

A regular meeting of the Groves City Council was held January 26, 2026, at 5:00 p.m., in the Groves City Council Chamber with Mayor Chris Borne, Councilmember Mark McAdams, Councilmember Brandon Holmes, and Councilmember Charles Chelette in attendance. Mayor Pro Tem Gay was absent. Mayor Borne called the meeting to order and welcomed the attendees and news media. The local VFW then led the prayer and the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mayor Borne asked whether there were any reports, and City Manager Kevin Carruth informed the Council that Friends of the Library is restarting and will hold its first meeting tomorrow at 5:30 p.m. Mr. Carruth also thanked the staff for the S.W.A.T. situation on Doyle, the Fire Department with the mutual aid to help the Nederland Fire Department with their 7<sup>th</sup> Street Baptist Church Fire, and the Public Works employees with the 10-inch main on Monroe with the break. There were multiple breaks from midnight until around 2:00 p.m., and you can imagine how miserable that would be in the cold. Only two businesses were affected: Whataburger and the convenience store right behind it.

Fire Chief Lance Billeaud then presented a report to the Council on Fire Engine 33 regarding a transmission issue. When the garage removed the sensor to replace it, there was a considerable amount of metal shavings on the sensor. They brought it to Siddons-Martin in Port Arthur, where trucks are normally taken for repairs when the garage can't perform them. Siddons-Martin offered two options: either break down the transmission to determine what needed repair, or replace it with a rebuilt unit through Reliable Transmission. The minimum to break it down was about \$13,000; costs would increase from there, depending on the repairs needed, with only a 90-day warranty on the replaced parts. Going directly through Reliable Transmission, the same company, a rebuilt transmission with a full 2-year warranty would be about \$22,000. After careful consideration, the \$22,000 rebuilt transmission option was selected as the best option. Chief Billeaud stated that this was not budgeted for, but we are fortunate that the department received a \$25,000 grant from the Forestry Service to purchase equipment. Chief Billeaud stated that they would purchase equipment only with grant funds, then use the budgeted equipment funds for repairs to the fire truck. Councilmember McAdams asked how many miles the fire truck has on it, and Chief Billeaud stated about 25,000 miles and 2,400 hours. It is a 2012 model. Councilmember Holmes asked whether the unit is nearing the end of its service life, and Chief Billeaud stated that they need at least 6 more years of service from it, but would like more. Councilmember Holmes asked if this unit being out will leave us exposed for local calls and mutual aid, and Chief Billeaud stated that it will not.

Mr. Ken Loftin of VFW 4820 stated that they have been traveling to other cities for Council meetings. Mr. Loftin then updated the Council, stating they have a stand-down coming up at Bob Bowers Civic Center next Friday, and a car show in March. Mr. Loftin also stated that they plan to host a major event at the park on Highway 73 on the 4<sup>th</sup> of July. There were no further reports.

Mayor Borne then called for public comments, and none were received.

RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE JANUARY 13, 2026, PLANNING AND ZONING MEETING: Mayor Borne stated that all of the Council has received a copy.

HEAR AND DISCUSS THE ANNUAL REVIEW OF BUSINESSES WITH BEER AND WINE PERMITS FOR ON-PREMISE CONSUMPTION: Marshal Robin addressed the Council and stated that this report will review each of the businesses that currently hold a permit for on-premise beer and wine consumption. These include Baytown Seafood, Colichia's Italian Village, Columbus Club of Groves, Larry & Rita's Mexican Cajun Bar & Grill, Tony's Barbecue, Milagro's Tex-Mex Restaurant, and Maison D'Amis. Burrito Bar currently holds a permit but is not yet open for business. Marshal Robin then reviewed each location and explained any calls for service. All calls for service were unrelated to on-premises consumption. There were no questions from the Council.

HEAR AND DELIBERATE ON A MUTUAL-AID AGREEMENT FOR COOPERATION ON LAW ENFORCEMENT EFFORTS BETWEEN MID-COUNTY LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES: Councilmember Holmes made a motion to hear and deliberate on a Mutual-Aid Agreement for Cooperation on Law Enforcement Efforts between Mid-County Law Enforcement Agencies, and Councilmember Chelette seconded. City Marshal Christopher Robin addressed the Council and informed them that the main purpose of this agreement is to put the Mutual-Aid Agreement in writing, since it is already being done. Marshal Robin then stated that some of this is in response to the Uvalde Strong Act. Putting this in writing helps ensure everything is easily understood and that parameters are set so there are no questions about how we will assist one another. This agreement is modeled on a longstanding agreement used in the North Central Texas region. All three attorneys for Nederland, Port Neches, and Groves have reviewed this and found no issues. This agreement remains active as long as at least two agencies are part of it. There are ways to exit from the agreement if necessary. It is also drafted to allow any other agency to join. Marshal Robin stated that, to his understanding, the City of Nederland has this on its agenda this week as well, but he is not sure whether Port Neches does.

Councilmember Holmes asked what the other named cities were in this agreement? Marshal Robin stated that, at this time, it's only Nederland and Groves. Councilmember Chelette asked about information sharing if we were called to another city for mutual aid. Marshal Robin stated that the agreement doesn't change how we handle our evidentiary data, but it does require us to comply with rules from our local District Attorney, which is already our practice. Councilmember Chelette also asked about any open records requests, and Marshal Robin stated that anything we generate would be stored in accordance with our policies and procedures, so it would have to be requested from us. City Manager Kevin Carruth stated that this agreement simply memorializes what we have been doing for years and that there has not been an incident that has served as a catalyst for this; however, it is prudent business to have everything in writing. There were no further questions, and the motion passed unanimously.

