

**CITY OF VIDOR
VIDOR CITY COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING
APRIL 24, 2025**

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Mayor Songe
Councilmember Lee
Councilmember Thompson
Councilmember Barker
Councilmember Bourque
Councilmember Weldon

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Councilmember McGowan

Administrative Personnel: Robbie Hood, City Manager; Pebbles Eckhoff, Finance Director; Rachel Duplechain, City Secretary; Chris Leavins, City Attorney; Rod Carroll, Chief;

A. OPENING, PRESENTATIONS, AND CITIZENS COMMENTS

A -1. Call to order and the establishment of a Quorum

A quorum was present, and the Regular Meeting of the Vidor City Council began at 7:00 p.m., Misty Songe, Mayor, presiding.

A -2. Invocation and Pledge to the United States Flag and the State of Texas Flag

Chris Leavins, City Attorney, gave the Invocation and led the Pledge to the United States Flag and the State of Texas Flag.

A -3. Citizen Comments

Misty Songe, Mayor, we do have one general citizen comment, Miss Briggs, if you would come to the podium. Miss Briggs, name, and address please. Natalie Briggs, 445 Glenwood, okay, I am here to talk about the streets in MapleCrest, probably not the first or last time that this will ever be brought up. I took the liberty of driving around the neighborhood and kind of notating areas I don't really think that the residents of Maplewood, MapleCrest, okay, with sections that are the worst being fixed somehow other than just filling it with the stuff that they are putting on the roads now because that does not stick at all, it comes right out. I have huge holes right in front of right out of my driveway. So just backing out, literally the day that they put it in, it all just pulls right back out. I did notate that there's just certain sections that I think are in need of something a little bit more permanent than that. I really think that everybody would probably be okay with what was done on the curve of North Lakeside coming in off of Hwy 90, it's kind of like some black top, really smooth that out. Everyone used to actually drive on the opposite side of the road just to avoid it because it was so bad. It's not the prettiest thing, but it smoothed out and I think everybody would be really happy with that. I don't think it needs to be, you know, some grand thing where people come in and you know, completely tear up the roads or expect, you know, the city to spend that kind of money putting concrete down you know. I think black top or something to smooth it out would be great. I'm not going to go through all of these that I noted because it's quite a few areas, even though it's just, you know, like for example, on my street in front of my house, it's from 435 to 455 Glenwood, that particular stretch of road is three (3) houses, and it's pretty bad, but again, it's not all of that section of Glenwood between the feeder

road and I believe that first street is Lyndale. But the ones to note are Maplewood and Mulberry, if I lived on either one of those streets, I would be not a happy person at all, and there are many, many, many, many areas; probably on Maplewood there might be two (50) foot stretches, that are practically almost gravel. I know where Maplewood and North Mayhaw meet its complete gravel. And then in the very back of the neighborhood is a street called Mulberry not a lot of houses back there, not a highly traveled area, but it is pure gravel. It's pretty bad back there. So again, I can't speak for everyone, but I know I personally would be happy with just some black top to smooth out some of these areas and stuff doesn't have to be the whole street, just where it needs to be done. I would be okay with that, thank you. Songe, can you send what you have documented to the City Manager of those specific areas? Briggs, yes, absolutely. Songe, thank you. Briggs, thank you for your time.

B. COUNCIL CONSENT AGENDA

B -1. Approval of Accounts Paid:

Paid Invoices:

General Fund -	\$225,968.00
MCBSF -	\$316.58
EMERGENCY MGMT	\$208.81
CDBG FUND -	\$279,234.56
Hotel Occupancy Fund -	\$680.00
Proprietary Fund -	\$29,569.76
Grand Total:	\$535,977.70

B -2. Approval of Minutes: Regular Meeting – April 10, 2025

A motion to **approve the Consent Agenda** was made by Councilmember Thompson, seconded by Councilmember Bourque. The Council voted five (5) for and none (0) opposed. **The motion carried.**

C. COUNCIL REGULAR AGENDA

C -1. Discussion and possible action regarding City Pool, including rates, Opening Day, and Dollar Days for 2025

Misty Songe, Mayor, we do have a citizen comment, Miss Wendy, come to the podium please. Wendy Glenn, My name is Wendy Glenn, I live at 1050 S. Ashland St., in Vidor, Texas, and I have actually been talking to citizens and other people that let that live in this area about the pool and how I was here at the last Council meeting and how we were considering doing a seasonal pass for people and what your price was. And I guess because I come to Council meetings, I was chosen to come up and speak. Most companies do seasonal type passes to cover operational costs upfront and usually when these companies do it, they're at a deep, deep, discount. I feel and other people that I've talked to have felt that you're what the numbers that you were throwing around last time were not a deep enough discount. I don't think the City Council is taking into consideration days that the pool would be closed. The fact that nobody is going to go every single day, the pool is open, bad weather days, things like that. So just to like give you an example of maybe some other things in the area like there is a YMCA in Port Arthur and they charge for three (3) months, it's like \$200.00 for a family of four (4), and you also get the gym, you get daycare, childcare, if you're at the gym, you get the pool with no closing. You know, you get so much more for your \$200.00, for your family of four (4) than

