

City Council Regular Meeting

Meeting Minutes

May 19, 2026, 6:00 PM

1. Call to Order & Establish of Quorum

The Mayor called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM at Trinidad City Hall, 100 Park Street, Trinidad, Texas 75163. Notice of possible quorum of the EDC and P&Z was acknowledged.

Present: Velma Womack, Marie Bannister, Chandra Sutton

A quorum was established.

2. Invocation

The Mayor led the invocation.

3. Pledge of Allegiance and Texas Pledge

The Pledge of Allegiance and Texas Pledge were recited.

4. Visitors/Citizens Inquiry

Several residents addressed the Council during the public comment period on items not listed on the agenda:

Jason Cox requested that the Council consider fully abolishing the fishing restriction ordinance (Ordinance 1667), citing the Texas constitutional right to fish without time restrictions. He suggested that the original ordinance was intended to address littering by non-residents and proposed that additional trash cans serviced regularly by Republic would better address the underlying concern.

Paul Kern asked the Council to formally recognize community member Dan Pass for his efforts in keeping the public informed about city matters, suggesting a key to the city or commemorative plaque.

Alex Estrada (remarks delivered by another speaker on his behalf) identified himself as a former city street department employee terminated on May 18, 2026. He stated for the record that he had never received a written reprimand or formal disciplinary notice, and that no formal job description or role change had been provided to him. The speaker delivering the remarks also raised concerns about the city's financial management, specifically noting that garbage rates had not yet been adjusted to reflect the vendor cost increase from March, and referenced the termination of another employee and the placement of Municipal Judge Shalena Bivens on administrative leave.

A fourth speaker raised concerns about TxDOT's plan to abandon FM 1667 (Eastman Road), noting that such action would eliminate the only escape route for residents living south of the railroad tracks. He reported receiving confirmation from TxDOT that the abandonment will not proceed until litigation concerning the cutoff road is resolved, which could take several more years. He urged the Council to engage with TxDOT and the county commissioner on the matter.

Beth spoke on the topic of employment law, noting that Texas is an at-will employment state with specific exceptions, and offered her opinion that there may have been violations of protected employee activities in recent terminations.

Dan Pass raised two items: first, a proposal to establish a citizen water committee, noting that Pat Jones, with 26 years of relevant experience, had volunteered to lead such a committee to complement the existing grant efforts; and second, a request that the city install a flagpole in front of City Hall in time for the Fourth of July, noting the significance of the upcoming 250th anniversary of American independence.

5. REPORTS FROM THE CITY DEPARTMENTS

Reports were received from the following departments: Police Department (Sergeant Robert McCumsey), Water Plant (Jeremy Crocker), Municipal Court (Judge Bivens),

EDC (Lisa Hebrank), P&Z (Jerry Bannister), Event Committee (Dusty Bannister), and CPA (Chris Turner).

6. Convene into Executive Session

The Council convened into executive session pursuant to Section 551.074, Texas Government Code, to deliberate the evaluation of contracts with Clayton Gaddis and Chris Quinn.

7. Reconvene into Open Session

The Council reconvened into open session to take action as appropriate regarding the evaluation of contracts with Clayton Gaddis and Chris Quinn.

8. Discuss, consider, and take action on Henderson County tax contract for 2026-2027

No discussion was recorded for this item.

9. Discuss, consider, and take action on approving the EDC budget

No discussion was recorded for this item.

10. Discuss, consider, and take action on food trucks being allowed in the city

No discussion was recorded for this item.

11. Discuss, consider, and take action on approving the amended zoning Ordinance No2026-005 to be able to rezone property in the city

No discussion was recorded for this item.

12. Discuss, consider, and take action on approving the amendment to Ordinance 70.18 PARKING AND FISHING ALONG PORTIONS OF LEAGUELINE ROAD (FM1667) PROHIBITED

No discussion was recorded for this item.

13. Discuss, consider, and take action on approving the amendment of Ordinance 70.19 PARKING ALONG PORTIONS OF OAK STREET AND FIRST STREET PROHIBITED

No discussion was recorded for this item.

14. Discuss, consider, and take action on approving the amendment of Ordinance 70.43 DECLARATION OF JUNKED VEHICLES AS PUBLIC NUISANCE

No discussion was recorded for this item.

