

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CITY OF JERSEY VILLAGE 2024 BOND
COMMITTEE**

April 15, 2024, at 6:30 p.m.

THE CITY OF JERSEY VILLAGE 2024 BOND COMMITTEE MET ON APRIL 15, 2024, AT 6:30 P.M. IN THE CIVIC CENTER MUNICIPAL CENTER MEETING ROOM AT 16327 LAKEVIEW DRIVE, JERSEY VILLAGE, TEXAS 77040.

A. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m. and the roll of appointed officers was taken.

Committee members present were:

Beverly Peterson

Curtis Haverty

Edward Lock

Jennifer Withner

Krista N. Guerrero

Sean Willis

Susan Edwards

Staff in attendance: Austin Bless, City Manager; Robert Basford, Assistant City Manager; and Maria Thorne, Administrative Assistant.

- B. CITIZENS' COMMENTS** - Any person who desires to address the 2024 Bond Committee regarding an item on the agenda will be heard at this time. In compliance with the Texas Open Meetings Act, unless the subject matter of the comment is on the agenda, the City staff and Committee members are not allowed to discuss the subject. Each person is limited to five (5) minutes for comments to the Bond Committee

Jim Fields, 16412 Saint Helier, Jersey Village, Texas (713) 206-1184 – Mr. Fields had questions concerning the mission of the committee. He was informed that the mission was to be defined at this initial meeting. Mr. Fields had other concerns to which he explained to the Committee.

- C. Discuss and take appropriate action on potential bond projects.** *Robert Basford, Assistant City Manager*

Robert Basford, Assistant City Manager, introduced the item.

The Committee engaged in discussion about various propositions to be included in the bond. In connection with same, Mr. Basford explained that the goal of the Committee is to discuss projects and gather action items for future meetings.

With this in mind, the Committee engaged in open discussion concerning the goals of the Committee. Some members felt that the focus/priority of the Committee should be the City's pool, outlining the benefits of neighborhood pools.

It was pointed out that there is a sense of Community pride concerning the pool. The budget was discussed. Some felt that City money is spent on City Parks and not so much on the City Pool. It was the sentiment that we do not need more parks, rather we need to find a solution for the pool. In discussing the process of bonding for project, it was explained that the bond could be looked at like a mortgage. There was concern about things the City truly needs but are not so evident. Accordingly, the City Manager was asked to list the needs that are known at this time.

The Committee discussed the fact that the cost for materials has increased. A most recent example of these increased costs was experienced with the Seattle Construction Project with bids coming in at 3 times greater than past bids. This increase in costs supports the need to fund any of the projects the Committee discusses with bonds.

The Committee discussed the various projects that the City might need to fund via bonds. These included a new pool, a new City Hall, and infrastructure for streets and roads. Staff explained that bonds were passed for Street Projects and Water and Sewer Projects during the past November 2023 Election. Accordingly, bonding for streets and roads will not be needed this year. The biggest focus is the City's Pool and Parks.

The bonds approved during the November 2023 Election were discussed. Staff explained that \$18,045 million was passed for streets, roads, and bridge projects. There was also \$15,855 passed for water, sewer, and drainage projects.

Some members of the Committee felt that the pool is the most important item that needs to be addressed. The pool is used by the swim team, and it draws people into the community. However, streets, roads, and bridges are important too. Accordingly some members agreed that the community needs a pool.

With a new pool in mind, the Committee had questions about having a metered pool and a pool with wider lanes. It was also mentioned that there is a new trend that neighborhood pools have eight (8) lanes. Discussion concerning the pool continued, to include fees for the pool. It was pointed out that fees in other areas are going up some 125% for the coming summer.

Some members felt that it was important to have a metered pool. Others felt it was more important to first develop the Committee's mission before discussing pool types, and others felt it was necessary to have the City's Finance Director come and address the Committee concerning the history of previous bonds and the City's ability to pay the bonds. It is important to know how much the City is able to pay for bond debt. Accordingly, the Committee needs to be educated on the numbers so that good decisions can be made regarding the issuance of bonds for projects.

In connection with same, the Committee had the following questions:

- What can the City afford right now?
- How will bonding for projects affect the City?
- Where is the money going to come from?

Some felt that in making these bonding decisions, it is important to understand the various areas of expertise on the Committee. In other words, what knowledge is available.

City Manager Bless explained that any bonds issued for projects would be backed by property taxes. As such, he gave an example that \$10 million in bonds would be about 5 cents.

It was mentioned that initially, \$19 million was proposed for the pool. In connection with this amount, some members felt that the initial plans for the pool were too extravagant and it turned some people off. With this in mind, it was felt that the Committee should consider gathering input from the residents. It was pointed out that the long-term benefit of a pool will encourage support. Also, it will be important to separate parks from pools when going out for bonds. Nonetheless, more feedback will be needed from residents.

The initial survey that was conducted for the November 2023 bond election was discussed. Some felt that the results of the survey were confusing, almost indicating that residents wanted a water park. It was also noted that very few people completed it.

One member pointed out that various websites were visited to see what people liked about Jersey Village. These websites described the City as quiet, safe clean, neighborly, and a nice place to live. Some members felt that City Parks should be connected by walking trails, to include the dog park.

The Committee discussed how the bonds would be structured. Some members felt that the Committee should be focusing on getting the history, goals, and concepts, first before focusing on the structure of the bonds. Others felt that the focus should be on developing a mission statement for the next couple of meetings. Perhaps the mission statement could include the following areas:

- City Pool
- Parks
- City Finances
- Serving citizens
- Connecting and Communicating

Some members wanted to know how much money the City has for projects. It is important to know the specifics of what bonding will look like, how much debt, how it will look in terms of taxes. The last pool bond had 59% opposition.

Assistant City Manager Basford gave the history of last year. During the month of May 2023, the pool was having structural issues. To address same, Council directed Staff to come up with three pool concepts valued at \$7 million, \$9 million, and \$11 million dollar. Those plans were presented to residents for feedback. At the time that this was going on, there were other CIP projects for parks being discussed. With the pool requiring infrastructure repairs and the talk of other park projects, in the end, the two concepts were combined. It was felt to share the burden across the projects as opposed to doubling spending. Accordingly, the Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee (PRAC) came up with the concepts for the November bonds.

In reviewing the history, Mr. Basford pointed out that this Committee can start from scratch with planning for a future bond or they can look at what has already been done in this area.

The cost of elections was discussed. City Manager Bleess pointed out that each time the City runs an election the cost is approximately \$12,000.

The Committee discussed the current condition of the pool. It was pointed out that last year there was a major leak that needed to be repaired. This leak has not been repaired and the pool still loses water.

Earning the trust of the City was discussed, as well as differentiating needs from “bells and whistles.” It was felt that residents tend to be more on the conservative side. Gaining support for a pool bond will take effort. Perhaps going door to door or sending out letters to the community.

Assistant City Manager Basford stated that he believes that staff has enough information to gather deliverables for the next meeting. The date and time for the next meeting was discussed.

D. ADJOURN

There being no further business on the agenda, a motion was made to adjourn the meeting by Beverly Peterson and was second by Krista Guerrero. The meeting was adjourned at 7:35 p.m.