you could ever possibly get at the Vidor pool. I would love to see the Vidor Pool succeed, I have lived here for twelve (12) years and to be very honest, my kids have used the pool, but not in the last I would say, what 8-9 years since before Harvey. They took swim lessons there and I think that was the last year or one of the last years that they had swimming lessons there. I would just love to see the pool flourish and I think that it could do that, and I think you guys could do that with your seasonal passes if you made them a lot cheaper than what you guys were talking about last time. From what I have asked people, they are saying anywhere between like \$75.00 to \$200.00 would be like the absolute most. I even had one person say for \$100.00 a person they're going to Baytown because there is Pirates Cove in Baytown, and if they can afford \$100.00 a person, they're going over there because it's a whole water park, and that's how much their seasonal pass is. So, it's going to have to be way less than that to make people want to come to the City Pool. Thank you. Songe, thank you. Okay, Council in your binders you have the new recommendations as discussed. Pebbles Eckhoff, Finance Director, Mayor/Council, we took into consideration Council's concerns last time, and we did some research. We sought out neighboring county pools and things of that nature and were recommending to keep the price for \$2.00 a person for resident and \$4.00 a person for nonresidents and the season pass individual \$75.00 per person for resident and \$150.00 per family of four (4) for resident, and season pass individual \$100.00 per person for nonresidents and \$250.00 per family of four (4) for nonresidents. We figured that was a good, cost-effective, realistic number for our citizens to be able to pay to come. And we averaged it was 74 days for the pool for the season, that was, excluding the Mondays off and the dollar days, and I think it leaves us with 69 days. Kathryn Weldon, Councilmember, Pebbles, it was \$75.00 per individual, and you gave two other prices. Can you give those again? Eckhoff, \$150.00 per family for residents and nonresidents, \$100.00 for individuals and \$250.00 per family of four. Songe, it's in your book the first page. Eckhoff, it should be a spreadsheet that is in your binders. Weldon, okay thank you I got it. Jessica Barker, Councilmember, so there's a smaller gap between the resident and nonresident \$75.00 and \$100.00, but then there's a \$100.00 jump for the family. Nicole McGowan, Councilmember, yeah. Barker, and I just wanted to see why you? Eckhoff, and that was just the numbers that we plugged in, and we decided that would be a good number if you think it should be lower, \$200.00 for families that are nonresidents, that's fine too. That was what we wanted to discuss at this meeting. Barker, I would like to see the noncitizens going from \$250.00 to \$200.00. Michael Thompson, Councilmember, I agree. Eckhoff, okay we can do that. Mercedes Lee, Councilmember, yeah, just doing some quick math Pebbles, which I'm sure you've already done, but if we have 74 open days and a resident goes every day, that's \$148.00. So, I think that's the point of, okay, they're not going to go every day, it is something to kind of look at. Eckhoff, considering originally my recommendation was not to even do the season passes. Because our price was so cheap for daily and it is unrealistic, we do get a lot of rain. Everybody's not going to go every day and \$2.00 is a really nice amount and we established that last year as a good base. And so, my original recommendation was not to have a season pass at all. But there were members of Council that wanted season passes, and we had some feedback from citizens that wanted season passes, and this was just the number that the City Manager, me, and the City Secretary just juggled around with. It's 69 days after dollar days, a family of four (4) is \$500.00 and something dollars, if they came every day, it was like \$536.00. Robbie Hood, City Manager, if you're doing it like in City with the \$2.00 a day times four (4) and you multiply it by days, it's like triple. Weldon, did you say that you sold zero last year? Eckhoff, we have sold zero (0) individual season passes, the family season pass, this would be the first year that it would be offered. It hasn't been offered in the past the pool manager, it was her suggestion to do a family pass. Now they've always had seasonal passes for individuals, we just haven't sold any in the last four years, and I think it's because they were \$150.00. Weldon, thanks. Songe, I agree with your adjustment, everything else looks okay to me.

A motion to approve seasonal passes for the Vidor City Pool individual \$75.00 per person for resident and \$100.00 per person nonresident, seasonal family pass \$150.00 per family of four (4) for resident and \$200.00 per family of four (4) nonresident, was made by Councilmember Barker, seconded by Councilmember Weldon. The Council voted five (5) for and none (0) opposed. The motion carried.

C -2. Consideration and possible action to approve an Ordinance of the City of Vidor, Texas amending the Code of Ordinances by amending Chapter 70 – Traffic and Vehicles, to create Article VIII – Operation of Motor Vehicles, regarding operation of motor vehicles in the City; providing for a repeal of conflicting ordinances; providing for severability; providing for penalties; and providing for publication and an Effective Date (Second reading)

Chris Leavins, City Attorney, Mayor/Council, the only changes made from the last version we just cleaned up some of the formatting and then some of the numbering was off just with the sections organizing, but the content and the substance stayed the same.

