

MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING
HELOTES CITY COUNCIL
July 27, 2023

The City of Helotes City Council met for a regular meeting on Thursday, July 27, 2023, at 7:00 p.m. in the City Hall Council Chamber, 12951 Bandera Road, Helotes, Texas. This was an open meeting, subject to the open meeting laws of the State of Texas.

Present: Rich Whitehead, Mayor
Craig Sanders
Jen Sones
Dave Cato
Cynthia Massey
Matthew Merchant

Staff Present: Marian Mendoza, City Administrator
Celina Perez, City Secretary

1. Call to Order.

Mayor Whitehead called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Dale Whitehead (Mayor Whitehead's father) led the invocation. Mayor Whitehead led the pledges to the U.S. flag and to the Texas flag.

OPEN SESSION:

2. Citizens to be Heard. *The speakers are grouped by subject matter.*

Karl Wanke, Jr. and Karl Wanke spoke in support of the proposed mixed-use project, the Trailhead at Helotes Planned Unit Development (Agenda Item No.7 Presentation). The speakers have worked with the developer for about a year, spoke on their willingness to cooperate with the community, and believe this mixed-use development will benefit Helotes.

Sabrina McGowan, Patrick McGowan, Sherry Schwegman, Mike Krisak, Rick Acuna, Charles Roberts, Richard Hawk, Debbie Hirst, Julie Salinas, Shawna Misiong, and Mike Misiong spoke against the proposed mixed-use project, the Trailhead at Helotes Planned Unit Development (Agenda Item No.7 Presentation). Reasons for opposition include concerns on high residential density (366 units), residential building height (three-story buildings in the center of the property at a height of 45 feet), limited retail area, increased traffic, additional strain on first responder personnel, and overall, the development does not serve the Helotes community.

CONSENT AGENDA: All items marked with an asterisk (*) on the consent agenda were voted on by one motion. Motion was made by Council Member Cato, second by Council Member Merchant to approve item 3 on the consent agenda. Motion to approve carried unanimously.

3.* Approval of the minutes of the Regular Meeting dated July 13, 2023. (Staff)

MAYOR'S REPORT:

4. Updates on the following:

- **Bid for public works storage building; and**
- **Police department news and community safety information.**

Mayor Whitehead announced the City is accepting bids for a new metal storage facility for Public Works (project approved by the City Council on March 23, 2023). The current storage building (former fire station) is old, outgrown by Public Works, and will be torn down. Information on this Competitive Sealed Bid is on the City website. Lastly, Mayor Whitehead reported that six additional police officers have been hired (two positions funded by the American Rescue Plan Act and four by the general fund, as prioritized through the voter approved 8.25% sales tax increase). With the new hires, higher policing in the community has been noticed, and is needed to keep Helotes safe.

ITEMS FOR INDIVIDUAL CONSIDERATION:

- 5. Discussion of and action on a Resolution of the City Council of the City of Helotes, Texas authorizing the execution of a Contingent Fee Contract between the City of Helotes and Linebarger, Goggan, Blair, & Sampson, L.L.P. for the collection of unpaid fines, fees and court costs as provided in Texas Code of Criminal Procedure Art. 103.0031; approving Extension No. 2 for a period of five (5) years beginning on September 1, 2023, and expiring on August 31, 2028; and authorizing the Mayor to execute said extension. (Staff)**

Motion was made by Council Member Sanders, second by Council Member Sones, to discuss and act on this item as written.

Motion to approve the item as written carried unanimously.

- 6. Discussion of and action on a Resolution of the City Council of the City of Helotes, Texas extending an Animal Care Services Agreement between the City of Helotes and De Zavala – Shavano Veterinary Clinic for animal control, shelter and adoption services; approving Extension No. 2 for the last successive one (1) year period beginning on September 1, 2023, and expiring on August 31, 2024, pursuant to Resolution No. 21-016, Exhibit A, Section II *Term*; and authorizing the Mayor to execute said extension. (Staff)**

Motion was made by Council Member Massey, second by Council Member Merchant, to discuss and act on this item as written.

Council Member Massey noted the clinic's schedule of fees increased, just as the year before. Dustin Blaschke, Animal Control, reported services rendered by the clinic are top notch. He added that Staff looked at other clinics in the past, and De Zavala – Shavano was, and still is, the best option to provide animal care services needed by the City.

Motion to approve the item as written carried unanimously.

PRESENTATION:

7. Proposed Development Presentation by MNO Partners on The Trailhead at Helotes, a mixed-use project pursuant to Municipal Code of Ordinances Chapter 98 Zoning, Article VI Planned Unit Development located on Bandera Road (S.H. 16) on land identified as BCAD Property ID Nos. 242100, 1097255, and 242130. (Developer)

Before calling the presenters, Mayor Whitehead reminded everyone this was a presentation item, not an action item. This presentation is part of the development process. It is also an opportunity for the developer to receive feedback/questions and determine if they will submit an official application. Mayor Whitehead noted that the City Council can not dictate to the developer what is submitted in the official application. After an official application submittal, the City Council can take action through a vote (the Mayor does not vote).

Presenting this item was David Morin, MNO Partners (developer), and Ashley Farrimond, Killen, Griffin, Farrimond, PLLC (land use attorney).

David kicked off the presentation by speaking about the current B-3 zoning and the allowable development uses by right. In his opinion, the existing B-3 zoning has, in some cases, allowed less than desirable uses in Helotes, and a PUD development is a better alternative. The Trailhead at Helotes, a proposed Planned Unit Development (PUD), will have park-like retail fronting Bandera Road (S.H. 16) and luxury residential rental apartments behind the retail. The park-like retail concept sits on 5 acres and is meant to compliment Old Town Helotes. The retail concept includes a perimeter walking trail, a dog park, pickle ball courts, a food truck park, and a nice sit-down restaurant like a steak and seafood place. The residential concept sits on about 17 acres and has 366 apartments. The two story buildings (35' height) are located at the back of the property and the three story buildings (45' height) are located in the center, more towards the retail. The apartments will have a hill-country aesthetic design with limestone. A preserved 40-foot wide tree buffer will surround the project, plus an additional 20-foot wide tree buffer between the retail/residential area.

Ashley spoke briefly on the Old Town Helotes Master Plan. While the Trailhead at Helotes PUD is not in the Old Town Helotes Special District, the project seeks to compliment the goals of the master plan by minimizing parking visibility and having walkways, park space, and enhanced tree preservation.

Mayor Whitehead opened up discussion. The City Council consensus was towards smart development with amenities that can service Helotes, not a second Old Town Helotes Special District, and not a "Pearl" like concept. Council Member Massey in particular stated the City Council approved Bandera Ranch, an actual mixed-use development at the corner of Bandera Road and Scenic Loop Road. This 31-acre PUD will have 220 high-end rental townhomes, none more than 2-stories, and a bona fide retail complex. Further down the road in the Bexar County jurisdiction, between Bridgeport Place and Triana Parkway, is the Ranch Creek Apartments, an upcoming 300 unit apartment complex. Although not in Helotes, it will affect the City. What's needed on the property at hand is a retail village - A development of small boutique stores, green space, and perhaps an anchor store like Trader Joes or Sprouts that benefits all of Helotes.

There being no further comments, Mayor Whitehead closed discussion.

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Adjourn.

With no more business to come before Council, Mayor Whitehead adjourned the meeting at 8:43 p.m.



Rich Whitehead, Mayor

ATTEST:



Celina Perez, City Secretary

