

MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL SESSION MEETING OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF JERSEY VILLAGE, TEXAS, HELD ON SEPTEMBER 11, 2017 AT 7:00 P.M. IN THE CIVIC CENTER, 16327 LAKEVIEW, JERSEY VILLAGE, TEXAS.

A. CALL TO ORDER AND ANNOUNCE A QUORUM IS PRESENT

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Ray at 7:00 p.m. with the following present:

Mayor, Justin Ray

City Manager, Austin Bleess

Council Member, Andrew Mitcham

City Secretary, Lorri Coody

Council Member, Greg Holden

Council Member, Bobby Warren

Council Member, Sheri Sheppard

Council Member, Gary Wubbenhorst

Staff in attendance: Eric Foerster, Chief of Police; and Bob Blevins, IT Director.

B. SPECIAL SESSION

1. Receive a presentation on FEMA Home Elevation and Buyout Grants.

Austin Bleess, City Manager, gave a presentation on FEMA Home Elevation and Buyout Grants that included the following topics:

- How it Works
- Repetitive Loss Explanation
- Severe Repetitive Loss Explanation
- Elevations
- Buyouts
- Eligibility
- Benefit Cost Analysis
- Eligible Costs
- Ineligible Costs
- Timeline
- Buyouts or Elevations in Jersey Village
- Staff Recommendations
- Staff Analysis
- Other Things to Note
- Future Years

In completing the presentation, Mayor Ray called the next item on the agenda as follows:

2. Conduct a question and answer session with those home owners in Jersey Village who are candidates for the FEMA Home Elevation and Buyout Grants.

After calling the item, Mayor Ray and the Councilmembers conducted a question and answer session as follows:

KAREN YAKLIN, 15606 JERSEY DRIVE

Question: Do eligible costs include relocation expenses?

Answer: Yes

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Question: What is the buyout value based upon?

Answer: Market appraisal.

JONICA PERRY, 7803 ZILONIS COURT

Question: What will be done with widening the bayou?

Answer: The widening of the bayou is under the control of the Harris County Flood Control District. Currently that project is awaiting funding.

LYNN FARLEY, 7823 ZILONIS COURT

Question: When will her home be included in the list?

Answer: It will be considered during the second phase.

Question: How long does it take to elevate a home?

Answer: The estimate is three to five months.

Question: What happens if the home collapses during the elevation process?

Answer: The value of the home will be established at the fair market value prior to the elevation process.

CARL TORREGROSSA, 7810 HAMILTON CIRCLE

Question: What is the lowest value of flood insurance coverage to qualify for the program?

Answer: The program requires that the home owner have flood insurance coverage. The lowest value for coverage is not known; however, it is recommended that the coverage be enough to cover the structure and its contents.

KATIE FRITSCH, 15906 JERSEY DRIVE

Question: What does it mean if she did not receive a survey from the City concerning the program?

Answer: Homes for the program were identified in the Dannenbaum Long Term Flood Recovery Study. The initial phase is to proceed with those homes that have received a survey. All other homes listed in the study will be considered in future phases of the program.

MARK MALOY, 7803 HAMILTON CIRCLE

Mr. Maloy voiced his concern about home elevations. He stated that elevating homes will not solve the problem of cars and garages continuing to flood. He believes that a better drainage system would better resolve the flooding issues.

TOMMY HELTON, 16006 ACAPULCO DRIVE

Question: If there is a block of 10 homes in one section, what happens to this land after the buyout?

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Answer: Under the buyout program, FEMA prefers that homes being bought out in a neighborhood be contiguous. They do not want a “checker board” approach to buyouts. When homes are bought out, the land can no longer be developed. It will remain open green space and the City must maintain this space.

Question: How were the 17 homes chosen for the program?

Answer: There were 76 homes identified in the Dannenbaum Long Term Flood Recovery Study. These home owners were mailed a survey to gather information concerning their desires. Of the 76 surveys mailed, 42 home owners responded. Of the 42 that responded, 17 homes were selected using the contiguous requirement coupled with the cost benefit analysis.

JOE HOWARD, 15905 JERSEY DRIVE

Question: What is the cost to elevate?

Answer: The cost will vary according to the square footage and the needed elevation height of the home.

Question: Will the elevation work be decided through competitive bids?

Answer: Yes

SIMON HUGHES, 15409 LAKEVIEW DRIVE

Question: What evaluation has been done when considering if homes should be buyouts or be elevated?