A motion to **approve an Ordinance of the City of Vidor, Texas amending the Code of Ordinances by amending Chapter 70 – Traffic and Vehicles, to create Article VIII – Operation of Motor Vehicles, regarding operation of motor vehicles in the City; providing for a repeal of conflicting ordinances; providing for severability; providing for penalties; and providing for publication and an Effective Date (Second reading)**, was made by Councilmember Thompson, seconded by Councilmember Bourque. The Council voted five (5) for and none (0) opposed. **The motion carried.**

C -3. Discussion and possible action to approve an Ordinance of the City of Vidor, Texas amending the Code of Ordinances by amending Chapter 74 – Vehicles for Hire, Article III – Tow Trucks; regarding operation of tow trucks in the City; providing for a Repeal of Conflicting Ordinances; providing for Severability; providing for Penalties; and providing for Publication and an Effective Date

Misty Songe, Mayor, will start with Mr. Dilley. Adam Dilley, 1170 Orange St. we stand in front of y'all once again. We've been told that this ordinance was going to be brought in front of y'all for a while, but it seems to be that they're not going to stop till they get what they want. Rod decided he was going to take this first on scene away six (6) years ago. When we sat there in front of Rod at the Police Department at a wrecker meeting and stated what about the officer safety, we said officer safety. He didn't worry about the officer safety then what's he worried about it now? I ask that y'all keep it the way it is, everything's been working. During the snowstorm, the City Manager rode out with one of the officers. They said hey I'm glad ya'll are up here, they were calling next out, wasn't first on scene it was next out, he said, Hey, y'all did good, y'all are up here, y'all are quick, and y'all clear the road fast, that's how we do it. If it's not broke, don't fix it, leave it the way it is. I'm asking City Council and Mayor to see to it that this Ordinance is enforced from the beginning to the end. There are parts that don't get enforced, certain sections of this Ordinance that don't enforced. I've got a violation that I'm filing tomorrow with Rod Carroll, I will let ya'll know the outcome. Thank you. Songe, thank you

Songe, called Kevin and Wendy. Wendy McKee with Kevin McKee, 7760 Chauncy St., Orange, Texas, Mayor/Council, he is just giving you some information that he's come up with. Wendy, most of y'all know or may not know that Kevin had a mouth cancer last year and he had the surgery had makes it difficult for him to speak. So, I'm just going to speak for him today and if you have any questions he can definitely answer. And if you can't understand, I can relay well I'll try to anyway. I'm reading this from Kevin, he wrote this. Hello, my name is Kevin McKee and I'm the owner of Ray's Wrecker Service, we were established in 1965, I have been the current owner since 2003. In that time, we have seen numerous changes in the Vidor Wrecker Ordinance with the majority of them being, the past few years, ultimately creating one of the most strict Ordinances in this area, we are owners. We as owners have been told time after time that quote, this is the final time. It will not be reopened for quite some time and here we are again. As business owners, we purchase equipment and hire drivers based on the economy and assuming there won't be any more changes to this Ordinance that will affect our operations, we have been regulated on what we can charge on accident tows, which is not even required by the State. That, along with the rising cost of equipment, insurance, inflation in general, and the constant changes to this Ordinance, makes it difficult to conduct business. Now

here we are to discuss yet another change regarding utilizing first on scene wreckers when necessary. The Police Department has always used first on scene wreckers in emergency situations with the Ordinance as it stands now, there's not been a problem with how this works, and everyone works together to get the job done. I don't understand the urgency to have this item placed on the agenda for the second time in less than a month, unless the first on scene is going to be utilized more than it is being portrayed. I know it is being said the change is for officer safety and I am all for that, but to the best of my knowledge there have been no officer involved accidents in our area while waiting on a tow truck to arrive with the current Ordinance. We have 30 minutes to arrive on scene. But do our best and most often arrive much sooner, many times we arrive and after we arrive, we are still waiting on an ambulance for sometimes as long as 45 minutes. Where is the safety concern there? We are unable to do our job until the paramedics do theirs. If officer safety is truly the concern here, shouldn't the Police Department be calling first on scene ambulance as well? Aside from protecting our police officers, we also have a responsibility to protect the citizens of the Community. As most of you know, tow truck drivers get paid on commission being first on scene could mean \$200.00 to \$300.00 of their paycheck per accident. From my experience, if the City Council allows this to pass, we will have numerous tow trucks rushing to be there first, creating a dangerous situation for the citizens of the Community. Of course, we as owners will do anything in our power to control it the best we can, but anyone that will stand up here and tell you that it will not happen with their company and that their drivers will not speed and will obey all traffic laws to get the call is lying to you. If we could control everything then there would be no need for the violation section of this Ordinance, most of the violations in this Ordinance were placed there because of a previous incident. Already dealing with one of the strictest Ordinances in our in this area, every call counts. While utilizing the current rotation list, the less our trucks have to be on the road and the less chance there is for them to be involved in an accident. Therefore, protecting the citizens and keeping costs down so we can continue to stay in business and support this town. Please keep all of this in mind while considering this agenda item. And thank you for your time. Songe, thank you

