

On this the 5th day of January, 2026 at 6:30 p.m., the City Commission of the City of Hereford, Texas, convened in a regular session in the Commission Chamber in City Hall, the meeting being open to the public and notice of said meeting having been given as prescribed by Chapter 551 of the Government Code, with the following members being present and in attendance, to-wit:

Cathy Bunch, Mayor
Rose Mary Barrett, Commissioner Place One
Angie Alonzo, Commissioner Place Two
Clint Savoini, Commissioner Place Three
Mark Collier, Commissioner Place Four
James Stow, Commissioner Place Five
Deven Black, Commissioner Place Six
Ryan Polster, City Manager
Wade Hawkins, Assistant City Manager
Franchesca Jimenez, City Secretary
Audie Sciumbato, City Attorney

Also in attendance were Todd Murray, Landon Swan, Anselmo Ramirez, Joe Olvera, Chris Ekrut, Margaret Del Toro, Ramon Nunez, Andreas D. Del Toro III, M.D., Juanita Del Toro, Angela Burnett, Sarah Finch, Kory Finch, Kent Finch, Suzanne Finch, Edmundo Garcia, Jessica Garcia, and Nathan Betzen.

Mayor Bunch voiced the invocation and Commissioner Savoini lead the Pledge of Allegiance to the United States flag. She called the meeting to order and welcomed those in attendance.

REGULAR HEARINGS:

ITEM 1 - Public Comments.

Mayor Bunch announced that those who want to comment on agenda item 2 can either wait until it opens for discussion for more speaking time or use the 3-minute comment window, whichever they prefer.

Mayor Bunch reminded the audience of the 3-minute limit and also the rule that the public is not allowed to approach the dais and will be escorted out of the chamber after the meeting adjourns.

Margaret Del Toro stated the city manager, wrote a positive article and emphasized the importance of explaining decision-making. She referenced a recent article about the former municipal judge, stating she assumed many of you were contacted to give your opinion, but likely did not respond. She stated she presumed nobody answered because maybe nobody cares. She urged the

Commission to do what is best for Hereford, noting the decisions made will impact our community, and she hopes the Commission will approach them with a positive outlook.

PUBLIC HEARING:

(Mayor Bunch opened the public hearing at 6:33 p.m.)

ITEM 2 - Consider approval of request to rezone property at the corner of East 15th Street and Blackfoot (Lots 1,2,3, and the East 42 feet of Lot 4 Bluebonnet Addition) from “R-1” Single Family District to “MF” Multi-Family District.

Drew Del Toro stated this request was first presented to the Planning and Zoning Commission on July 14, 2025, and again on December 29, 2025, yielding similar results each time. Following suggestions from commission members, the request was refiled and reheard by the Planning and Zoning Commission on December 29th, with significant public participation.

Mr. Del Toro stated the property was originally intended for single-family development and was legally surveyed in 2024. After marketing the lots, all interest received was contingent upon multifamily zoning. He stated the property's location is on a major thoroughfare near parks, churches, and recreational facilities.

Mr. Del Toro clarified that no apartment development is currently proposed; instead, future development would consist of duplexes or townhomes. He stated multifamily development would require modern stormwater and infrastructure improvements, which could help mitigate existing flooding concerns. Mr. Del Toro requested the City Commission's approval of the rezoning and urged them to uphold the recommendation of the Planning and Zoning Commission.

Commissioner Savoini questioned the prior survey of the property. Mr. Del Toro stated the land was surveyed in 2024 with the intent for single-family development. All interest received was for multifamily zoning, which was attributed to the location.

Sara Finch stated she is opposed to rezoning the property at East 15th Street and Blackfoot from single-family to multifamily. Mrs. Finch cited the city's zoning ordinances and expressed concerns; multifamily development could increase traffic and safety risks on an already congested roadway, reduce privacy for adjacent homeowners, and place additional strain on existing water and sewer infrastructure. She also noted the uncertainty regarding the potential type of future development and mentioned prior sewer issues in the area.

Angela Burnett with Palo Duro Real Estate stated that all buyer inquiries received were contingent upon multifamily zoning. She noted that investors are interested in multifamily housing due to

economic feasibility and high housing demand. Ms. Burnett indicated that the property would be marketed for townhomes, duplexes, or similar developments that are consistent with the surrounding neighborhood.

Kory Finch, a resident on Cherokee Street, expressed his opposition to the rezoning request. He voiced concerns that multifamily development would change the character of the neighborhood and lead to increased noise and congestion. Mr. Finch referred to past flooding on Cherokee Street and referenced flood prediction data suggesting that the development could result in increased runoff from the property. He is worried that the new development could worsen existing drainage and flooding issues that affect nearby residences.

Commissioner Alonzo asked if they knew the house was in a flood zone. Mr. Finch responded that flooding has been minimal, thanks to drainage from nearby undeveloped lots. He expressed concerns that developing similar land could worsen drainage and increase runoff, citing public flood mapping data.

Edmundo Garcia, a resident on Blackfoot Street, expressed his opposition to the proposed rezoning. He raised concerns about flooding, drainage, and the potential impact on surrounding properties within a FEMA-designated flood zone. He questioned whether the development would affect flood risk or insurance requirements and doubted its benefits for the area and the community's long-term growth.