Answer: Both programs are voluntary. The City wants to avoid a “checker board” approach. In choosing homes/programs, the information provided in the home survey responses was heavily considered.

GARY GEX, 15902 JERSEY DRIVE

Question: Has the City looked at the eminent domain process as a solution?

Answer: Eminent domain will not aid the city in getting grant funding for the project.

GERILYN STAFFS, 15622 JERSEY DRIVE

Question: Is the program being discussed this evening the same or different from FEMA’s Severe Repetitive Loss Program?

Answer: The City is not aware of FEMA’s Severe Repetitive Loss Program, but will look into same.

MICHAEL BROWN, 16025 WALL STREET

Question: With so many severe repetitive loss homes, why would repetitive loss homes be included?

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Answer: Both the contiguous requirement and the cost benefit analysis requirement drive which homes are selected in order to give the City the best opportunity to receive grant funding.

GENE GANT, 15403 PHILIPPINE

Mr. Gant explained that his neighbor's home drains into his yard and causes flooding. He is concerned about the contiguous decision and wants City Council to acknowledge the human element. Council assured Mr. Gant that they are always aware of the human element; and while we are all neighbors and understand the flooding issues in Jersey Village, the Federal Government is removed and we must be competitive in the grant application process.

BOB DRAFTS, 15802 JERSEY DRIVE

Question: Is there a listing of the 17 homes selected?

Answer: Yes, there is a listing of the 17 homes, but due to privacy issues, the listing cannot be made available.

LAUREL CALKINS, 16001 WALL STREET

Question: Will the City be passed over in the grant process because we did not have as many homes flood during Harvey as did the City of Houston?

Answer: Since the timeline for submitting our application for grant funding is September 28, 2017, there is no concern of being passed over at this time.

BILL BEAZLEY, 15534 CONGO LANE

Question: The choice for this grant is between buyouts or elevations. The grant application is for \$2,791,000. If 17 homes are elevated, that comes to approximately \$150,000 per home. I thought elevations could be accomplished for \$90,000 to \$100,000. What is the difference?

Answer: There is no average cost for elevating a home. The cost to elevate is dependent upon the square footage of the home, the number of stories, and the elevation height required. Therefore, grant dollars are awarded for each specific home and the City is not allowed to use any excess for a different home.

KATHY RENEE YARBROUGH, 15602 LAKEVIEW DRIVE

Question: Has the City applied for FEMA grants in the past when Woodland Trails West flooded last year and when Jersey Village flooded during Allison?

Answer: Harris County Flood Control District took the lead on prior buyouts. The City has not applied for a FEMA grant.

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GERILYN STAGGS, 15622 JERSEY DRIVE

Question: Of the 17 homes included in the grant application, what is the breakdown of these homes in terms of Severe Repetitive Loss and Repetitive Loss?

Answer: 7 homes are Severe Repetitive Loss, 4 homes are Repetitive Loss, and 6 homes are neither.

Question: How will the home owners' portion for the elevations be paid?

Answer: There is an item on this agenda for City Council to discuss how the match of approximately \$342,000 will be paid.

JUDY BRUNER, 15310 PHILIPPINE

Ms. Bruner shared information about buyouts after Alicia. She told Council that five homes were bought out by FEMA and one home was purchased by an individual. She then asked:

Question: Will the City lose tax revenue as a result of the buyouts?

Answer: Buyouts will affect the assessed value, but the result will be negligible.

TOMMY HELTON, 16006 ACAPULCO DRIVE

Question: Has the City considered the amount of lost revenues?

Answer: Buyouts will affect the assessed value, but the result will be negligible.

MICHAEL BROWN, 16025 WALL STREET

Question: Is the requirement to be contiguous a FEMA requirement or a City of Jersey Village requirement?

Answer: It is a FEMA requirement.

SIMON HUGHES, 15409 LAKEVIEW DRIVE

Question: The remaining homes in Woodlands West refused the buyouts. With this in mind, can we look at having a private person buy the homes and build new?

Answer: Private purchase of land is always an option.