Songe, calls Mr. Herrera. Ronnie Herrera, Herrera's towing, 20585 IH 10 in Vidor, TX., well, you've heard a lot of compelling stories from the other two companies, and I'm always the odd man out for some reason other than, they don't get along with who I am or what we do, which is fine. Me and Kevin get along pretty good, but, nevertheless. Whatever you're being told or whatever is going on, the number one reason this was brought before you is because you've had you know some officer involvement, accidents that you know because of traffic or whatever. And they can say whatever they want to we're going to the wreck, all of us do, no matter if it's first on scene or not, because we're going to be there, in case they do call it, you know whether it's in the current Ordinance, they may call it or may not and have they had and maybe there is speeding? Maybe there is not? I don't know, you and I can't, know and can't control who is behind the wheel of a vehicle no more than y'all can. Do y'all speed? Do you ever run a stop sign? Do you? You know? I mean, sometimes it happens. It might not happen on purpose. But I'm just telling you the reason this thing has been brought forth. And yes, there's been a lot of changes, I've been here since 1984, I have seen Council people come, Council people go, Mayors come, Mayors go. It's all the same no matter what, we're all trying to make a living, the reason we got a cap is because you know, some people wanted to overcharge and that's why we, the owners, got brought forth for that, you know? So yeah, I mean is it good for our city to keep our officers safe? Is it good that it might be navigated to where it's certain places on I-10 or on 105 or on Hwy. 12 major thoroughfares? You know, it's not going to be for the first on scene, I don't think it should be for somebody in a parking lot of a store, I mean, okay, you utilize your rotation list. I just know the last time we were here we thought something was going to happen and man, it just got quiet, and it was really a waste of everybody's time, and I hope it's not a waste of all our time tonight. I really hope that ya'll think about some of the stuff that's being said. I hope ya'll let the Chief speak and hear him out, man. He didn't even have a chance to talk last time you know. Songe, I brought this back forward. Herrera, we appreciate that, we really do. Songe, because of a situation and when you get finished talking, I'll explain to Council and everybody the reason. Herrera, yes mam. So, you know we are going to the wreck, whether it's first on scene or not. Perfect example, last night it was raining badly, Laredo screaming on the radio, somebody help us please. You know, God, give me some trucks, Rose City came, there was different cars, different wrecker services. We get up there and help block traffic too. You know, we do our part to try to help the office because we

don't want to get hit either, our truck might get hit. We're putting our own self, our own drivers in danger, you know, but we're doing it because of officer safety as well. So, we don't need what, whatever this is that he's trying to do, I guarantee you it is for the best. You know, it really is, they still do first on scene wreckers in Beaumont, they still do first on scene wreckers in Hardin County. You know it's just the way it's always been and the way it will always be no matter what, you know. Adams one (1) guy, Kevin has a couple of guys. Do I have several, yes? So, is it fair for my guys to miss out on a chance to make money because they only have one (1) guy or two (2) guys? Why should I suffer? You know, I have 12 trucks, they've got three (3) or four (4) or five (5) or whatever they got. I mean, issue, if you want to keep it on rotation, issue a permit for every truck. How many trucks you got to pay for? You know that make it better, give us a wrecker list so everybody's guaranteed a wreck. They were doing that, but then it got changed, you know? So, if you really want to make it fair, you can make it fair. There is solution and the Chief could make it fair. He can give you the solutions to what needs to happen. The biggest thing I'm seeing is that officer safety and know I'm just about done here and also keep in mind I've been doing this a long time. We're going to the wreck regardless. We my company is going, whether we get the call or not, period where everybody's going. Thank you. Songe, thank you.

Songe, after the last council meeting that Friday, I headed to work and there was an accident on the Interstate. 1:30 in the afternoon, traffic's crazy. They were in the inside lane, so the inside curb and the 1st lane totally blocked, truck was totally into the median, and another car had hit them. There's nobody on the scene. So, I parked farther back where if somebody hit my car, it wouldn't hit anybody there and walked up to them and I called it in. City Officer comes out and Ray's showed up on scene and backed all the way up to block the lane and then the second Ray's wrecker showed up on scene, backed up to block it as well. Dilley's came on scene third, Herreras came on scene 4th, fire truck came, and ambulance came. Everything proceeds, I'm blocked in at this point, I can't go anywhere. I was talking to Danielle, and they have first on scene, but they also have officer discretion. So, Dilley was next out, Dilley got the tow, not the first on scene wreckers. They helped close the freeway down, move all the traffic over everything like that. But they were not given first scene, it was still used as a rotation, that's what started the conversation, of the Ordinance options to have both and have officer discretion in an emergency situation to use first on scene versus always having to use first on scene. So that is the purpose of why I brought it back after actually witnessing them, show up first on scene and set up and then it's still not be a first on scene, but if they were still able to use rotation for whoever was next out. And then Chief, I will turn it over.

Rod Carroll, Police Chief, In 2020, 447 peace officers lost their lives in the line of duty deaths in the United States, 52 involved felony shootings, 46 traffic related deaths. This is a 31% increase from 2023, in which it was 31. Texas, unfortunately, led the statistics with 9 excuse me, eighteen line of duty deaths. In the past two weeks, Texas has lost two officers to traffic related deaths in the eight years that I've been here at the PD, we have lost four patrol units, totaled all the units were totaled on IH 10. Three officers were injured, transported to the hospital, and lost time at work, with one officer being off for three months. The impact to the City of Vidor was not just the loss of the vehicle and loss of manpower hours, but also our liability and workers comp rates were increased last year. The City of New Braunfels lost two officers and had two officers injured in a single incident, their workers comp and insurance rate went from \$700,000 a year to \$2.7 million. Our current Ordinance requires utilization of the rotation list, which has 30 minutes to respond, imagine the danger involved when you have a traffic accident in early morning fog with limited visibility. My goal is to be proactive and protecting our officers, our first responders and the general public from injury and death. The current verbiage in the City Ordinance states the exception for Law Enforcement personnel, it shall be an exception to prosecution for any violation of this article that an actor was an employee of Law Enforcement Agency acting in an official capacity within the scope of his employment. I'm asking that the exception clearly state as other local cities have. We've had prior changes. I mean, as other cities have, and we had prior to changes in our City Ordinance. That will allow first on scene wreckers in emergency and extreme circumstances. This is emergency and extreme circumstances type situation is what I'm talking about here, is non injury accidents where I got a vehicle in the roadway, and I need to get it out or I'm going to have another accident if I have people inside the vehicle. The rotation list is fine because it's going to be 30 minutes for us to get the ambulances on the scene and get everything else. you know, it's just it's one of

