

MINUTES OF THE
HENDERSON CITY COUNCIL
Regular Scheduled Meeting

September 2, 2025

CALL TO ORDER: *The Mayor will call the meeting to order, declare a quorum if present, and declare notices legally posted pursuant to Open Meetings Act.*

Mayor Pace called the meeting to order at 6 p.m.

Council members present were Michael Searcy, Greg Jackson, Melissa Morton, and Gina Juarez. Stephen Strong was not able to attend.

Staff members present were City Manager Jay Abercrombie, City Secretary Cheryl Jimerson, City Attorney Russell Brown, Chief of Police Chad Taylor, Assistant Fire Chief Jeff Stoddard, Director of Operations Davis Brown, Director of Public Services Kirk Kimbrell, Director of Utilities Randy Boyd, Director of Utility Infrastructure and Delivery, Community Development Manager/Building Official Cliff McElfresh, Finance Director Karen Arnall, Animal Center Director Charissa Pool, Civic Center Manager Stephanie Kimbrell, Executive Leadership Assistant/HR Specialist Hillary Faulkner, Communications and Marketing Coordinator Phedra Johnson, and HEDCO Director Bret Gardella.

INVOCATION AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

John Buzz Fullen gave the invocation, Melissas Morton led the Pledges.

CITIZENS COMMENTS:

Comments shall be limited to three (3) minutes and taken in the order they are received. By State law, no action may be taken on items not on the agenda.

1st - Trey Segura stated the current HEDCO Board is very aggressive, and he fully supports that. He explained how HEDCO receives their funds from sales tax and his request is for Council to approve HEDCO's proposed budget and scope of work, so the board can move forward with operations.

2nd - Sandy McMurray, pulled her request to speak.

3rd - Rachel Hale, has concerns about transparency and aggressive spending on travel expenses for Mr. Gardella. Rachel demands the council to stop being silent and do a complete overhaul of the HEDCO Board or expect the citizens to petition to have an election to dissolve the EDC completely.

4th- Rachell Thrasher stated the code of ethics to the council and demands accountability from them upon the members they appoint to all the boards and committees.

5th — Weldon Gray submitted by email due to being out of town at the time of this meeting. City Manager Jay Abercrombie gave a synopsis of Mr. Gray's request; he asked the City Council to reconsider the motion to lower the tax rate and keep it the same as last year.

PRESENTATIONS/ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mayor Pace announced a special presentation for Mr. Cason Weatherton.

COUNCIL BUSINESS – REGULAR SESSION

1. Consideration and possible action upon tabled item from the August 19th meeting; Resolution 2025-08-01 for Boards and Commissions transparency.

Council Member Michael Searcy made a motion to approve dropping this item and bringing it back to Council in October, duly seconded by Council Member Melissa Morton. The vote was unanimous.

2. Consideration and possible action upon a tabled item from the August 19th meeting; HEDCO Program of Work for fiscal year 2025-2026.

Mayor Pace stated he wanted to drop items 2 and 3 until the September 9th meeting so Council Member Stephen Strong can attend.

Council Member Melissa Morton made a motion to approve dropping both items until the September 9th meeting, duly seconded by Council Member Greg Jackson. The vote was unanimous.

3. Consideration and possible action upon a tabled item from the August 19th meeting; HEDCO Budget for the fiscal year 2025-2026.

Mayor Pace stated he wanted to drop items 2 and 3 until the September 9th meeting so Council Member Stephen Strong can be here.

Council Member Melissa Morton made a motion to approve dropping both items until the September 9th meeting, duly seconded by Council Member Greg Jackson. The vote was unanimous.

4. Open a second public hearing on the proposed tax rate to be the No-New-Revenue tax rate of .529139 per \$100.00 valuation on each assessment to be based upon 100% of its appraised value. (Abercrombie/Arnall)

Rachel Hale

5. Consideration and possible action upon closing the public hearing. (Mayor)

Council Member Michael Searcy stated he would make a motion to close, if there is no one that wants to comment on this item.

Rachel Hale asked Council to keep the proposed tax rate as the No New Revenue tax rate. The citizens are being taxed to death, so please listen because you haven't before.

Council Member Michael Searcy made a motion to close the public hearing, duly seconded by Council Member Melissa Morton. The vote was unanimous.

6. Consideration upon the first reading of Ordinance 2025-09-01 setting the proposed tax rate to be the No-New-Revenue tax rate of .529139 per \$100.00 valuation on each assessment to be based upon 100% of its appraised value.

(The No New Revenue tax rate lowers the property tax rate from the previous year.)

Melissa Morton asked what happens if emergency repairs come up? Is there money to pay for them?

City Manager Jay Abercrombie stated that's a difficult question to answer, he would like to say yes. The utility department's budget for repairs. If there is an unforeseen emergency, it will have to be repaired even if scheduled repairs have to wait.

7. Open a second public hearing on the proposed 2025-2026 budget. (Abercrombie/Arnall)

Mayor Pace opened a public hearing on the proposed 2025-2026 budget.

8. Consideration and possible action upon closing the public hearing. (Mayor)

There were no comments or questions.

Council Member Gina Juarez made a motion to close the public hearing, duly seconded by Council Member Greg Jackson. The vote was unanimous.

9. Consideration upon the first reading of Ordinance 2025-09-02 on the proposed budget for the 2025-2026 fiscal year.

Council had no questions or comments on the first reading of Ordinance 2025-09-02.

10. Consideration and possible action to cancel the September 16th Council Meeting. (Jimerson)

City Secretary Cheryl Jimerson stated the Council and staff have had so many meetings over the past two months. We have nothing urgent coming up and would like the Council to consider canceling the September 16th meeting.

Council Member Gina Juarez made a motion to approve canceling the September 16th meeting, duly seconded by Council Member Greg Jackson. The vote was unanimous.

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

11. Executive Session to Consult with the City Attorney in accordance with Vernon's Texas Government Code Annotated, Chapter 551, Section 071.

Mayor Pace convened into executive session at 6:34 p.m.

REGULAR SESSION:

12. Convene in Regular Session and take action necessary as a result of the Closed Session.

Mayor Pace reconvened into regular session at 7:15 p.m. asking the Council if there were items they would like to take action on from the executive session?

Council Member Gina Jaurez made a motion to have Brian Ballard be removed from the HEDCO Board effective immediately, duly seconded by Council Member Melissa Morton. The vote was unanimous.

ADJOURNMENT

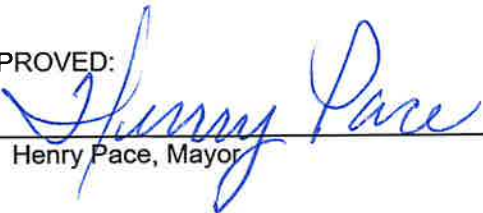
13. Adjourn

Council Member Melissa Morton made a motion to adjourn at 7:16 p.m., duly seconded by Council Member Gina Juarez. The vote was unanimous.

ATTEST:


Cheryl Jimerson, City Secretary

APPROVED:


Henry Pace, Mayor