

**MINUTES OF THE CITY COUNCIL
OF THE CITY OF GALVESTON
SPECIAL MEETING - MAY 28, 2025**

5/28/2025 - City Council Minutes

1. DECLARATION OF A QUORUM AND CALL MEETING TO ORDER

With a quorum present, the meeting was called to order at 10:00 a.m.

2. ROLL CALL

Present: Mayor Craig Brown, Mayor Pro Tem Marie Robb, Council Member Sharon Lewis, Council Member David Finklea, Council Member Bob Brown, Council Member Alex Porretto, and Council Member Beau Rawlins.

3. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

No conflicts of interest were declared.

4. WORKSHOP ITEMS

- 4.A Discussion of proposed communication by the City Council directed to the Trustees of the Galveston Park Board advising the Trustees of Council's expectations related to adherence with the Texas Open Meetings Act and Freedom of Information Act; Actions expected in response to requests for information from the Office of the City Auditor; a timeline for Park Boards delivery of information requests already pending; and other related matters.

The City Council discussed sending a formal letter to the Galveston Park Board of Trustees in response to ongoing concerns surrounding transparency, accountability, and compliance with the City Auditor's requests. The Council emphasized the need for the Park Board to adhere to the Texas Open Meetings Act and the Freedom of Information Act, noting particular frustration with the Board's refusal to provide full, unfiltered access to audit documents. The Council expressed concern over the Park Board's revocation of the City Auditor's read-only access to records and the selective, annotated release of documents, which they view as a barrier to transparency. After two months, only half of the requested documents have been provided, prompting debate over setting a firm deadline for compliance. Council members also raised concerns about potential misuse of public funds and stressed that audit data should be fully accessible to ensure accountability and public trust.

5. EXECUTIVE SESSION

Pursuant to Texas Gov't Code 551.071- Consultation with attorney, an executive session will be conducted to discuss and receive legal advice concerning pending litigation and/or a settlement offer, or on a matter in which the duty of the attorney to the governmental body under the Texas Disciplinary Rules of Professional Conduct of the State Bar of Texas clearly conflicts with this chapter, related to the following:

- 5.A Discussion of possible action authorizing the Office of the City Attorney to take action against the Galveston Park Board of Trustees related to violations of the Open Meetings and/or Texas Public Information Act including filing of administrative complaints with appropriate state agencies or initiation of litigation in a court of competent jurisdiction seeking any and all relief available to the City.

At the advice of Legal Counsel, this item was discussed in open session.

The City Council discussed authorizing the City Attorney to take legal action against the Galveston Park Board of Trustees for potential violations of the Open Meetings Act and Texas Public Information Act. The issue centers around the Park Board holding executive sessions where settlement agreements were discussed and authorized without proper public disclosure or detailed motions, possibly violating open meeting laws. The City Attorney's office, and outside Legal Counsel Robert Booth, have sent inquiries to the Park Board requesting clarification and compliance. If the Park Board fails to respond or continue the violations, the City may file administrative complaints or initiate litigation seeking injunctions to stop the Board from finalizing settlements without open meetings and votes.

Council members discussed the legal process, possible injunctions, and emphasized that the Park Board must hold open meetings on settlement terms before final approval to avoid violations. The City is waiting for a response from the Park Board's attorney but is prepared to proceed with legal action if necessary to uphold transparency and compliance with state law.

- 5.B Legal advise pursuant to Article II, Section 5 "Investigative Powers of the Council" of the Charter of the City of Galveston, and Article III, Section 2-146 "Investigations by Council" of the Code of Ordinances of the City of Galveston

City Council convened into Executive Session at 11:14 a.m. and reconvened into Open Session at 11:55 a.m. No action was taken during Executive Session.

6. PUBLIC COMMENT ON AGENDA ITEMS

Brian Gattis commented on the Park Board's withholding of information.

7. ACTION ITEMS

- 7.A Consider for approval an Ordinance of the City of Galveston, Texas, amending Chapter 10, "Building Code", Section 10-16. "Drainage Regulations", of the Code of the City of Galveston; amending the design criteria to mitigate peak runoff and maintain meaningful detention requirements, as well as, decrease the burden/costs of related development; making various findings and provisions related to the subject; providing for an effective date. (R. Winiecke)

Ordinance No. 25-024 was read by caption. Director Robert Winiecke provided staff comments. Mayor Brown made a motion, seconded by Council Member Rawlins, to approve the ordinance. Unanimously approved.

- 7.B Approval of approved communication by the City Council directed to the Trustees of the Galveston Park Board advising the Trustees of Council's expectations related to adherence with the Texas Open Meetings Act and Freedom of Information Act; Actions expected in response to requests for information from the Office of the City Auditor; a timeline for Park Boards delivery of information requests already pending; and other related matters and directing the designated member to sign on behalf of Council and directing the City Secretary to effect delivery.

Council Member Porretto made a motion, seconded by Council Member Lewis, to approve the communication by the City Council directed to the Trustees of the Galveston Park Board advising the Trustees of Council's expectations related to adherence with the Texas Open Meetings Act and Freedom of Information Act; Actions expected in response to requests for information from the Office of the City Auditor; a timeline for Park Boards delivery of information requests already pending; and other related matters and directing the designated member to sign on behalf of Council and directing the City Secretary to effect delivery. In favor: C. Brown, Robb, Lewis, Finklea, Porretto, and Rawlins. In opposition: B. Brown. Motion carries.

- 7.C Consider for action a motion authorizing the Office of the City Attorney to take action against the Galveston Park Board of Trustees related to violations of the Open Meetings and/or Texas Public Information Act including filing of administrative complaints with appropriate state agencies or initiation of litigation in a court of competent jurisdiction seeking any and all relief available to the City.

Council Member Rawlins made a motion, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Robb, authorizing the Office of the City Attorney to take action against the Galveston Park Board of Trustees related to violations of the Open Meetings and/or Texas Public Information Act including filing of administrative complaints with appropriate state agencies or initiation of litigation in a court of competent jurisdiction seeking any and all relief available to the City. In favor: C. Brown, Robb, Lewis, Finklea, Porretto, and Rawlins. In opposition: B. Brown. Motion carries.

- 7.D Initiate a Council investigation of the Galveston Park Board of Trustees pursuant to Article II, Section 5 "Investigative Powers of the Council" of the Charter of the City of Galveston, and Article III, Section 2-146 "Investigations by Council" of the Code of Ordinances of the City of Galveston

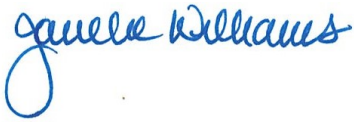
(Rawlins/Finklea)

Council Member Rawlins made a motion, seconded by Council Member Finklea, to defer this item to the next meeting. Unanimously approved.

1. Determine the scope and parameters of the Council investigation of the Galveston Park of Trustees.

8. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 12:22 p.m.



Janelle Williams, City Secretary
Date Approved: August 28, 2025