With no more questions from the public, Mayor Ray called the next item on the agenda as follows:

3. Discuss and take appropriate action concerning the next steps in pursuing the FEMA Home Elevation and Buyout Grants.

Austin Bless, City Manager, introduced the item by stating Staffs' recommendation in pursuing the FEMA Home Elevation and Buyout Grants as follows:

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- Staff recommends that the Council authorize a grant application to apply for elevations of homes that responded to the questionnaire located on Jersey Drive from Lakeview west to Elwood, Elwood Drive, Acapulco Drive, Juneau Lane and St. Helier Street.
- This would be 17 homes.
- 7 homes are Severe Repetitive Loss.
- 4 homes are Repetitive Loss.
- 6 homes are neither.
- This would be a grant application of an estimated \$2,791,000.
- It would require a match of approximately \$342,000.

Mayor Ray gave an overview of the City's history concerning flooding and steps taken to mitigate same as follows:

- 1998 to 2000 – The City flooded several times.
- 2001 to 2002 – Harris County Flood Control (HCFCD) made several improvements that have helped to mitigate flooding in Jersey Village.
- 2016 – Tax Day Flood – 230 homes flooded. It has been estimated that without the HCFCD improvements made in 2001 and 2002, 366 homes would have flooded during the Tax Day Floods.
- 2016-2017 – The City hired Dannenbaum Consultants to conduct a Long Term Flood Recovery Study to determine what can be expected with a 100 year flood event. The Study resulted in the following recommendations:
 1. Build a berm around the Jersey Meadow Golf Course;
 2. Improve drainage;
 3. Deepen and widen the bayou; and
 4. Elevate/buyout flood risk homes identified in the study.
- 2017 – The City sent a survey to 76 homes to determine the owner's desire for elevation or buyout.

The item on tonight's agenda is to discuss buyout/elevations as part of the plan to mitigate flooding in Jersey Village.

Council engaged in discussion about the questions had this evening and the communications that were had with residents prior to tonight's meeting in order to gather information for the grant application. Council wondered if the City should contact those owners that did not respond to the survey in order that their information is collected which will aid in making a contiguous decision for buyouts or elevations. City Manager Bless stated that contacting those who did not respond may be difficult for this grant application submittal, but indicated that contact would be made for future phases.

Council discussed home elevations. It seemed that the home elevation program was the best remedy for the homes being considered for this grant application as these homes are located on large lots and having vacant lots in this area would not be appealing. It was

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mentioned that the program is voluntary and the advantage of home elevations outweighs that of home buyouts since elevations can help the City's image, and help the owner and the city via tax revenues.

There was concern about getting owners on board one way or the other. It will be important to understand each home owner's predicament. Additionally, Council discussed that the survey is not definitive in that only 55% responded. It was also noted that the City will need to submit a grant application that provides the best opportunity for success and receipt of grant dollars.

Council discussed a buyout plan. It was noted that in order to proceed with a buyout plan, additional information and analysis of same is needed. Accordingly, for the purposes of this grant process, a home elevation program seems to be the way to proceed.

Council agreed that the plan for moving forward is to establish an plan where the City will do all that it can to help home owners. The major goal is to protect homes from future flooding. An elevation program provides this protection and is cost effective.

The application process was discussed. The application is due on September 28 and will involve 17 homes. The City will learn during the grant application process on how to approach future phases.

Council discussed buyouts vs. elevations in terms of being competitive. City Manager Bless explained that elevations make our application more competitive; however, we need to look at the cost for both.

Next, Council discussed the process and the grant match of \$390,000. Most were in favor of the City covering these costs for the home owners. City Manager Bless added that if the City commits to the match, it will help us to be more competitive. It was the consensus of Council that the City should pay the \$390,000 local share match.

Ineligible costs were discussed in terms of how these costs will affect the home owners. Also, Council discussed future activities for those home owners not included in the September 28 application. Some felt it would be worth checking into the possibility of the City partnering with a private developer and the home owners.

With no further discussion on the matter, Council Member Wubbenhorst moved to direct Staff to pursue a FEMA grant application for home elevations. Council Member Mitcham seconded the motion. The vote follows:

Ayes: Council Members Mitcham, Holden, Warren, Sheppard, and Wubbenhorst

Nays: None

The motion carried.

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Council Member Mitcham moved that the City cover 100 percent of the local match requirement for the FEMA application not to exceed \$400,000. Council Member Wubbenhorst seconded the motion. The vote follows:

Ayes: Council Members Mitcham, Holden, Warren, Sheppard, and Wubbenhorst

Nays: None

The motion carried.

D. ADJOURN

There being no further business on the Agenda the meeting was adjourned at 8:58 p.m.

Lorri Coody, City Secretary