those situations. I'm requesting that verbiage be added that clearly states emergency and extenuating circumstances in the event that a peace officer in the exercise of his or her sole discretion determines that conditions exist, that pose the potential for injury or death to any person the officer may summon the first available wrecker to arrive on scene without utilizing the rotation list. All tow companies that responded to such summons shall operate in a reasonable and prudent manner in compliance with all federal, state, and or local laws, rules, and regulations. This is the exact same verbiage that Rose City has and most of the cities have in this area. The exceptions for I-10, where the posted speed limit is 75, which at times is the minimum speed limit, as anybody that's driven down it, and creates the greatest chance of death and injury. We will continue to utilize the other exception when a life of threat occurs, such as when a person is pinned in a rollover accident underneath the vehicle. We can utilize that one instead of getting first on scene. The main situation is, and I want you all to think about it is we make a traffic stop with a drunk driver and they don't pull onto the shoulder, they pull into the lane of traffic. You never know where they're going to go. Now I'm up on I-10 and I have a drunk driver, and I need to get that vehicle out of the lane of traffic. Tonight particularly, we only have so many units on at this particular time of night. We only have two to you know, 3 to 4 units on at night. This is a danger. I'm not talking about accidents where we have injuries when we have the fire truck there and the ambulance. I'm talking about where I have a one vehicle accident where somebody has slid into the wall and hydroplane, which often happen. And I need to just get that vehicle off the roadway before the next vehicle hydroplanes. Once one vehicle that there is a defect on I-10 in the westbound lanes over Hwy. 90 Claiborne area water pools there and once we get one accident, my worst fear is that another person is going to be coming along and we're going to have that secondary accident. I'd rather get that vehicle off the roadway as quickly as possible, all the people off the roadway, get them down to the Market Basket parking lot. We can work the accident there. There's been several times when I've had no injuries, and I've had families and cars that I make stay inside the car because there's nowhere for them to go safely while I'm waiting. That 30 minutes for the wrecker to get on scene. You know I can't put a kid over the wall, it's kind of a 12-foot drop, whereas I could do in other areas. I can get them out of the vehicle and put them over on the service Rd. That is what I'm asking for is extenuating circumstance. I'm not talking about every accident. This is the minimum number of accidents. It will be regulated by my officers. You know, I give them this discretion to make an arrest. They know the rules and the regulations they can take away somebody's liberty. My thing is they can also protect a life and the life they may protect is not just their own, but the other person in the vehicle. Thank you.

Michael Thompson, Councilmember, So I do have a few questions for you. In relation to this, have we had any incidents in the city from the time we took a like from the time we went to the on-call process to now, have we had any issues where an officer was actually hurt due to one of the wrecker services not getting there in time? Carroll, to try and think through the different accidents we've had. Most of them had been injury accidents with the fire trucks and everybody was there, and we were utilizing everyone, blocking traffic, because we had injuries ahead and they ran into the patrol cars, which is what the patrol car is for. I'd much rather them run into the patrol car than run into a medic, a fire fighter, or a parent, or officers. Thompson, So in those events were the wrecker services is already on site, or have they not arrived yet? Carroll, their wrecker services the ones I'm thinking, are they probably were already on, saying whether we had the wrecker that was up for rotation, I'm not sure, again we would not that's the 30 minutes, I'm fine with that. That's not what I'm talking about in a low visibility issue like I'm describing where there's extra, there's no injuries. I don't have an ambulance coming, but I have a wrecker that that shows up. I can see him at 500 feet down the road and maybe he even beat me to the scene, and I can just put a hook up, get it off the road in a safe manner. Thompson, So with the current verbiage of it being at that officers sole discretion, would there be any kind of verbiage in that to prevent them from letting personal issues, personal thoughts or beliefs interfere with that? Carroll, Council, they're gonna have to justify it to me. The thing is, I got to put in the call notes. Why did they go outside the norm? You know the why this was an anomaly? You know, it was low it was, it was a fog, you know, let's be honest. Festival days we've had some fog in the morning. That's an example that I'm just utilizing that hydroplane into the wall hydroplane alone. Where in especially in that area, let's get it hooked up and get it off the roadway as quickly as possible. You know, they were the wrecker drivers. During the ice storm that I made contact with each wrecker driver and said be prepared if

you know you're the next up, get ready and start heading that way when those calls got out. Because again, I was worried about that and they did a great job that wasn't, out of the was not a norm for them to be. Hey, when you hear the wreck and what I was most afraid of is I-10, and we're going to get it. I told him we're going to hook it up, get it off the road and get on the Service Rd. where the speed limit is a lot lower.

Thompson, So one of my worries with this whole Ordinance in general and this is why I'm kind of questioning a little more than I have in the past is I worry about a precedence that we could set that we would be okay regulating certain companies out of business and things like that. And that's something that I definitely want to make sure that we're not doing. We already regulate their rates and how much they get paid. I struggle to regulate them even more so by potentially taking away that call list, because that call list really makes it a little fairer, and equitable to all the drivers. Carroll, the call I'm sorry the call list is not going away. They still have the rotation. I'm just talking about the exigent circumstances. Thompson, Are there any other options that we could look at, like possibly reaching out to the fire department to block the roads for us or anything of that nature? Any other avenues that we could go down? Carroll, The fire department is going to not put a \$750,000 piece of equipment out there just to block traffic then and The thing is, and we're increasing the number of people on the roadway, we got 2 firefighters out there now. I will tell you is I researched all the other city ordinances and what they had was one of two things. Is that the A plan was what we had. Which was 30 minutes rotation and then what I'm asking for and all the other ordinances. Had the exigent circumstances for tows in certain situations, the other one is cities had no exigent circumstances, but the rotation list required a 20 minute on scene time. So that was the two variances as far as research and all the other city ordinances.

