

City of San Antonio



Minutes

Governance Committee

Wednesday, March 16, 2022

10:00 AM

City Hall Complex

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

Members Absent: None

Attendees: Debbie Racca-Sittre *Attendee*

Approval of Minutes

1. Approval of minutes from the City Council Governance Committee meeting on February 16, 2022.

Councilmember Courage moved to Approve. Councilmember Rocha Garcia seconded the motion. The motion carried by the following vote:

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

Briefing and Possible Action on

2. Briefing and possible action on a Council Consideration Request by Councilmember Manny Pelaez (District 8) to designate the circular area in front of City Hall to Inclusion Plaza. [Nicholas Dominguez, Interim Director, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion]

Councilmember Pelaez moved to Approve. Councilmember Cabello Havrda seconded the motion. The motion carried by the following vote:

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

Nicholas Dominguez, Interim Director of the Department of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion presented the history of the area, and recommendation.

Councilmember Pelaez moved to forward the recommendation to full City Council and Councilmember Cabello Havrda seconded the motion.

Councilmember Courage asked if the address of City Hall would change noting it was currently 100 Military Plaza. Chief of Staff to the City Manager John Peterek confirmed that the address would not change.

Councilmember Cabello Havrda requested a briefing on the history of the accessibility of City Hall which was described by Peterek.

Councilmember Rocha Garcia asked about the history with the Canary Island families.

Mayor Nirenberg expressed his support for the designation of the front of City Hall as Inclusion Plaza.

3. Briefing and possible action on a Council Consideration Request by Councilmembers Jalen McKee-Rodriguez (District 2) and Ana Sandoval (District 7) regarding the creation of a Food Access Master Plan. [Erik Walsh, City Manager; Claude A. Jacob, Director, Health]

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

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

Claude A. Jacob, Director of Metro Health provided background on programs to expand the development of healthy food retail, local food gardens including use of city-owned vacant lots for community gardens, and outreach efforts. Jacob provided a definition of food insecurity and stated that food insecurity was a priority for the City. Jacob proposed creation of a Food Insecurity Workgroup, collaboration with several departments and the community.

Councilmember McKee-Rodriguez, sponsor of the Council Consideration Request (CCR), addressed the Committee by describing the extensive community need for food security, and recommended the Food Access Master Plan include Citywide metrics, goals, timelines. Councilmember Cabello Havrda recommended coordination with the City Council offices and moved to forward the discussion to the Community Health, Environment and Culture Committee.

Councilmember Pelaez suggested that developers could include fruit trees in front yards and mentioned that some HOA's prohibit fruit trees.

Councilmember Courage recommended partnership with the San Antonio Food Bank as food access was a public health and safety issue.

Councilmember Rocha Garcia recommended that the students in local School Districts should be involved in the plan and its implementation, particularly with community gardens. Councilmember Rocha Garcia asked for clarification that the Plan was for the City of San Antonio, not the full service area of the SA Food Bank.

Mayor Nirenberg asked for clarification on the involvement of the SAFB and noted that child poverty issues were a part of the discussion and Plan metrics should be clear and based in equity with a goal that no one in San Antonio had to live with food insecurity. Jacob said that SAFB would be represented on the Food Insecurity Workgroup.

4. Briefing and possible action on Council Consideration Request by Councilmember Jalen McKee-Rodriguez, District 2, and Councilmember Melissa Cabello Havrda, District 6, on Animal Care Services Master Plan. [David McCary, Assistant City Manager; Shannon Sims, Director, Animal Care Services]

Councilmember Cabello Havrda moved to Approve. Councilmember Courage seconded the motion. The motion carried by the following vote:

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

Shannon Sims, Director of Animal Care Services (ACS) Department provided history of past strategic planning efforts beginning in 2004 and progress made to date related to the goals of: increasing live releases, enforcement, decreasing the stray population, and education/outreach for the public. Sims explained that a proposal for a new Strategic Plan began in the Fall of 2021. Sims provided a schedule and outline of the planning process for the next year.

Councilmember Cabello-Havrda, sponsor of the CCR recommended including animal foster care groups in the discussion and moved to forward the CCR to the Public Safety Committee. Councilmember Courage seconded the motion.

Councilmember McKee-Rodriguez, sponsor of the Council Consideration Request, addressed the Committee by describing the extensive community need, and recommended the Animal Care Strategic Plan include measurable goals with clear timelines to include funding in the ACS Budget. Councilmember McKee-Rodriguez supported City Manager Erik Walsh spoke regarding the

success of the plan that was adopted in 2012 and welcomed a refresh of the goals and objectives that were previously set and recommended a focus on live release, rescue, enforcement, and education.

Councilmember Rocha Garcia asked how this plan would be different from previous plans. Sims explained that the previous efforts focused on rabies vaccinations but that did not do much for animal health as there were more prevalent diseases. Sims also recommended analysis of the spay/neuter need and develop greater capacity. Sims said that the new Animal Hospital could assist and there would be a focus on best practices. Councilmember Rocha Garcia suggested a review of the Animal Defense League's programs as well as bereavement programs for pet owners that lost their animal as pets were like family members. David McCary, Assistant City Manager noted that the Animal Hospital was a part of the collective strategy that was a vision of ACS Department and its Advisory Committee.

Councilmember Courage asked about partnerships and noted that some of the organizations did not feel heard. Sims listed a few major agencies and noted there were more than 300 partner agencies and confirmed that all agencies would be invited to participate in the strategic planning effort. Councilmember Courage recommended increased education of the public and recommended licensing of pets. Sims indicated that microchipping was considered a best practice rather than licensing and all animals that came through the ACS programs were being microchipped.

Adjournment

There being no further discussion, meeting was adjourned at 11:16 AM.

ATTEST:

Ron Nirenberg, Mayor

Debbie Racca-Sittre
Interim City Clerk