15. Discuss, consider, and take action on approving the amendment of Ordinance 90.018 RESPONSIBILITY TO KEEP PROPERTY CLEAN, ABATEMENT

No discussion was recorded for this item.

16. Discuss, consider, and take action on approving the amendment of Ordinance 90.036 MOTOR VEHICLE MAINTENANCE, ASSEMBLAGE AND THE LIKE ON PRIVATE PROPERTY

No discussion was recorded for this item.

17. Discuss, consider, and take action on approving the amendment of Ordinance No. 57-3 CONNEX SHIPPING CONTAINERS

The Council reviewed the proposed Connex Shipping Containers Ordinance (No. 57-3), which establishes standards for the placement, appearance, and maintenance of shipping containers on residential, commercial, and agricultural properties within the city. Discussion focused on two amendments prior to adoption.

Maximum Length: The ordinance as drafted capped container length at 40 feet. A council member raised the concern that standard shipping containers are manufactured at up to 44 feet, and that enforcing a strict 40-foot limit would place compliant property owners in violation through no fault of their own. After brief deliberation, the Council agreed to raise the maximum length to 50 feet across all applicable sections—Section 4 Item E, Section 5 Item G, and Section 6 Item G—to accommodate standard manufactured dimensions while still excluding oversized or custom-welded units.

Painting Deadline (Section 7, Item D): The original language required containers to be painted within 30 days of "pulling a permit." The Council noted this was impractical, as a permit is typically obtained before the container arrives on-site. The provision was amended to require painting within 30 days of *placement* of the container.

The city attorney noted he would review the ordinance language for proper legal wording going forward, particularly regarding variance procedures through the Planning and Zoning Commission.

Motion to approve Ordinance No. 57-3, Connex Shipping Containers, with the corrections as stated, was made by Mayor Pro Tem Marie and seconded by Council Member Chandra. The motion carried.

**18. Discuss, consider, and take action to approve the amendment of Ordinance No. 2009-008 AN
ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 72 PARKING
SCHEDULES OF THE CODE OF ORDINANCE OF THE
CITY OF TRINIDAD, TEXAS**

No discussion was recorded for this item.

19. Discuss, consider, and take action on approving the School Resource Officer position — Samantha Tanner

The Council considered establishing a cooperative agreement between the City of Trinidad and Trinidad Independent School District (TISD) to fund a full-time School Resource Officer (SRO) position, to be filled by Ms. Samantha Tanner. The agreement was prepared jointly by Chief Charles Gregory and TISD Superintendent Mazel, and had already received approval from the TISD Board.

Under the cost-sharing arrangement, TISD would contribute \$30,000 annually and the City of Trinidad would contribute \$13,680 annually, placing the officer at approximately \$21 per hour. The City would be solely responsible for all payroll administration, benefits, equipment, uniforms, and a patrol vehicle. During school breaks, the officer would serve on regular city patrol duties at no additional cost to the district. In the event of a service lapse, TISD's contribution would be subject to prorated adjustment.

A council member questioned why the City was contributing to the cost given that the school district is a separate entity. It was explained that the City's share covers full benefits including health, dental, vision, and retirement, and that TISD's school safety allotment—which must also fund physical security infrastructure such as fencing and camera systems mandated after the Uvalde incident—limits how much the district can dedicate solely to an SRO. The Chief of Police emphasized the critical importance of having a sworn officer on campus as the primary law enforcement response in the event of a serious incident.

The city attorney advised that the formal contract approval be deferred to a future meeting, and that the Council's action at this meeting be limited to approving the SRO position itself.

Motion to approve the School Resource Officer position for Ms. Samantha Tanner was made by Mayor Pro Tem Marie and seconded by Council Member Chandra. The motion carried.

CONSENT AGENDA

Motion to approve the minutes from the Regular Council Meeting on April 21, 2026, the minutes from the Budget Workshop Meeting on May 1, 2026, and the monthly bills was made by Mayor Pro Tem Marie and seconded by Council Member Chandra. The motion carried.

20. COUNCIL MEMBER INQUIRY TIME

No items were raised for future agenda consideration.

21. Adjourn

Motion to adjourn was made by Mayor Pro Marie and seconded by Council Member Velma. The motion carried. The meeting was adjourned.



Approved on 10/20/26

Mayor: Dennis Haws
Dennis Haws