

**Cold Spring City Council
Special Meeting
March 18, 2019**

The special meeting of the Cold Spring City Council was called to order by Mayor Angelo Penque.

Roll call showed the following council members present - Lisa Cavanaugh, Paul Kloeker, Michael Ruscher, and Chris Ampfer. Cindy Moore and Adam Sandfoss were excused. Also, present were Administrative Officer Stephen Taylor, City Clerk Robin Sweeney, Police Chief Steve Collinsworth, Ronnie Hitch Public Works Director and City Attorney Brandon Voelker.

Mayor Penque gave the exit instructions, per Fire Department regulations.

Consideration of renewing lease with Walnut Hills Academy: Brandon Voelker opened the discussion by providing all the details that led up to this point. The City gave notice to WHA in November 2017 that they would not be renewing the lease. The City would like to plan for the Police Department to take residence in the building that WHA is currently in. The City wants to move the Police Department because the department is growing and to relieve safety concerns with the Police being on campus with the city building. Walnut Hills Academy did request that the City extend the lease, which the City granted and gave them another year which would end their lease in June 2019. WHA owners attended the March 2019 Caucus meeting to request another extension or reconsideration of terminating the lease. The next day WHA notified the parents that they would be closing at the end of May. After many calls, emails, and Facebook posts in disagreement with the decision to end the lease, Mayor Penque suggested that we raise WHA rent to the market value and use those funds to build a police department on campus. Mr. Voelker explained some of the items in the commercial lease agreement. It will now be locked in for 5 years rather than being a year-to-year lease. Michael Ruscher wants to make sure that only the lease payments will be used for the building of a new police department, he does not want tax payer's money to be used for that. Mayor Penque agrees and added that they can also lease the current Police Department and use the funds from that to go towards the new Police Department. Lisa Cavanaugh expressed her disappointment with the perception that the City did this to WHA at the last minute with no warning. Lisa Cavanaugh then asked how long it will take to get this new Police Department built. Mayor Penque responded that we have not put it on the drawing board yet. Steve Taylor guessed that it would be approximately 18 months. Mayor Penque asked for a roll call vote to authorize the Mayor to enter into a new Commercial Agreement Lease with Walnut Hills Academy. Roll call vote shows 4 yeses and 0 noes. **Motion carried.**

Mr. Sparks addressed council and thanked them for reconsidering the lease. He also thanked all the parents in attendance for all of their support, and he thanked the employees. Mr. Sparks addressed Councilwoman Cavanaugh's comment, they did not tell their employees and parents hoping there would be more negotiation and a different outcome, and to avoid parents leaving to look for another provider, it was a business decision. Mayor Penque added to that, the City did not tell anyone because we didn't want to hurt their business. Michael Ruscher stated that there could have been more information in the letter to the parents that would have provided more of a back story to help avoid all of the angry calls and emails. Lisa Cavanaugh stated that the amount of people at this meeting is a testament to The Sparks and their business. Mayor Penque said that the City loves to see the kids around the campus.

Michael Ruscher made a motion to adjourn the March 18, 2019 special council meeting at 6:48 pm. Lisa Cavanaugh seconded the motion. **All in favor.**

Approved: 3/25/19

City Clerk: /s/ Robin Sweeney

Mayor: /s/ D. Angelo Penque