**DELIBERATE AND ACT TO PROCLAIM APRIL AS FAIR HOUSING MONTH:** Councilmember Chelette made a motion to deliberate and act to proclaim April as Fair Housing Month, and Councilmember McAdams seconded. Mayor Borne then read the proclamation proclaiming April as Fair Housing Month in the City of Groves. There was no further discussion, and the motion passed unanimously.

**DELIBERATE AND ACT ON RESOLUTION 2026-03, AUTHORIZING SIGNATORIES FOR THE GLO RESILIENT COMMUNITIES PROGRAM GRANT (23-160-138-F544):** Councilmember McAdams made a motion to deliberate and act on Resolution 2026-03, and Councilmember Chelette seconded. City Manager Kevin Carruth informed the Council that the just-passed Proclamation, this item, and the next item all relate to the grant for the comprehensive planning process we were awarded. All of these items are required to receive those funds. This item authorizes the City Manager and Mayor to serve as signatories on the documents. There were no questions, and the motion passed unanimously.

**DELIBERATE AND ACT ON RESOLUTION 2026-04, TO ADOPT THE REQUIRED CDBG CIVIL RIGHTS POLICIES:** Councilmember Holmes made a motion to deliberate and act on Resolution 2026-04, and Councilmember McAdams seconded. City Manager Kevin Carruth reiterated that this is required for us to receive funds for the comprehensive plan and noted that we have already agreed to these policies as a condition of accepting police department grants. There were no questions, and the motion passed unanimously.

DELIBERATE AND ACT ON HOTEL OCCUPANCY TAX FUNDING REQUEST BY THE GROVES CHAMBER OF COMMERCE FOR THE CHRISTMAS TREE TRAIL: Councilmember Chelette made a motion to deliberate and act on Hotel Occupancy

Tax funding request by the Groves Chamber of Commerce for the Christmas Tree Trail. Councilmember Holmes seconded. The Groves Chamber of Commerce Director, Letha Knaus, informed the Council that this item was to pay for the Grinch's appearance at the Christmas Tree Trail. Councilmember Chelette asked whether there was a good turnout, and Ms. Knaus stated that it was larger than in previous years. Mayor Borne asked Finance Director Lamar Ozley whether we have sufficient funds to cover this, and Mr. Ozley stated that we do. There were no further questions, and the motion passed unanimously.

DELIBERATE AND ACT ON ADDITIONAL HOTEL OCCUPANCY TAX FUNDING REQUEST BY GROVES PECAN FESTIVAL: Councilmember Holmes made a motion to deliberate and act on additional Hotel Occupancy Tax funding request by Groves Pecan Festival, and Councilmember Chelette seconded. The Groves Chamber of Commerce Director, Letha Knaus, informed the Council that this is for the entertainment portion of the Grove Pecan Festival. This includes the DJ, the sound team, and the bands. Councilmember Holmes asked if this was the total price for the entertainment package, and Ms. Knaus stated it is. Councilmember Holmes asked whether Ms. Knaus has other DJ options for future years, as the current DJ does not have their own equipment. Ms. Knaus stated that they will still have Beau Wilson because he brings large crowds. There were no further questions, and the motion passed unanimously.

DELIBERATE AND ACT ON THE JANUARY 26, 2026, INVOICE LIST: Councilmember Chelette made a motion to deliberate and act on the January 26, 2026, invoice list, and Councilmember McAdams seconded.

INVOICES: City Manager Kevin Carruth presented invoices for payment totaling \$141,825.42 as follows:

- |                        |   |             |
|------------------------|---|-------------|
| 1. City of Port Arthur | Garbage and trash collection 10/27/25 - 11/25/25 and 11/26/25 - 12/22/25. | \$35,925.00 |
| 2. Enterprise          | Vehicle lease payment.  | \$12,217.3  |

3. Frakes Construction	Demolitions of four houses from the 3-25-25 C.O.D.E.S. Hearing.	\$67,174.00
4. Lower Neches Valley Authority	Raw water purchased for December 2025.	\$26,509.11

Mayor Borne asked for questions. Councilmember Holmes asked whether we have any additional invoices pending for the demolitions from Frakes Construction, and Mr. Carruth stated that 6 or 7 additional houses remain to be demolished. There were no further questions, and the motion passed unanimously.

CITY COUNCIL WILL HOLD AN EXECUTIVE SESSION PURSUANT TO THE PROVISIONS OF CHAPTER 551 OF THE TEXAS GOVERNMENT CODE, IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE AUTHORITY CONTAINED IN:

- A. SECTION 551.071 (1) (A) – CONSULTATION WITH ATTORNEY WHEN THE GOVERNMENTAL BODY SEEKS THE ADVICE OF ITS ATTORNEY ABOUT PENDING OR CONTEMPLATED LITIGATION.
- B. RECONVENE INTO OPEN SESSION.

The Council went into Executive Session at 5:45 p.m.

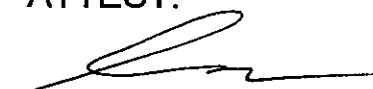
The Council reconvened in an Open Session at 6:13 p.m.

Mayor Borne asked for Council comments, and Councilmember Chelette thanked all city employees who have helped us get through this weather, especially the Public Works employees who assisted with the major water break. Mayor Borne thanked the Fire and Police Departments for their help with the barricaded individual. There were no further comments.

There was no further business, and the meeting was adjourned at 6:14 p.m.

  
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Mayor

ATTEST:

  
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City Clerk

