

State of Texas
County of Bexar
City of San Antonio



Public Comment

No in-person access to this meeting

Wednesday, September 15, 2021

5:00 PM

Videoconference

ROLL CALL

The City Council convened in a Regular Meeting. Interim City Clerk Debbie Racca-Sittre took the Roll Call noting a quorum with the following Councilmembers present:

PRESENT: 11 - Mayor Nirenberg, Bravo, McKee Rodriguez, Viagran, Rocha Garcia, Castillo, Cabello Havrda, Sandoval, Pelaez, Courage, and Perry

Public Comment

1. Public Comment is your opportunity to address your City of San Antonio elected officials directly about issues that are important to you and your community. To sign-up to speak, please go to www.sanantonio.gov/agenda and click on the eComment link for instructions. Members of the public are given up to three minutes to speak, and groups are given up to nine minutes.

Public comments have been submitted through the eComment System and will be attached to the minutes.

Ananda Thomas stated that she was upset that the City was still increasing the Police Budget and supported that \$10,000 be provided for childcare for parents on the boards and commissions, additional funding for housing services, and after school programs. She added that she knew the City could use ARPA funding for those items but noted that the City had a chance to do something with this Budget now.

Steve Huerta stated he was neutral on the Budget. He stated that he was a former supervisor in Stand Up program and that the city needed to continue programs such as Ka-hoots. He stated that the City needed to use a proven method for the community to work with the Police that helped increase the capacity for the community to have better safety outcomes without Police.

Sophia Sepulveda stated that over policing was not a priority of the community, and that housing was a higher priority, and the City should dedicate \$50 million to housing. She noted that low income families lacked safe homes. She added that \$2 million should not come from services budgets but should come from the Police budget. She also stated that the City should hire a Civil Rights Coordinator and strengthen the NDO and that formerly incarcerated persons need another chance.

Valerie Reiffert stated that on Saturday, August 28, 2021 there was a March on SA event commemorating the Martin Luther King, Jr March. She stated that residents wanted full access to the polls and that the City should create a general election voting day as a City holiday. Refusal to take from the police dept budget does not address the desires of the community or the root causes of crime.

Rick Trevino stated that \$50 million in housing assistance was a good investment and that he as a teacher making \$50,000 at times needed assistance. He added that \$3.1 billion was a giant budget and should help individuals who were facing evictions. Mr. Trevino said that the City needed to be bolder and not produce problematic outcomes.

Marco Acuna stated that the Budget still included too much money for Police and that the police should not be involved in mental health calls. He stated that many individuals were having a difficult time finding housing and staying in their homes and argued that over policing did not reduce crime and that the community did not want Police response for every call. He stated that the SA SpeakUp survey ranked housing and public health above Policing and that housing should be considered a public health issue. He reiterated that the \$2 million Budget shortfall should come from the Police Budget.

Justin Martinez noted that Texas had evolved into supporting policies that made residents feel less safe. He stated that people were being kept from living their best lives because policy makers lacked the courage to be creative in policy making. He added that as a country, hundreds of millions of dollars were being spent on policing and incarceration and should rather expand access to housing, jobs, and health care in order to provide the answer to societal ills.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further discussion, Mayor Nirenberg recessed the meeting at 5:27 PM.

APPROVED

Ron Nirenberg
Mayor

Attest:

Debbie Racca-Sittre
Interim City Clerk

DRAFT