Thompson, And Chris, is it acceptable for me to speak to some of the ones who spoke earlier in regard to this? Leavins, you can comment about the Ordinance.

Thompson, I guess my question for all three companies that are present is do you feel like what is being proposed today will with that kind of being a compromise where it's only in those emergency situations, do you feel like that would be fair for all of your companies to be able to survive?

Songe, Wendy, will you come to the mic please, we have to have it recorded. Wendy, So what he's talking about the wording that he's wanting to put in there that's already in place, we've already had first on-scene calls for accidents or whatever the situation was and all three of us were fine with it because we knew the situation. We knew that it's probably it's most likely. What was needed at the time, and we had no issues with not calling the next out rotation for that and we didn't have a problem with that, so. If we're okay with that, why can't we just leave it the way it is? Because we're okay, everybody's okay with it and then if it's the officer's discretion. What happens when you know that officer and they make that decision? The job is done already. Somebody whoever was next out didn't get it or whatever, you know, the other person's another wrecker. Got it for, you know, being first on scene when it should have been, you know, next out. Well, that person that wrecker driver lost out on that money on their paycheck. And then, you know, we ask about it. Why did that happen? Why? But it doesn't really matter why it happened nothing really gets changed. It's not going to put money back in that driver's pocket. You know, for him, for his family or whatever. So, it is what it is, the officer's discretion. I understand what he's saying, but when it happens and if it doesn't need to happen, it really doesn't matter. It's what's done is done. And then our drivers miss out on what could have been theirs and it's fine the way I mean it's been working the way that it is, even if they do first on scene, because we all understand the reason for that.

Songe, Adam. Dilley, Answer your question, Thompson. No police officer or city about a patrol unit has ever been struck waiting on a wrecker, Brittany, was the first officer got hit this past year? Me, Kevin, and his drivers were overturning a box truck when she got struck. There was two other officers out there that was with her diverting traffic onto the exit ramp. The second officer was Amber Meadows. She was on the shoulder of the road and got struck by a DWI driver she was trying to locate. Not one officer got hit waiting on the wrecker. The fire department, when they get on the scenes, they already use their apparatus to block the traffic as a barrier. Chief Smith will tell you that that's what he's got his fireman to do. Thompson, ok but with the ordinance as the way chief described it. Would that still work as a compromise in this type of situation? Dilley, I'm with Wendy on that the same thing that he's talking about is already in the ordinance. They've already called like 5. First on scenes like that and a life and death situation. They had a guy at 90

into width that was flipped over in a ditch. They caught first on scene wrecker. I hooked up to it, got it. So, I mean, as long as it's a life-or-death situation like he's saying it, you know, he's wanting to do, we're fine with it. That's what's in the ordinance right now. That's what we came back and talked to you about in 2023. Why is he wanting to do any words or anything changing now that that's. Barker, Change of that wording and the ordinance now specifically, is that wording in the ordinance now specifically that he's talking about. He's saying it's already. Chief, I'm sorry, mam. Barker is that wording in the Ordinance right now. Chief, I can actually have my officers right now. The officers could actually tow anything as a first on scene like the low visibility they could actually use that as. An exception and go ahead and utilize and do it right now do the first on scene. That would not be a problem. What I'm trying to do is make sure it's very clear when they can use the first on scene, but right now if we had a vehicle up against the wall and low visibility, we could actually call first on scene and just get it off the highway because of the chance of death to other people. Barker, so essentially nothing's changing. You're just making it very clear and not up for interpretation. Chief, I wanted to clarify the Ordinance yes. Barker got it. Thompson, that makes sense.

Songe, Come on, Mr. Herrera. Herrera, you know it's really simple that comes down to verbiage. They don't have a lot of employees. I got a lot of employees. They're worried about their drivers are going to miss out on money. But what about my drivers that miss out on the money that are sitting there, ready to go and you're going to call a rotation wrecker if it's, it's something that. They could call first on scene and clear it like that. My guys are going to miss out on money because they're calling a rotation wrecker, but you know it's it really. It's tit for tat. It's not going to put anybody out of business none it's not that. Nobody's going to go out of business. Are they going to lose some calls if they're not getting up and go work? Yeah, that's part of the hustle. That's the way it's been for years. You gotta get out. You gotta get to work. You gotta hustle. And if a guy's willing to stay out for two or three in the morning. You know, waiting on the call, I mean, that guy's hungry. He needs the money. You know, if you can't just sit at the house and wait for it to come to you, you know that as a salesperson, right? Songe, I'll be honest, my opinion was different in the whole situation until I was witnessing and then talking to officer may know about the teeth and hers and how they were happy with it, and it worked for them because it's at their discretion and to see she used the third person. I'm seeing who was next out, not either of the other ones that were on there. Herrera, It's it comes. It goes either way. You know if they only use the first one saying we're good with it. I got people like I said, we're going regardless. We're going to be there; I'm going to waste the fuel just in case they call first on scene. Songe, ya'll were actually 4th on scene. Herrera, On that one, no. So yeah, I'm just saying we're going regardless, you know, and we're going to help, but not I've got a Fire Commissioner here that would like to speak on the fire department matter. You know, I'm telling you now, they're not going to I'll let him tell how it is, he allowed to speak or no, or he didn't sign up. Jerry Aldridge is here he's a Commissioner from the fire department. Songe, Chris, can someone speak that's not on the citizens comments. Leavins, I mean since you brought up the fire department, then yes, Jerry, okay.