Suzanne Finch stated she is opposed to the rezoning request, expressing concerns over the fairness and transparency of the process. She noted the property owner had been allowed to remain in the commission chambers after prior meetings, and he stated commission members allegedly indicated support for the request before public hearings or protests were filed. She also raised concerns about prejudicial remarks made by the Planning and Zoning Commission chairman and recommended the city consider amending the zoning ordinance to include a waiting period of six months to a year for repeated rezoning requests to prevent the situation from occurring again.

Margaret Del Toro spoke in support of the rezoning, noting that traffic and flood concerns are manageable and highlighting the development's potential to support community growth.

Commissioner Collier made the motion to approve the request to rezone the property at the corner of East 15th Street and Blackfoot (Lots 1,2,3, and the East 42 feet of Lot 4 Bluebonnet Addition) from "R-1" Single Family District to "MF" Multi-Family District. Commissioner Alonzo seconded the motion and it passed with a 3/4 vote (6-1) as follows: Mayor Bunch – aye, Commissioner Barrett – aye, Commissioner Alonzo – aye, Commissioner Savoini – nay, Commissioner Collier – aye, Commissioner Stow – aye, and Commissioner Black – aye.

(The public hearing ended at 7:14 p.m.)

REGULAR HEARINGS:

ITEM 3 - Discuss and consider approval of minutes for the December 15th, 2025 Regular meeting.

Commissioner Barrett made the motion to approve the minutes as presented. Commissioner Savoini seconded the motion and it passed with the unanimous vote of the Commission.

ITEM 4 - Discuss and consider approval of new water and sewer rates. Presentation by New Gen Strategies.

Chris Ekrut with New Gen Strategies, LLC presented the city's water and sewer rate study, outlining the financial status and capital needs of the utility system. The city must maintain revenue sufficiency, adequate reserves, and ongoing reinvestment in infrastructure.

Key points included:

- Capital Needs
- Rate Structure
- Projected increases
- Financial health
- Implementation
- Infrastructure benefits

The presentation provided a roadmap for funding capital projects, maintaining system integrity, and ensuring long-term financial sustainability.

The Commission discussed the importance of doing what is best for the community and taking preventative measures to improve the city's infrastructure.

Commissioner Collier motioned to approve the new water and sewer rates (Scenario 1), with the implementation starting on February 1, 2026. Commissioner Stow seconded the motion and it passed with the unanimous vote of the Commission.

ITEM 5 - Discuss and/or consider Resolution 01.05.26 establishing participation in a depreciation and service schedule to enroll in Utility Service Company Inc. GASB 34 program.

Commissioner Savoini made the motion to approve Resolution No. 01.05.26, establishing participation in a depreciation and service schedule to enroll in the Utility Service Company Inc. GASB 34 program. Commissioner Barrett seconded the motion and it passed with the unanimous vote of the Commission.

ITEM 6 - Consider cancelling the regular City Commission Meeting scheduled for January 19th, 2026 (Martin Luther King Jr. Day).

Commissioner Stow made the motion to cancel the January 19th, 2026 City Commission Meeting. Commissioner Savoini seconded the motion and it passed with the unanimous vote of the Commission.

ITEM 7 - Announcements and comments from Mayor and City Commissioners.

Commissioner Savoini thanked everyone for their attendance and reminded them as public elected officials, we must be good stewards with our resources. He expressed that the suggestion that we do not care is unfair. This Commission cares and if you haven't seen that tonight, come to more meetings.

Commissioner Collier agreed that as a Commission, we do care and expressed appreciation for everyone attending the meeting and thanked them for their presentations.

Commissioner Barrett acknowledged that this has been a learning experience, as we lacked essential studies and we did not get some of the things done that we need. While the utility increase is hard to accept, it is vital. Patching problems isn't a sustainable solution. She stated noticed heavy traffic during her commute, and we need to attract more people to help our town grow.

Commissioner Stow stated we cannot keep postponing important issues. There are infrastructure matters that require our attention. The rezoning process was challenging because the outcome was not popular. We have a Planning and Zoning Commission in place to evaluate the pros and cons before presenting their findings to us, and I find it difficult to go against the Commission's recommendations. He thanked everyone for coming and acknowledged that their presence reflects their love for the community.

Commissioner Black expressed that he values hearing the community's concerns and genuinely cares about them. He encouraged people to attend the meetings to voice their opinions.

Mayor Bunch expressed her gratitude to everyone for attending the meeting and for their diligence. She also thanked the city staff present for their commitment and thanked the public for the time they dedicate to making Hereford a better place.

ITEM 8 - Announcements and comments from City Staff.

City Manager Polster thanked the Commission for their support in advancing the city. He announced that an organizational strategic plan will be presented at the Commission meeting on February 2nd, and he will discuss a comprehensive plan with PRPC to gather community input.

City Manager Polster thanked Whiteface Ford and Goodin Fuels for their partnership in funding the successful concrete street project. He stated the city will apply for grants to hold tire collection days at the landfill, where citizens can drop off tires at no cost.

There being no further business before the Commission, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:07 p.m.