

Minutes  
Regular Council Meeting  
March 17, 2026

On this 17<sup>th</sup> day of March 2026, at 6p.m., the City Council of the City of Devine convened for a Regular Meeting, the same being open to the public, at the Dr. George S. Woods Community Center, 200 E. Hondo Avenue, Devine Texas 78016. Notice of said meeting having been prescribed in Chapter 551, Government Code, and Vernon's Texas Codes, Annotated, and the following members being present:

Alderman Ray Gonzales  
Alderman Jeff Miller  
Alderman Michael Hernandez  
Alderman Harold Lance Jr  
Alderman Adrian Valle  
Mayor Butch Cook

Thus, constituting a quorum.

Personnel Present: Michelle Martin, City Secretary, Pete Sanchez, Director of Public Works, Debra Dubose, Library Director, Bonnie Manning, Community Engagement, Juanita Romero, Director Permits & Code Enforcement, Cassandra Maldonado, Court Administrator, Stephanie Martinez, Utilities Supervisor, Lt. Chris Andrews, Police, Tom Cate, City Attorney.

Others Present: Nancy Saathoff, Martha Wall, Karl Goering, Armstrong, Vaughn & Assoc, Sabrina Guerra, Devine Area Health & Hospice, Anton Riecher, Devine News.

Mayor Butch Cook called the regular council meeting to order at 6pm.

The second order of business was invocation and the pledge of allegiance. Alderman Jeff Miller led the invocation. Council and attendees recited the Pledge of Allegiance and the Texas Pledge.

The third order of business was to consider and act upon appointment of a new alderman. This item has been tabled until Mr. Valle arrives at the meeting. Alderman Hernandez makes a motion to table this agenda item. Alderman Miller seconds the motion. Motion carried 4-0.

The fourth order of business was citizens to be heard. No one signed up to speak at this time.

The fifth order of business was public recognition. Devine Area Health & Hospice Resource was recognized for their generous donations to the library with programming and resources for the community.

The sixth order of business was Employee Recognition. The following employees were recognized for their years of service to the City of Devine:

- Officer Eliseo Perez celebrating 19 yrs of service.

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- Officer Robert Amaro celebrating 17 yrs of service.

Officer Kevin Lara was recognized for Heroic Acts. Officer Lara applied lifesaving skills in an emergency situation to a resident in need.

The seventh order of business was to approve the meeting minutes from February 17, 2026. Alderman Miller made a motion to accept the meeting minutes. Alderman Hernandez seconded the motion. Motion carried 4-0.

The eighth order of business was to review the presentation from FCCLA students for a recycling program for the City of Devine. The students reviewed concerns and needs for recycling in the community. They also discussed company services that may be available to provide recycling services. Mayor Cook said that city staff will reach out to our current vendor on potential services for recycling. There was no action taken by council at this time.

At this time mayor and council went back to agenda item#3- consider and act upon appointment of a new alderman:

- Mayor Cook provided background on why a new alderman was being appointed. This is due to Alderman District 4 Josh Ritchey's resignation due to moving out of the area.
- Adrian Valle previously submitted his name to be placed on the ballot for District 4.
- Mayor Cook is recommending that Adrian Valle be placed on council immediately ahead of the May appointed date.

Alderman Hernandez made a motion to appoint Adrian Valle as the new alderman for District 4. Alderman Gonzales seconded the motion. Motion carried 4-0.

The ninth order of business was to consider and act upon a budget allocation for the America's 250<sup>th</sup> Anniversary.

- Bonnie Manning, Community Engagement Specialist for City of Devine kicked off the discussion and shared the purpose of America's 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary.
- Bonnie also shared other events in Devine that are scheduled for America's 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary.
- Nancy Saathoff highlighted Flag Day Ceremony on June 13<sup>th</sup> at Briscoe Park. Donations from community members are being requested for this as well.
- A potential July 4<sup>th</sup> event was discussed as well.

Mayor and council asked questions on the budget needed along with building material for the flag pole. Alderman Miller stated that security may be an issue and asked how the flag would be secured. Martha Wall described the flag pole that is being donated and that it does have a lock with it too. It is being donated by someone who previously lived in Devine. Alderman Miller also stated that there are rules in place on how flag poles are to be displayed and cared for. An in-kind donation by Public Works was discussed as well for installation of the flag pole. Alderman Miller made a motion that council approve the June 13<sup>th</sup> Flag Day Celebration at Briscoe Park with Public Works taking care of the installation. Alderman Gonzales seconded the motion. Motion carried 5-0.

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The tenth order of business was to consider and act upon accepting the annual audited financial statement and opinion for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2025. City of Devine was given an audit of unmodified. Karl shared that this is one of the best opinions given on an audit and it does follow general accounting principles. Devine has a healthy general fund balance too. Karl discussed various financial statements and reviewed key financial activities. Alderman Lance asked Karl if he is stating that overall, the City of Devine is in good shape. Karl confirmed with yes. Alderman Miller made a motion to accept the annual audited financial statement and opinion for fiscal year ending in September 2025. Alderman Gonzales seconded the motion. Motion carried 5-0.

The eleventh order of business was to consider and act upon commercial sewer rates vs. residential rates.

