

**State of Texas
County of Bexar
City of San Antonio**



**Meeting Minutes
City Council B Session**

Council Briefing Room
City Hall
100 Military Plaza
San Antonio, Texas 78205

2023 – 2025 Council Members

Mayor Ron Nirenberg

Dr. Sukh Kaur, Dist. 1 | Jalen McKee-Rodriguez, Dist. 2
Phyllis Viagran, Dist. 3 | Dr. Adriana Rocha Garcia, Dist. 4
Teri Castillo, Dist. 5 | Melissa Cabello Havrda, Dist. 6
Marina Alderete Gavito, Dist. 7 | Manny Pelaez, Dist. 8
John Courage, Dist. 9 | Marc Whyte, Dist. 10

Wednesday, April 16, 2025

2:00 PM

Council Briefing Room

The City Council convened a B Session meeting in the Council Briefing Room beginning at 2:11 p.m. City Clerk Debbie Racca-Sittre took the Roll Call noting a quorum with the following Council Members present:

PRESENT: 10 – Nirenberg, Kaur, McKee-Rodriguez, Viagran, Rocha Garcia, Castillo, Cabello Havrda, Alderete Gavito, Courage, Whyte

ABSENT: 1 - Pelaez

BRIEFING ONLY

1. Briefing on the 89th State Legislative Session. [Jeff Coyle, Assistant City Manager; Sally Basurto, Director, Government Affairs]

Sally Basurto, Director of Government Affairs (GA), provided an update on the 89th Texas Legislature noting that there were seven weeks left in the 89th regular session and committee and floor hearings were continuing in both chambers. She reported that the House approved a

\$337 billion Budget for the next two years. Basurto stated that House Bill (HB) 150, filed by Capriglione, would establish the Texas Cyber Command as a component institution of The University of Texas System in San Antonio, had passed in the House. She indicated that the bill, according to Basurto, was a priority of Governor Abbott. Basurto noted that the Texas Cyber Command would create a robust strategy for the State of Texas to anticipate and detect potential cyber threats, promote cybersecurity awareness, professional training, and other workforce-oriented measures, prepare for cyberattacks through planning and proactive collaboration, defend against and mitigate against the effects of cyberattacks, and support to conduct post-attack investigations and recovery efforts.

Basurto reported that community meetings were held during the week of April 7th with a stakeholder meeting on April 11, 2025 and approval by the Technical Advisory Committee on April 14, 2025 for the South Texas Parkway (STP). She stated that the Planning Commission was expected to consider the STP at its meeting on April 23, 2025 and City Council would consider adding the parkway to the Major Thoroughfare Plan on May 8, 2025. These actions, according to Basurto were necessary to respond to the Metropolitan Planning Organization's Summer 2026 Call for Major Projects.

Basurto indicated that bills related to land use were on the move including HB 23 filed by Harris, which would allow applicants to request third-party review of development documents or land improvements by a certified engineer or building inspector. She stated that HB 23 was reported as substituted from the House Land and Resource Committee. Basurto indicated that SB 673, filed by Hughes, would allow an Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) in a single-family zoning or un-zoned areas by right, and prohibit a city's ability to regulate an ADU in certain ways, had passed the Senate.

Basurto stated that HB 32 filed by Button and its companion bill SB 38 filed by Bettencourt would change laws regarding eviction processes to make it easier for landlords to initiate evictions. She noted that HB 32 was voted favorably from committee as substituted House Judiciary and Civil Jurisprudence, and SB 38 passed the Senate. Basurto reported that SB 208 filed by West would establish a workforce housing capital investment fund program to support the development of workforce housing across Texas and included provisions for authorizing a fee to fund this initiative. She stated that SB 208 was referred to the Senate Local Government Committee.

Also related to housing, according to Basurto, SB 234 filed by Johnson, which would incentivize private sector construction of workforce housing units through low-interest mezzanine real estate financing, had been referred to the Senate Local Government Committee.

Basurto stated that HB 3858 filed by LaHood would require the Governor's Office with help from the Texas Department of Emergency Management to set up a process for cities and counties to get approval to build or run temporary housing or emergency shelters for disaster victims. She noted that HB 3858 was pending in the House Homeland Security, Public Safety & Veterans' Affairs Committees. Basurto stated that the City opposed this bill as it eroded the City's ability to manage disasters.

