

AARON ROCCAFORTE <i>Council Member, Place 1</i>	DAVID RUTLEDGE <i>Mayor</i>	PATTY COLLINS <i>Mayor Pro-Tem/ Council Member, Place 4</i>
GINA MANNINO <i>Council Member, Place 2</i>		CHRIS BOULEY <i>Council Member, Place 5</i>
BRYANT CHAMPAGNE <i>Council Member, Place 3</i>		SHERBY DIXON <i>Council Member, Place 6</i>

CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

CITY OF BRIDGE CITY

November 18, 2025

The City Council of Bridge City met in a meeting on Tuesday, November 18, 2025, at the City Hall of Bridge City, 260 Rachal, Bridge City, Texas.

1. **CALL TO ORDER**

Mayor David Rutledge called the City Council meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

CITY COUNCIL PRESENT:

Mayor David Rutledge
 Council Member Aaron Roccaforte
 Council Member Gina Mannino
 Council Member Chris Bouley
 Council Member Sherby Dixon

CITY COUNCIL ABSENT: Mayor Pro-Tem Patty Collins
 Council Member Bryant Champagne

CITY STAFF PRESENT:

City Manager Bart Bartkowiak
 City Attorney Paul Fukuda
 City Secretary Jeanie McDowell
 Chief Tod McDowell
 Public Works Director Mike Lund
 Utility Superintendent Mike Die

2. **INVOCATION**

The invocation given by Council Member Gina Mannino.

3. **PLEDGE TO THE UNITED STATES FLAG AND THE STATE OF TEXAS FLAG**

Mayor Rutledge led in the pledge of allegiance to the United States flag and to the State of Texas flag. At the conclusion of the pledges, Mayor Rutledge thanked everyone for coming to the meeting.

4. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Council Member Roccaforte made a motion to approve the agenda, seconded by Council Member Dixon.

With no changes, discussion, or alterations, Mayor Rutledge called for a vote.

MOTION CARRIED.

Ayes: Mayor Rutledge, Council Members Roccaforte, Mannino, Bouley, and Dixon.

Noes: None.

Absent: Mayor Pro-Tem Collins and Council Member Champagne.

5. CITIZEN COMMENTS

None.

6. REPORTS & COMMENTS

(a) City Manager Bart Bartkowiak

1. Christmas in the Park had 26 participants sign up for the Christmas Trail that would be set up on the old Pony Field. He said he had a list of names of businesses. The train will also be on the old Pony Field.
2. IT Audit has been conducted by a firm the City engaged, and all the office phones have been changed out which should be a savings of \$10,000 to \$11,000. The City has also moved over to a different 365 hosted environment, which has given more functionality than before with savings of about \$700 per year.
3. Orange County Drainage District put in a Texas Development Water Board application for planning assistance to develop a flood control planning study of culverts and railroad trestles throughout Orange County. He said they were submitting for the funding, but there would be a comment period open with the Texas Development Water Board that would end on December 7th if anyone would be interested to comment to support the drainage study.
4. Facebook Safewise posted that Bridge City was the 24th safest city in Texas. He said the City could congratulate the Police Chief for the good rating on that.
5. The City has been working on evaluating structures for floods which was a grant program that has been in motion for a while. There will be a notice sent to the Port Arthur News to be published Saturday, November 22nd and Saturday, November 29th which would start the ads publicizing a notice for proposals and notice to contractors and people would have until 3 p.m. Thursday, December 11th to put bids in.
6. TxDot approved the grant for sidewalks along Roundbunch. The City was awarded \$5.426 million. The City would not pay any money, because we had so many credits.

(b) City Council

Council Member Roccaforte thanked the City for allowing the City Council to attend the TML Annual Conference. It was great with a lot of good classes and networking.

(c) City Staff
Chief Tod McDowell

The Police Department hired a full-time dispatcher and made contingent offers to two police cadets.

(d) Mayor David Rutledge report:

On Wednesday, November 19th at 9:30a.m. the Ben and Julie Roger community service award ceremony would honor four people and one of them is our very own Patty Collins. Please congratulate her next time you see her.

7. RESOLUTION

(a) Consideration and possible action to approve Resolution No. 2025-22(R) casting the City of Bridge City's 100 votes to Philip Welch for the 2026 Orange County Appraisal District Board of Directors

Council Member Roccaforte made a motion to approve Resolution No. 2025-22(R) casting the City of Bridge City's 100 votes to Philip Welch for the 2026 Orange County Appraisal District Board of Directors, seconded by Council Member Mannino.

With no further discussion , Mayor Rutledge called for a vote.

MOTION CARRIED.

Ayes: Mayor Rutledge, Council Members Roccaforte, Mannino, Bouley, and Dixon.

Noes: None.

Absent: Mayor Pro-Tem Collins and Council Member Champagne.

8. ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION & POSSIBLE ACTION

(a) Consideration and possible action to approve October 7, 2025 City Council Regular Meeting Minutes

Council Member Dixon made a motion to approve the October 7, 2025 City Council Regular Meeting minutes, seconded by Council Member Bouley.

