it is correct. Mayor Borne then stated that now that we don't have a golf course, an ordinance is needed to allow them to be driven on city streets. Mayor Borne noted that this Council never intended or desired to outlaw golf carts in the City of Groves. The Council intended to have this Ordinance written up so we could allow the golf carts in Groves under special provisions.

Councilmember Holmes asked Marshal Robin about the provisions allowing owners to operate certain vehicles on our streets, but wondered about the enforcement of this. Marshal Robin stated that officers are permitted to make a stop for any suspected violations of this ordinance. Mayor Borne noted that if this ordinance is passed, all traffic codes, license plates, and minimum liability insurance must be followed. Councilmember McAdams asked Marshal Robin to explain that this is not only for golf carts but also for ATVs, ROVs, and UTVs. Marshal Robin then projected pictures of what these types of vehicles look like. Marshal Robin also stated what is not allowed, specifically 4-wheelers, 3-wheelers, dirt bikes, go-karts, and mini-bikes. Mayor Borne stated that e-bikes are not stated in this ordinance due to the laws of the State Statutes allowing them. Councilmember McAdams asked if this were passed, would it go into effect immediately? City Attorney Brandon Monk stated that the ordinance would go into effect after publication in the newspaper, which would be upon publication this Thursday. There were no further questions, and the motion passed unanimously.

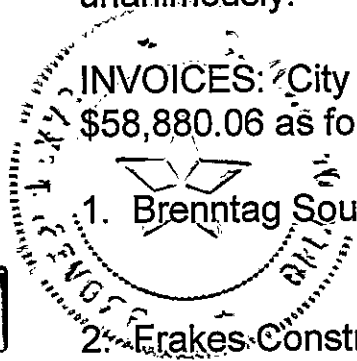
DELIBERATE AND ACT ON ORDINANCE 2025-11, AUTHORIZING A SPECIFIC USE PERMIT FOR APARTMENTS AT 5500 39TH ST.: Councilmember McAdams made a motion to deliberate and act on Ordinance 2025-11, and Councilmember Holmes seconded. Mayor Borne asked Chairman Plokhoo of the Planning and Zoning Committee if Mr. Brett Smith had satisfied all the Planning and Zoning Committee requirements at this time. Mr. Plokhoo stated that they have his site plan, and the only question was concerning Article X, section 10-9.03 of the Ordinance regarding the footprint of the buildings, which could not exceed 30% of the acreage of the plot. There was no answer at that meeting, but the next day, Jeremy Mitchel from Soutex sent in the figures to show that the apartments would come in at 28%, which is lower than the 30% threshold. Mayor Borne asked City Attorney

Brandon P. Monk if, since this is a Specific Use Permit, would it need approval yearly, and Mr. Monk stated this one is not yearly. Mayor Borne then asked Mr. Monk if he was able to come up with any provisions that would restrict the apartments from ever becoming HUD. Mr. Monk stated that he had spoken to Mr. Smith's counsel about potentially restricting the apartments from ever becoming HUD, and ultimately, Mr. Smith's counsel was concerned about the potential liability associated with discrimination.

Mayor Borne then stated that he had the City Manager, Kevin Carruth, and Finance Director, Lamar Ozley, run some numbers regarding how much money this project could potentially add as income for the city, which came out to around \$377,000 a year. One of the main concerns from citizens has always been what are we going to do with the old hospital, and the answer has always been that the city does not own the hospital, so we can't do anything with it, and the city does not have the money to tear it down. Now, when our city needs financial help to get where we want to be, we have a developer who has come in, brought forth the money to tear it down, and build something that gives substantial income to this city. We have heard from Public Works that the infrastructure will not be hindered. Mayor Borne then stated that he understands that there are people who live next to it who have concerns, but there are 17,000 people in this city who want their streets fixed, and this is a good start to get there. Mayor Borne said he is for this project and hopes the rest of the Council agrees. Councilmember Holmes stated that he has talked to this developer many times about their intent with the property, and these developers are already doing quality developments around the City—Mr. Holmes's consideration for this project is based on the history with those developers.

Tara Oney then said that she works with the developers for this project and stated that their RV Park screens its residents with background checks to ensure that they bring upstanding, hard-working citizens to Groves. Councilmember McAdams reiterated that he understands some of the concerns with this project, but he would have to agree with the Mayor and Councilmember Holmes. Our City needs this income; our infrastructure is failing. Mayor Borne stated that the Council's decision would be made on what is best for the entire city, which is all 17,000 people. A citizen then spoke about the apartments being built up and the fear of flooding. Tara Oney stated that when drainage plans are designed for any structure, the plans force you to put in a drainage pond or pipe big enough to hold the water so that no property around the structure is affected. City Manager Kevin Carruth stated that the building code requires that any development cannot shed more water onto the adjoining

property than what's already being shed. Mr. Carruth then noted that, with this property the way it is, there is not enough frontage for this to be a viable retail property, and the market would not support a one-story office park. What Mr. Smith has in his development plans calls for half a million dollars for demolition, and that is only because one of the owners has a remediation company, so they can do it for a lot cheaper than anybody else. Mr. Carruth then stated that if another developer goes in there to remediate both buildings with asbestos, you are looking at a million dollars or more in development costs that have to be factored into however many single-family homes can be put on that property. That alone would kill the entire single-family project. There were no further questions, and the motion passed unanimously.

INVOICES: City Manager Kevin Carruth presented invoices for payment totaling \$58,880.06 as follows:

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| 1. Brenntag Southwest, INC. | Sodium hydroxide for Water Plant. | \$7,634.91 |
| 2. Erakes Construction | Concrete and curb replacement at City Hall. | \$8,500.00 |
| 3. Republic Services | Commercial dumpster pickup for May 2025. | \$10,245.15 |
| 4. Soutex Surveyors, INC. | Engineering service for elimination of bottleneck on 25 th Street. | \$32,500.00 |

Councilmember Holmes made a motion to deliberate and act on the June 9, 2025, invoice list, and Councilmember McAdams seconded. Mayor Borne asked for questions. Mayor Borne asked Assistant Public Works Director Glen Boudoin if he knew how much the sodium hydroxide had gone up in the last five years, and Mr. Boudoin stated he does not know. There were no further questions and the motion passed unanimously.

Mayor Borne asked for Council comments. Mayor Borne stated that this decision was not easy for him or any of the Council. His first instinct was to say no, but after researching and communicating with Mr. Smith and Mr. Carruth, he believes it is for the betterment of the city. He also stated that he knows that he probably made many people mad, but that's okay because he believes this is what's best. He also thanked

the citizens for being patient with the golf cart ordinance. There were no further comments.

There was no further business, and the meeting was adjourned at 6:09 p.m.



Mayor

ATTEST:



City Clerk