Basurto reported that additional bills on the move included HB 1866 filed by Lujan, which would give additional State law enforcement authority to National Parks Service Officers including the ability to execute arrest and search warrants under State Laws and the ability to pursue emergency detention or court ordered protective detention related to mental health as included in the Texas Health and Safety Code Chapter 573 and 574. Basurto added that HB 1866 was reported favorably out of the House Homeland, Public Safety & Veterans Committee. Councilmember Viagran and Director of the Office of World Heritage, Colleen Swain, spoke in support of the bill in committee and the bill was consistent with the City's Legislative Agenda.

Basurto stated that HB 2806 filed by Lujan would allow increased flexibility for Animal Care Services Officers to identify and make dangerous dog designations, increase the penalty for multiple bite incidents from a Class C to a Class B misdemeanor, and restrict ownership of dogs for five years for individuals with multiple convictions for dangerous dog bites. She noted that HB 2806, which the City supported, had been referred to the Committee on Public Health.

Basurto indicated that HB 3594 filed by Lujan and its companion bill SB 2318 filed by Menendez related to the San Antonio Fire and Police Retiree Healthcare Fund would expand retiree flexibility in payment of required contributions, allow surviving spouses to retain coverage if they remarried, and allow a retiree to defer coverage and contributions if they were married to another member of the plan that had not yet retired. She noted that HB 3594 had passed in committee on April 7, 2025, and SB 2318 was referred to the Finance Committee. Basurto added that the City of San Antonio was registered in support of these bills.

Basurto reported that SB 19 filed by Middleton, which related to the use of public funds by a political subdivision for lobbying and certain other activities, had passed the Senate and was referred to the House State Affairs Committee. She stated that while the bill did not impact City staff's ability to advocate, it would impede our ability to analyze bills and be a part of organizations such as the Texas Municipal League.

Basurto stated that HB 4283 filed by LaHood would add penalties for municipalities that violated State Law and the State Constitution and would allow the Attorney General to investigate whether a City Ordinance violated State Law or the State Constitution. She noted that if a violation was found and the City failed to correct the violation, the City could be fined up to \$3,000 per day and would be prohibited from initiating an annexation procedure or issue bonds. Basurto mentioned that the comptroller could withhold sales and use tax revenue to the City while in violation. The City opposed this bill as it failed to provide due process and would create significant liability. HB 4283 was pending in the House State Affairs Committee.

DISCUSSION:

Mayor Nirenberg asked Basurto for an update on school vouchers as this was the issue that caused the Governor to veto almost all bills passed in the last session. Basurto stated that school vouchers were likely to advance but independent school districts had been successful

in adding funding for public schools. Mayor Nirenberg suggested that allowing voters to decide would be the best solution.

Councilmember Cabello Havrda recommended opposing SB 33, which would ban cities from funding travel and accommodations for abortion as this bill would erode the local control that cities could exert and asserted that this was an attack on local governance. Basurto noted that it was opposed but it was still advancing.

Councilmember Whyte disagreed with Councilmember Cabello Havrda's comments on SB 33 and did not support the use of taxpayer money to fund out of state travel for women seeking abortion. He suggested that the action that City Council took last week to approve a new Request for Proposals (RFP) for these services was illegal. City Attorney Andy Segovia stated that nothing passed by City Council last week was illegal. Councilmember Whyte disagreed. Councilmember Whyte stated that the Cyber Command coming to San Antonio was a big win for our City and he supported HB 3594 as he sat on the San Antonio Police Pension Fund Committee.

Councilmember Whyte also supported strengthening penalties for loose and dangerous dogs under HB 2806 and HB 1866 in support of public safety. Councilmember Whyte stated that he had not read Representative LaHood's bill (HB 4283) but felt the spirit of the bill was spot on as municipal governments often veered into areas that were beyond its purview.

Councilmember Alderete Gavito spoke in support of HB 2806 filed by Lujan to address dangerous dogs citing her Council Consideration Request (CCR 2024-0014). She also supported SB 1520 filed by Campbell and Flores to create a hike and bike trail named the "Bicentennial Trail" to connect landmarks such as the Alamo to the State Capital, which would support more green spaces. Councilmember Alderete Gavito supported establishment of the Texas Cyber Command in San Antonio.

Councilmember Rocha Garcia asked what funding requirements could be enacted for the HB 32 bill so that we could help prevent evictions. Director of the Housing and Neighborhood Services Department (NHSD), Veronica Garcia, indicated that there were no financial impacts to the City under this bill but the time to evict could be reduced from six weeks to three weeks. Chief Housing Officer, Mark Carmona, reported that the Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs (TDHCA) would contract with housing programs to implement SB 208 and SB 234. Councilmember Rocha Garcia noted the focus on the STP and asked how SB 840 could impact the South Side area. Basurto stated that SB 840 would require the City to make changes to its master development plan.