With no changes, discussion, or alterations, Mayor Rutledge called for a vote.

MOTION CARRIED.

Ayes: Mayor Rutledge, Council Members Roccaforte, Mannino, Bouley, and Dixon.

Noes: None.

Absent: Mayor Pro-Tem Collins and Council Member Champagne.

(b) Consideration and possible action to approve the bills list for the months of September 2025 and October 2025

Council Member Roccaforte made a motion to approve the bills list for the months of September 2025 and October 2025, seconded by Council Member Dixon.

With no further discussion, Mayor Rutledge called for a vote.

MOTION CARRIED.

Ayes: Mayor Rutledge, Council Members Roccaforte, Mannino, Bouley, and Dixon.

Noes: None.

Absent: Mayor Pro-Tem Collins and Council Member Champagne.

WORKSHOP SESSION

9. WORKSHOP ITEM FOR DISCUSSION ONLY

(a) Discussion of policies on reserving the pickleball courts for special events

Bart Bartkowiak, City Manager asked Council for guidance on reserving the pickleball courts for special events. He asked if they wanted to charge a fee for the pickleball courts for tournaments or just reserve the courts. He said the City reserves the pavilion but does not charge a fee for the usage.

Mayor David Rutledge said he did not want to charge a fee for tournaments, but if it turned out they were reserving the courts every weekend then the Council would need to revisit and may set a fee for rental of the pickleball courts.

All council members in attendance agreed that they did not want to charge a fee for tournaments at the pickleball courts.

(b) Discussion of the City of Bridge City's Strategic Plan

Bart Bartkowiak, City Manager, said he had a suggested version of the Bridge City Vision Statement:

His suggested version: "Bridge City is the heart of Southeast Texas – a welcoming community where opportunity, connection and pride come together."

He said the City would be the preferred community in Southeast Texas and a city that provided value for residents and businesses.

He said the City will be known as the choice to live, work, invest, and play and a place where neighbors help neighbors and contribute to the greater good.

City Council agreed with the Vision Statement

Mr. Bartkowiak said he also had a suggested version of the Bridge City Mission Statement:

His suggested version: “We serve with integrity, lead with compassion, and work together to build a prosperous, thriving community through responsible leadership and exceptional service.”

He said the city would enhance the community’s prosperity by working together as servant leaders, delivering exceptional personal service, and fulfilling the public trust by being responsible stewards of resources.

He said he would like a consensus of the top 2 or 3 amongst all of this that would be complete in this physical year. He said the two in particular is the last one on Infrastructure. It would be IF7-Utility Rate Study and Sense of Community SC4-Create Parks Master Plan. He said those would be the two he would consider the top goals for this year.

He said there was one under Infrastructure for Street and Drainage for a bond issue and he put question marks under the Fiscal Year, because the City just issued bonds for work and did not know at what point the Council would want these recommendations to come back considering it would result in another bond issuance. He said his thought it would not be this physical year.

Mayor Rutledge ask if the City would have a professional firm come in and help facilitate the strategic plan and the comprehensive plan.

Mr. Bartkowiak said they may look at the strategic plan the City had outlined as part of the comprehensive plan. He said the City was still waiting for a funding decision. He said supposedly the City was still in the running for it. He said the City has not been counted out but does not have an answer on it.

Council Member Mannino said she liked the idea of prioritizing the other and coming back and filling in. She said we could already mark one off under Infrastructure, which would be the walking track.

Mr. Bartkowiak said at least the City had the grant. He said under the original plan the Council wanted to get the Pony Field back and that it has been accomplished. He said he would tag the Street and Drainage Bond issuance for Year 26-27 for now.

Mr. Bartkowiak said he would put this together and finalize it and that would be the initial draft of the strategic plan. He said there was one more thing and it was previously discussed, the cell sites. He said he reached out to Diamond Marketing and basically the City would have to give them a list of city sites that we own. He said they would market those going forward for the City and we would have to agree with them to give them the exclusive rights to market city owned properties for a period of 5 years and there would be no cost to the City. He said they would have five years to get people interested in putting cell towers up. He said if they put a tower on city infrastructure, such as a water tower, the City would get 75% of the revenue for any attendant installed. He said an attendant would be T-Mobile, Verizon, etc. if it is a new build meaning they would have to put a tower up then the city would get 30% of the revenue

from the first and second carrier and 40% of the revenue from the 3rd plus carrier. This would be a decent income stream, but you would not expect anything crazy off of it.

Council Member Roccaforte asked if it was put on a water tower would the revenue have to go into the utility fund.

Mr. Bartkowiak said he would work with Mr. Fukuda and get an answer for the Council.

10. ADJOURN

Mayor Rutledge adjourned the meeting at 6:41 p.m.


David Rutledge, Mayor

ATTEST:


Jeanie McDowell, City Secretary