Songe, Name and address, you know the drill. Jerry Aldridge, 360 W railroad I'm the one of the fire Commissioners for Orange County ESD #1. Fire Department brought up a little while ago. We've had two fire trucks hit in the last three years due to waiting on. Wreckers to get there, to pick it up, to pick up the car, get it out of the way. We're not going to use a \$750,000 fire truck as a traffic cone. Not going to happen. When we get called to the scenes, we don't get called on all MVC's. We do not. We need to, but we don't. We'll discuss that later. When we get there, we're concentrating on the patient. Everything is going on the same. Our safety, the police officer, safety, the public safety pretty much in that realm. So, we're there to help. We're there to do what we can. We're not going to block traffic 8, four mile behind the scene and get traffic out of the way. We're not going to do it; it's Not Going to happen so y'all can understand that as well as anybody can understand. The wreckers the fire department used the wreckers and kind of wear two (2) hats the fire department uses the wreckers to stabilize vehicles on occasion. We do that on a first come. We turn around; we see a wrecker set. Now we'll use that wrecker. We've used dillies. We've used rays. We've used Herreras. So, before I went to work for Herreras, we used to use whoever was there, we didn't care. So, Police Department call the first on scene we call it help so. Fire Department still does that, so if they need something, if there's a wrecker there, we'll use them. I would imagine police partners doing the same thing. They don't want to send it on ice can in the fall over the rain for 30 minutes, waiting on a car to get cleared

off the roadway. So, but I mean, it's whatever y'all want to do. I don't have a dog in that hunt. But fire department? Yeah, we're not. Songe, does anybody have questions for Mr. Aldridge? Thank you. Aldridge, alright.

MiKayla Bourque, Councilmember, I have a question. Yeah, what's the? Thank you. What's the average time for the wrecker to show up? Like just average. And I understand it's 30 minutes. Carroll, I don't have to have. Responsibility checking on any check up to the 30 minutes which is. We call. They have over 30 minutes to show up to the scene on the rotation basis. Wendy, That generally does not happen. Bourque, Yeah, like is it typically like 10 minutes, 15 minutes or, okay. Thompson, And so let me just clarify on this change like so the change you're wanting to make is actually making that process a little stricter. You guys in clearing up when exactly you can do it instead of it being vague and up for interpretation. Bourque, But we're not making that's already in the ordinance, correct? Barker, Yeah, if it's already in there, I don't. Chief, It's already for us to do is actually, and we're also does not have to obey different. What I'm saying is specifically in the ordinance where the blame, he can utilize that sole discretion when it's actually the circumstances and correct the life. So, we're talking about these are non-injury accidents, but I got a vehicle in the roadway. And I need to get them off the roadway. So, I'll have a second there. Songe, So it's almost regulating the officers side of it.

After the motion – Chief, I have one more thing this is not going to be something the officer is just going to do, he's going to have to clarify that over the radio by asking the Sergeant for permission, hey I'm in a bad position here, no injuries. Can I call first on scene that Sergeant has to authorize that. Maybe I wasn't specific about that earlier. That might be the check and balance like you would ask.

Kathryn Weldon, Councilmember, I'm curious why this didn't get brought when we beat this Ordinance to death in 2023, I guess it was, it was shortly after the last election. Why? Didn't it come up, I'm curious? Chief, that was my mistake, I should have, I'll be honest with the number of officers that have gotten injured or killed, I've just become more aware after we lost Chris Barry, of watching the number of officers killed in the line of duty. I think it's just one of those situations. Weldon, could we get some kind of metrics to see how this plays out. Chief, oh yeah and I think you're gonna find out it's gonna be very minimal number of times. Weldon, I wouldn't want to be what Councilman Thompson said about being responsible for driving someone out of business, I don't. Chief, please do not think that was my goal, my goal is safety, safety for all parties involved. This has nothing to do with money, because my thing is it isn't really, I'm just going to say it really doesn't matter to me which company comes and pulls that vehicle off the roadway. I just need the roadway cleared. Songe, but yeah in a couple of months we can bring that just as an overview back, that's fine.

A motion to approve an Ordinance of the City of Vidor, Teas amending the Code of Ordinances by amending Chapter 74 – Vehicles for Hire, Article III – Tow Trucks; regarding operation of tow trucks in the City; providing for a Repeal of Conflicting Ordinances; providing for Severability; providing for Penalties; and providing for Publication and an Effective Date, adding the verbiage as is and adjusting the fees adding the additional \$25.00, was made by Councilmember Barker, seconded by Councilmember Bourque. The Council voted four (4) for and one (1) opposed. The motion carried.