Councilmember Viagran supported the STP and requested more details about SB 280 funding. She expressed concern with the new rules about ADUs and that these could be used as Short Term Rentals (STUs). Ramirez stated that the City requirement that the homeowner had to live on the property would be removed, however, zoning would not be impacted and STRs would still need to be permitted. Councilmember Viagran recommended watching SB 234. Councilmember Viagran noted that SB 840, which was for multi-family development in non-residential areas was a lawsuit waiting to happen. She noted that HB 3858 requested statistics on what could happen if the City could not set up emergency shelters such as the

number of lives that could be lost: specifically hurricanes and flooding shelters. She asked Segovia how many laws the State had that were obsolete. Segovia indicated that HB 4283 took out the judiciary's role of determining if what cities were doing were unconstitutional. Councilmember Viagran noted that there was no discretion on how egregious the offense and she was worried about smaller cities abilities to defend themselves. Councilmember Viagran commented that this session seemed to include more bureaucracy and paperwork.

Councilmember Castillo expressed concern that non-profits that provided care and services to youth were being squeezed due to the defunding of public schools and warned there would be a greater need for youth services in the future. Councilmember Castillo supported simplifying the transfer on the death deed process. She expressed concern that HB32 would undermine the work the City had performed to support Tenant's Rights. Councilmember Castillo suggested that HB 3858 would create lack of access to shelter for Texans and San Antonians, which could put them in harm's way during a disaster.

Councilmember Courage expressed concern with the State creating a bureaucracy to be able to serve residents during a disaster. He noted that there were 75 co-sponsors of the School Voucher Bill and suggested that the last bill could cost \$5.6 billion; there needed to be a dramatic increase in funding for public education and asked how much money public schools might get.

Councilmember Whyte asked who was working on SB 33. Basurto reported that when SB 33 was initially filed, the City of San Antonio did not take a position because the City Council had not taken a position at that time. Assistant City Manager, Jeff Coyle, indicated that when the item came up at the House Committee, GA staff of the City would register its position.

Councilmember Whyte asked if paid lobbyists would get involved with opposition to SB 33. Coyle stated that lobbyists did not register the City's position; lobbyists were used to help draft legislative language. City Manager Erik Walsh noted that staff would support any efforts in line with the City Council position and he understood that Councilmember Whyte disagreed with the City Council's position on SB 33. City Manager Walsh reserved the right to manage the legislative agenda the way City Council authorized. Mayor Nirenberg distinguished that lobbyists researched all the bills and taxpayers had to pay for responses to bad bills. He noted that just because Councilmember Whyte was on the losing end of the vote, did not mean the City was doing anything wrong by defending its policy positions.

Councilmember Kaur clarified that travel funding for abortion had been approved by the City Council and asked of the status of the City's Request for Proposals (RFP). City Manager Walsh reported that the RFP had been issued. Councilmember Kaur asked whether ADU's by right would impact the City. Basurto stated that even though the City's rules on ADU's were reasonably unrestrictive, the City would have to align with the new laws, if passed. Ramirez commented that parking requirements and the requirement for the homeowner to reside on-premises would go away.

Councilmember Kaur asked how HB 840 would impact zoning. Ramirez explained that

anything zoned commercial would be required to allow multi-family. Councilmember Kaur suggested that the goal should be to maintain local control and the ability to work with the community. She requested clarification on HB 234 mezzanine funding. Carmona indicated that the funding for property acquisition would help leverage other funds. Councilmember Kaur asked if the San Antonio Housing Trust (SAHT) could use the mezzanine funding. Carmona stated that he would investigate the opportunity.

Councilmember Kaur supported HB 4230 to create the Bluebonnet Trail System and the additional National Parks Ranger authority and noted that with Federal budget cuts, the Rangers were hurting right now.

Councilmember Viagran asked if the School Voucher Program addressed children with disabilities and expressed concern that private schools could deny access. Basurto stated that she would research the information for the Councilmember.

Councilmember Castillo emphasized that in August of 2022, the City Council passed a Resolution to protect reproductive rights and would prioritize access to healthcare in the upcoming legislative agenda.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Executive Session was not held.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further discussion, the meeting was adjourned at 3:08 p.m.

Approved

**Ron Nirenberg
Mayor**

**Debbie Racca-Sittre
City Clerk**