

City of San Antonio



Minutes

Governance Committee

2023 – 2025 Council Members

Mayor Ron Nirenberg, Chair

Dr. Adriana Rocha Garcia, Dist. 4 | Melissa Cabello Havrda, Dist. 6

Manny Pelaez, Dist. 8 | John Courage, Dist. 9

Monday, February 17, 2025

3:00 PM

City Hall

The Governance Committee convened a regular meeting in the City Hall Media Briefing Room at 3:05 p.m. City Clerk Debbie Racca-Sittre took the roll call, noting a quorum with the following Committee Members present:

Members Present: Ron Nirenberg, *Mayor, Chair*
Dr. Adriana Rocha Garcia, *Member*
Melissa Cabello Havrda, *Member*
Manny Pelaez, *Member*

Members Absent: John Courage, *Member*

Approval of Minutes

1. Approval of minutes from Governance Committee on January 15, 2025.

Councilmember Rocha Garcia moved to Approve the minutes of the January 15, 2025, Governance Committee meeting. Councilmember Pelaez seconded the motion. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: Nirenberg, Rocha Garcia, Cabello Havrda, Pelaez

Absent: Courage

Briefing and Possible Action on

2. Consideration of five (5) At-Large appointments to the Planning Commission. [Debbie Racca- Sittre, City Clerk]

Mayor Nirenberg introduced the Item and announced that the Short List Committee had selected nine applicants to be interviewed from the 29 applications received. He reported that of those nine, Wendellyn Miller withdrew her application. Mayor Nirenberg stated that Samer Dessouky, George Peck, and Tomas Uresti provided written statements and Corin Hooper, Matthew Proffitt, Jacob Sanchez, Meredith Siegel, and Maryann Smith were interviewed by the Committee. Mayor

Nirenberg noted that there were five seats open to serve the remainder of the unexpired term through October 6, 2026.

Mayor Nirenberg recessed the meeting into Executive Session at 3:52 p.m. to discuss the applications. Mayor Nirenberg reconvened the meeting in Open Session at 3:59 p.m. and announced that no official action had been taken in Executive Session. Mayor Nirenberg thanked all applicants for their interest.

Councilmember Cabello Havrda moved to recommend the reappointment of Dr. Samer Dessouky, George Peck, Matthew Proffitt, and Meridity Siegel, and to appoint Jacob Sanchez to the Planning Commission. Councilmember Rocha Garcia seconded the motion. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: Nirenberg, Rocha Garcia, Cabello Havrda, Pelaez

Absent: Courage

3. Council Consideration Request by Councilmember Teri Castillo (District 5) on Rebuilding Dreams Policy Request. [Lori Houston, Assistant City Manager; Veronica Garcia, Director, Neighborhood and Housing Services]

Assistant City Manager Lori Houston reported that Councilmember Castillo submitted Council Consideration Request (CCR) 2024-0029 titled “Rebuilding Dreams Policy Request” on December 11, 2024. She stated that according to the CCR, there were an average of 43 residential fires per month over the last two years, and City fees related to permitting and inspections (building, electrical, mechanical, and plumbing) contributed to cost burden when families sought to repair or rebuild their home. Houston noted that the CCR asserted that there were no fee waiver policies or home rehabilitation programs specifically addressing fire-damaged properties.

Houston stated that the CCR requested the use of home rehabilitation resources, including fee waivers, for homeowners who were rebuilding fire-damaged homes. She indicated that the CCR asked staff to consider whether annual fee waiver funds could go toward this effort, with eligibility/program qualifications, which mirrored those from COSA’s Home Rehabilitation program. Houston stated that stipulations that funds should not be used for homes that were vacant when a fire occurred or for homes that experienced a fire due to arson/insurance fraud, best practices from entities who work with homeowners experiencing a house fire, and the implementation of a rolling application period were included.

Houston recommended a comprehensive update to the COSA Fee Waiver Program policy, to include provisions for fire-damaged property, which would be brought before the Planning and Community Development Committee.

DISCUSSION:

Councilmember Rocha Garcia suggested that the two CCRs on the agenda complemented each other and spoke in support.

Councilmember Cabello Havrda supported the CCR and the staff recommendation.

Mayor Nirenberg spoke in support of the CCR and the staff recommendation to refer the Item to the Planning and Community Development Committee.

Councilmember Rocha Garcia moved to Refer to Committee. Councilmember Cabello Havrda seconded the motion. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: Nirenberg, Rocha Garcia, Cabello Havrda, Pelaez
Absent: Courage

4. Council Consideration Request by Councilmember Adriana Rocha Garcia (District 4) and Councilmember Teri Castillo (District 5) on Establishing a Process for City Assistance after Home Fire. [Lori Houston, Assistant City Manager; Veronica Garcia, Director, Neighborhood and Housing Services]

Assistant City Manager Lori Houston reported that Councilmembers Rocha Garcia and Castillo submitted Council Consideration Request (CCR) 2025-0004 on February 6, 2025 titled "Establishing a Process for City Assistance after Home Fire." She stated that the CCR requested establishment of a response system to coordinate efforts of agencies that supported families after a home fire and expansion of the existing Housing Assistance Program (HAP) Administrative Policy to include eligibility for financial and relocation assistance for families affected by home fire incidents.

Houston listed current efforts by the Neighborhood Housing and Services Department (NHSD), which included responding to home fires and referrals in coordination with the Department of Human Services whenever requested by the Development Services Department (DSD) or council districts. She stated that the City did not have a program that provided financial assistance or emergency relocation services to families after a home fire, however, the Housing Assistance Program (HAP) provided up to \$3,000 for reasonable moving expenses for eligible renters impacted by financial hardship and housing instability, but homeowners were currently not eligible for relocation assistance. Houston recommended that the Item be brought before the Planning and Community Development Committee for discussion.

DISCUSSION:

Councilmember Rocha Garcia spoke in support of the CCR and recommended consideration of the loss of pets and also suggested developing methods to help find displaced families and coordinate services.

Councilmember Cabello Havrda supported the CCR and the recommendation, noting that entire communities could be impacted when a home fire occurred, particularly when they did not have insurance.

Mayor Nirenberg spoke in support of the CCR and the staff recommendation to refer to the Planning and Community Development Committee.

Councilmember Rocha Garcia moved to Refer to Committee. Councilmember Cabello Havrda seconded the motion. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: Nirenberg, Rocha Garcia, Cabello Havrda, Pelaez
Absent: Courage

Adjournment

There being no further discussion, the meeting was adjourned at 4:10 p.m.

Approved

***Ron Nirenberg
Mayor***

Debbie Racca-Sittre
City Clerk