- Stephanie Martinez Utility Supervisor presented to council rate comparisons of commercial sewer rates vs. residential sewer rates.
- Sewer rates for residential and commercial are the same except for winter averaging that gets applied on residential accounts only. It is based off of December-February usage.
- Commercial accounts do not get winter averaging. They get charged according to consumption only. The result is businesses are paying more for sewer than a resident is.
- High consumption households will pay more if winter averaging is removed.
- Alderman Miller stated that current residential rates are already high enough and it seems the winter averaging is there to protect the residential customer.
- Discussion on why businesses are being charged more for sewer.
- We need to determine the financial impact if an adjustment was made in regards to the sewer rates.

Council took no action on this item for lack of a motion. This item has been tabled for further discussion perhaps during budget season to review further.

The twelfth order of business was to consider and act upon a resolution for a \$5 million no match grant program from Texas Water Development Board (TWDB). City Administrator David Jordan pointed out that House Bill 500 was passed during the 89th Legislation Session. TWDB has been given \$1 billion for the water supply system for TWDB. City of Devine is in critical need of an additional water line into the city. City of Devine only has one 12-inch water line coming into the city. Approximately \$300,000 will be needed to begin, but funds are refundable if grant is received. Funds can possibly come out of the CD that has recently matured. City of Devine has a ready shovel project and we are given preference as well due to being a rural community. We have also reached out to local politicians for support. They have agreed to write letters on our behalf to help us get this grant too. Alderman Hernandez made a motion to adopt a resolution to apply for a \$5 million no match grant from the Texas Water Development Board. Alderman Valle seconded the motion. Motion carried 5-0.

The thirteenth order of business was to consider and act upon resolution for grant administration for a \$5 million no match grant program from Texas Water Development Board. Alderman Miller

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made a motion to adopt the resolution for grant administration for a \$5 million no match grant program from the Texas Water Development Board. Alderman Hernandez seconded the motion. Motion carried 5-0.

The fourteenth order of business was to consider and act upon procurement for engineering services for a \$5 million no match grant program from Texas Water Development Board. Alderman Miller made a motion to approve procurement for engineering services for a \$5 million no match grant program from Texas Water Development Board. Alderman Gonzales seconded the motion. Motion carried 5-0.

The fifteenth order of business was to consider and act upon the adoption of Public Utilities Authority for the Aquifer Storage Reserve to create an ordinance. City Administrator David Jordan described the benefit of being a part of the Public Utilities Authority with Medina County. It will establish us as an entity to allow us to apply for more grants. City Attorney Cate also provided the importance of being a part of the Public Utilities Authority. The mayor will temporarily represent the city on the board. There will be 9 board members. Alderman Miller made a motion to approve the adoption of the Public Utilities Authority for the Aquifer Storage Reserve and to create an ordinance and to also appoint Mayor Cook as a representative on the board. Alderman Hernandez seconded the motion. Motion carried 5-0.

The sixteenth order of business was to consider and act upon an ordinance for appointment to fill a vacant seat on council. Mayor Cook provided some background information on how previous council members have been appointed. We need an ordinance to establish a standard on how we appoint council members. Alderman Hernandez made a motion to adopt an ordinance for appointment to fill a vacant seat on city council. Alderman Miller seconded the motion. Motion carried 5-0.

The seventeenth order of business was to consider and act upon accepting the Certification of Unopposed Candidates. City Secretary Michelle Martin stated that elections are May 2<sup>nd</sup> and the City of Devine did not have any other candidates submit their names to run against Alderman Jeff Miller for District 3 and for candidate Adrian Valle for District 4 therefore these candidates are unopposed. Alderman Miller made a motion to accept the certification of unopposed candidates. Alderman Gonzales seconded the motion. Motion carried 5-0.

The eighteenth order of business was to consider and act upon ordering the cancellation of the election for District #1, District #3, and District #4. Alderman Hernandez made a motion for ordering the cancellation of the election for District #1, District #3, and District #4. Alderman Lance seconded the motion. Motion carried 5-0.

The nineteenth order of business was informational items:

Informational items

- Alderman Miller asked about the status of our partnership with the Nueces River Authority. City Administrator Jordan said that they are still working on getting more cities to join and coordination is still occurring.

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- Mayor Cook provided an update on the Four Corners Project and in working with the Garden Club. The irrigation system will be disconnected soon. Looking at something that will benefit the community with low watering with a drip system. It was becoming a burden for Public Works to maintain the Four Corners as well. Working on something attractive for the community. Allowing non profits to put signage to communicate community events.
- Storage Tank Project at Warhorse Stadium is 3-4 weeks out. It will refurbish our water system for years to come.
- City Administrator Jordan let Mayor and Council know that Sophia Benavides, Finance Director has resigned. Cassandra Maldonado who has experience as an Assistant Finance Director has stepped into the role for now while conducting her municipal court duties. Christine Green Chief Finance Director is still on the team assisting as well.
- Operation Get Lit is moving along and progress is being made.
- City Hall beautification project is also in progress. There has been a new awning installed at the front entrance. Power washing will be done to the sidewalks and walls too. Adding letters to City Hall as well to identify the building.
- City Administrator Jordan thanked the team for a successful audit and congratulated the new Alderman Valle.

The twentieth order of business was to adjourn. Alderman Miller made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Alderman Valle seconded the motion. Motion carried 5-0. Meeting ended at 8pm.

  
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City Secretary

  
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Mayor