C -4. Discussion and possible action to approve Conn Park Complex's use of the City's Conn Park for a festival on the 24th and 25th of October 2025

Misty Songe, Mayor, Mr. Woodard. Terry Woodard, I'm going to be way faster than last night. Songe, But hold on, Terry. I'm gonna have to do it, Terry. I have to do it again for clarification on the dates. It is not the 24th and the 25th. It is the 25th and the 26th. Woodard, We changed it, mayor. So, we're going to, we're going to change it to the dates that were listed. Songe, you're changing them back. Woodard, But for the city, we're going to need a few extra days for setup. If y'all do approve it, you know we'll there'll be we, we're going to need a couple of days for clean up in a couple of days for set up. So, for what y'all would be approving? It would be I think I've got four or five days listed for it. Songe, we just have the 24th and 25th.

Woodard, okay, if we could approve that is the correct times for the festival. Songe, so Friday and Saturday. Woodard, yes Friday and Saturday. Oh, First off, Terry Woodard, 480 Lakewood Dr. feeder, Texas. I'm the president of Conn Park, the other Conn Park that we're very confused about that I hope we're going to get that corrected sometime, for the wrecker. We would really like to request from the 21st to the 25th, including some setup days and some cleanup days for the park. Pebbles Eckhoff, Finance Director, okay so your festival is on the 25th and the 26th so do you need it till the 27th? Woodard, yes, we are going to clean up on Sunday. Eckhoff, okay so the 21st through the 27th. Woodard, correct, okay And to explain what we're trying to do for Council, we're this is a first-time festival that we're hoping to bring to Vader in in hopes of raising money for the Compact Park baseball complex that were that were in the process of building. You know, I know we've been talking about common park for many, many years. It is in process. You can see we're clearing land out there and we have approval from our board to build the concession stand and we're well on our way. Although we're probably going to run out of money really quickly because what we're using to build it is donations. From local businesses, and that's hard to get. So, we're doing all kinds of fundraising things, trying to gather up the money to build these parks for the kids. Any questions? Robbie Hood, City Manager, If the Council chooses to allow that we will have a meeting that's on the next agenda item that we will pass the Committee, and they can help with this. Also, the Council will require some type of insurance as well. Woodard, absolutely and we will follow along with any City Ordinances that we need to as well. Hood also we want to be fair to everyone and they will have to pay. Woodard, we understand that nothing's free.

A motion to **approve Conn Park Complex's use of the City's Conn Park for a festival on the 24th and 25th of October 2025**, was made by Councilmember Barker, seconded by Councilmember Thompson. The Council voted five (5) for and none (0) opposed. **The motion carried.**

C -5. Discussion and possible action to appoint three (3) members to the Conn Park Advisory Committee

Gary Herrera, 1015 Orange St, I'm coming to you today to be asked to be put on the. Conn Park Advisory Committee and this Committee is going to move forward to look at making Charter rules of what we can do and how we can make rules for different events. So, if there's water involved, electricity involved, it's a small party of a bigger party and then how to improve the parking and Make that part move forward and any funds that we collect from those fees will actually go right back into the park and to develop more and hopefully. In the future hopefully it will not just be Conn Park Advisory Committee, it will be just the City of Vidor Park Advisory Committee or Pirate Pride Park, and this is a start for us, and we want to try. Songe, yes tentative name change to come soon. Basically, like a Charter, we can get all the rules. Regulations so other people can use the facility for their event and the main goal is to eventually open it up to the public. I would say to fly kites. But kids don't fly kites, come on, they. Hood, this will be an advisory committee to bring things to City Staff and then we will bring them to Council. City Hall will maintain the calendar. Also, the bathrooms are held up due to the water district and TCEQ. Hood, it will be one Councilmember and two citizens. Songe, yes two citizens. My suggestion is Gary and Jessica and whoever for the 3rd.

A motion to **approve Gary Herrera and Jessica Barker to the Conn Park Advisory Committee**, was made by Councilmember Bourque, seconded by Councilmember Weldon. The Council voted five (5) for and none (0) opposed. **The motion carried.**

C -6. Discussion and possible action to approve an Ordinance of the City of Vidor, Texas, amending the Code of Ordinances by amending Chapter 58, Section 58-75. – Unlawful Conduct in City Parks, to prohibit smoking and vaping in City parks; providing for a Repeal of Conflicting Ordinances; providing for Severability; providing for Penalties; and providing for Publication and an Effective Date amend

Misty Songe, I have been getting a lot of messages about this, and I think it needs to be broader. Robbie Hood, City Manager, we need to clarify so City Staff can handle the signages for the parks. Discussion ensued, settled with all parks no smoking or vaping except for designated smoking areas

A motion to **approve an Ordinance of the City of Vidor, Texas, amending the Code of Ordinances by amending Chapter 58, Section 58-75. – Unlawful Conduct in City Parks, to prohibit smoking and vaping in City parks; providing for a Repeal of Conflicting Ordinances; providing for Severability; providing for Penalties; and providing for Publication and an Effective Date amend**, was made by Councilmember Barker, seconded by Councilmember Thompson. The Council voted five (5) for and none (0) opposed. **The motion carried.**

C -7. Consideration of Adjournment

A motion for **Consideration of Adjournment** was made by Councilmember Thompson, seconded by Councilmember Barker. The Council voted five (5) for and none (0) opposed. **The motion carried.** The meeting adjourned at 8:16 pm.

These minutes were approved on May 8, 2025.



ATTEST:

Rachel Duplechain, City Secretary

Misty Songe, Mayor