

City of San Antonio



Minutes

Governance Committee

2021 – 2023 Council Members

Mayor Ron Nirenberg

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

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

Wednesday, August 17, 2022

10:00 AM

City Council Chambers

The Governance Committee convened a regular meeting in the Norma S. Rodriguez Council Chamber in the Municipal Plaza Building beginning at 10:13 AM. 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*
John Courage, *Member*

Members Absent: None

Approval of Minutes

1. Governance Committee meeting on June 15, 2022

Councilmember Rocha Garcia moved to Approve the minutes of the Governance Committee meeting of June 15, 2022. Councilmember Courage seconded the motion. The motion carried by the following vote:

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

Briefing and Possible Action on

2. Council Consideration Request by Councilmembers Ana Sandoval (District 7) and Adriana

Rocha Garcia (District 4) regarding Task Force on Heat Illness Prevention for Construction Workers. [Roderick Sanchez, Assistant City Manager; Michael Shannon, Director, Development Services]

Assistant City Manager Roderick Sanchez introduced the Item and provided a staff recommendation that a Task Force be created.

Councilmember Sandoval provided background on the Council Consideration Request (CCR) as well as context related to the recent high temperatures and the number of heat related illnesses reported by the local construction industry. Councilmember Sandoval noted support from the Associated General Contractors and American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL-CIO). She provided examples of other peer cities' programs and noted that Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) does not already regulate this issue at a sufficient level and Federal legislation took too long to go through the process.

Councilmember Rocha Garcia commented that the Task Force was a good start for San Antonio to show leadership not only in our community but for the nation. Although this program was specific to construction, Councilmember Rocha Garcia suggested that the Task Force findings could be expanded to other industries as many low wage workers and workers of color were disproportionately represented in jobs where they were exposed to heat. Councilmember Rocha Garcia advocated for a city-wide educational and outreach campaign to promote awareness and to empower workers.

Councilmember Courage asked representatives of the AFL-CIO and the Associated General Contractors of America (AGC) if there were rest breaks built into collective bargaining agreements and contracts. Both representatives stated that this was a standard already included in contracts. Councilmember Courage commented that there should be consistency between large and small companies' concern for worker's health.

Councilmember Pelaez asked if the City of San Antonio regulated private owners. First Assistant City Attorney Liz Provencio replied that the City regulated its own contracts but did not have a widespread enforcement authority. Councilmember Pelaez clarified that an Ordinance would be the first of its kind in San Antonio and he questioned the City's authority to enforce such a law.

Councilmember Pelaez supported an education campaign so workers could be encouraged to advocate for themselves.

Councilmember Cabello Havrda expressed concerns about the City's ability to enforce an Ordinance but supported an educational campaign. She stated that she wanted to see a meaningful and impactful action for the workers.

Mayor Nirenberg noted a letter from Councilmember Castillo related to the Item and asked that it be included in the record (Exhibit 1).

City Manager Erik Walsh noted that the City of Austin and Dallas did not enforce their

ordinances and wanted to ensure clarity on the direction that was to be provided to the CHECC.

Councilmember Rocha Garcia supported referral to PCDC and CHECC.

Councilmember Courage expressed concern that the Item went through both committees and suggested referral to CHECC with their recommendation to PCDC for review and additional input.

Mayor Nirenberg supported the Item going to CHECC as a health issue but asked how OSHA complaints were currently handled. Provencio stated that all violations were handled directly between the employer and OSHA but if it was a City contract, it could be considered a contract violation and the City could assist with coordination. Mayor Nirenberg asked how the Task Force would be formed. Assistant City Manager Sanchez stated that the Development Services Department would lead the effort.

Councilmember Pelaez made an amendment to the motion to refer the Item to the Planning and Community Development Committee (PCDC). Councilmember Cabello Havrda seconded the motion. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: Rocha Garcia, Cabello Havrda, Pelaez

No: Nirenberg, Courage

3. Council Consideration Request by Councilmembers Teri Castillo (District 5) regarding the Creation of the San Antonio Volunteer Exemption for Seniors Program.
[Ben Gorzell, Chief Financial Officer; Troy Elliott, Director, Finance]

Deputy Chief Financial Officer Troy Elliott provided information on the proposed San Antonio Volunteer Exemptions for Seniors (SAVES) Pilot Program including program provisions and city requirements and provided an example of how the program could impact participants. Elliott recommended the framework for a pilot be designed in FY 2023 for implementation in FY 2024 to allow sufficient time for planning and development.

Councilmember Castillo stated that the SAVES Program would benefit seniors by helping them with their taxes and also providing them opportunities to socialize and contribute to the community. Councilmember Castillo provided a written statement that was entered into the record. (Exhibit 2)

Councilmembers Pelaez and Courage offered their support of the Item and thanked Councilmember Castillo for her work spearheading the initiative.

Councilmember Rocha Garcia spoke in support of the Item and recommended that a substitute for homebound seniors could help volunteer in the place of the homebound seniors and suggested pairing the seniors with college students for a multi-generational program.

Councilmember Cabello Havrda spoke in support of the Item but clarified that this was not forcing seniors to work because the program was voluntary and asked for a count of the

number of senior volunteers the City currently had. Elliott stated that staff would collect and provide the numbers during the Pilot Program.

Councilmember Courage called the question.

Mayor Nirenberg asked if there was a limit on how much property taxes could be forgiven through the volunteer time. Elliott responded that this was something that would be determined through the Pilot Program.

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

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

Adjournment

There being no further discussion, Mayor Nirenberg adjourned the meeting at 11:09 AM.

Approved

Ron Nirenberg, Mayor

Debbie Racca-Sittre
City Clerk