

City of Coldspring, Texas
Minutes of the Regular Called Council Meeting
Monday, March 9, 2026

1. Meeting called to order 7:00 PM

2. Roll call.

PRESENT: Alderman Jessica Sewell, Dianne Griffith, Kyle Currie and Mayor John Benestante

ABSENT: Alderman Jennifer Manuel and Alderman Nichole Gatewood

VISITORS: Derren Hall-SJNT, Debra Thomas, Michell Hayock-CVFD, Shawna Holman-CVFD, Marsha Strickland-City Municipal Judge, Linda & Gerald Deeter, Ray McCoppin-SJC TV, Fernando & Isabel Preciado-Red Cross, Tony Sewell, Linda Almaguer, Greg Magee-City Attorney

3. NO PUBLIC COMMENT

4. AGENDA: Mayor Benestante presented the agenda for the meeting. Alderman Kyle Currie made a motion to adopt the agenda as presented. Alderman Jessica Sewell seconded the motion. All in favor.

5. MINUTES: Mayor Benestante presented the minutes from the regular meeting called February 2, 2026, and the minutes from the Special Called February 17, 2026, meeting. A motion to accept the minutes from the regular called February 2, 2026, meeting, and the minutes from the Special Called February 17, 2026, meeting, was made by Alderman Jessica Sewell and seconded by Alderman Dianne Griffith. All in favor.

6. APPROVAL OF BILLS: The list of bills paid and to be paid were reviewed by the Council for approval. A motion to pay the bills was made by Alderman Dianne Griffith and seconded by Alderman Jessica Sewell. All in favor.

7. REPORTS:

A. Mayor's Updates- Mayor Benestante briefed Council that despite numerous calls and in person visits to the City's audit firm of Axley and Rode who was taken over mid year by Carr, Riggs, and Ingram. Mayor will be making another trip to Lufkin to try to get answers regarding the audit. Visit Coldspring had a great meeting with the key stakeholders and will be meeting again in June of 2026. Also, Council was briefed on the No Kings Protest scheduled for March 28 and the concerns by the San Jacinto Historical Commission.

- B. Operation of Treatment Plant and Collections System- Josh Taylor, the City's sewer operator, presented the report on the Operation of the Treatment Plant and Collections Systems. The plant operated at 24 percent capacity for the month of February and flowed an average of .048 MGD. Rain Total was 2.75 inches. The Onsite Lift Station located at 211 Jones Road had no issues. Josh updated on Lift Stations 1,2,3,4,5 & 6 having no issues. No sampling issues for the month of January.
 - C. FINANCIAL & LEGISLATIVE REPORTS - Mayor John Benestante briefed Council with the current financial profit and loss statements for the General account, Sewer & Maintenance, Hotel/Motel, Capital Projects, Investment Report, Community Center, Coldspring Volunteer Fire Department. Michelle Haylock reported on the Coldspring Volunteer Fire Department for the month of February. Mayor Benestante asked for any comments or questions regarding the profit and loss statements. There were none.
 - D. CAPITAL PROJECTS REPORTS: Mayor John Benestante briefed Council with the current Capital Project Reports for the Community Center, Fire Department Building, TX Dot Sidewalk Project, Department of Agriculture-CDBG-TDA Grant Project (Faulkner), General Land Office-MIT MOD- Grant Project (SH 150 W/FM 2025 Sewer Project), Texas Parks and Wildlife City Park #2 Project, City Hall Extension and City Record Retention Building/Public Works. Mayor Benestante asked for any comments or questions regarding reports. There were none.
 - E. CITY ATTORNEY REPORT: City Attorney Greg Magee went over the Interlocal agreement with animal control, a gaming ordinance, and burning within the city limits.
 - F. SEWER REPORTS: Briefing on sewer adjustments & sewer cutoffs - Assistant City Executive Administrator, Amanda Villa briefed Council on the sewer adjustments made to customer accounts in the month of February. Amanda also briefed Council that there were 4 customer accounts that were locked off for non-pay. Only one has since paid and been unlocked.
8. OLD BUSINESS:
- A. Discussion and possible action on SJC Master Gardeners memorandum of understanding to relocate their demonstration garden(s) from the Coldspring Community Center to City Park #2. After a brief discussion from Mayor Benestante, the city will draft a memorandum of understanding to relocate their demonstration garden(s) from the Coldspring Community Center to City Park #2 to be tabled until next meeting.
 - B. Briefing on the Coldspring Area Library's memorandum of understanding/contract. Mayor Benestante briefed council on the Coldspring Area Library's memorandum of understanding/contract. Greg Magee will be reviewing the information and will be respond accordingly.

- C. Discussion and possible action to approve Resolution No. 2026-03 a resolution acknowledging the dedication of a permanent easement by Johnnie Berger for the purpose of construction a sewer lift station on the easement property, and the granting of one sewer tap and five thousand dollars to Johnnie Berger in consideration of the dedication of the permanent easement along with the granting of a temporary easement across his property during the construction of the lift station. After a brief discussion from Mayor Benestante, a motion was made by Kyle Currie to approve Resolution No. 2026-03 acknowledging the dedication of a permanent easement by Johnnie Berger for the purpose of construction a sewer lift station on the easement property, and the granting of one sewer tap and five thousand dollars to Johnnie Berger in consideration of the dedication of the permanent easement along with the granting of a temporary easement across his property during the construction of the lift station. This motion was seconded by Jessica Sewell. All in favor.
 - D. Discussion and possible action to amend the 2026 General Budget to include a line item for the San Jacinto County Animal Shelter for the amount of \$10,000 by removing said amount from the Contingency Fund line item. After a brief discussion, a motion was made by Dianne Griffith to amend the 2026 General Budget to include a line item for the San Jacinto County Animal Shelter for the amount of \$10,000 by removing said amount from the Contingency Fund line item. This motion was seconded by Kyle Currie. All in favor.
9. NEW BUSINESS:
- A. Discussion and possible action on issuing a proclamation for declaring the month of March as Red Cross Month. After a brief discussion, a motion was made by Jessica Sewell to issue a proclamation for declaring the month of March as Red Cross Month. This motion was seconded by Dianne Griffith. All in favor. Mayor John Benestante read the proclamation to the public.
 - B. Discussion and possible action City Ordinance 2026-02 on the abandonment of right of way being 0.248 acres of land located in the Robert Rankin Survey, Abstract 42, in San Jacinto County, Texas and being all of the Texas Street of Faulkner's Park Place addition. After a brief discussion a motion was made by Kyle Currie to approve the City Ordinance 2026-02 on the abandonment of right of way being 0.248 acres of land located in the Robert Rankin Survey, Abstract 42, in San Jacinto County, Texas and being all of the Texas Street of Faulkner's Park Place addition pending attorney's review. This motion was seconded by Dianne Griffith. All in favor.
 - C. Discussion and possible action on authorizing the certification of unopposed candidates for other political subdivisions for the election scheduled May 2, 2026. After a brief discussion a motion was made by Dianne Griffith, authorizing the certification of unopposed candidates for other political subdivisions for the election scheduled May 2, 2026. This motion was seconded by Jessica Sewell. All in favor

- D. Discussion and possible action on authorizing the cancellation of the election scheduled to be held on May 2, 2026, in accordance with Section 2.053(a) of the Texas Election Code. After a brief discussion a motion was made by Dianne Griffith authorizing the cancellation of the election scheduled to be held on May 2, 2026, in accordance with Section 2.053(a) of the Texas Election Code. This motion was seconded by Kyle Currie. All in favor.
- E. Discussion and possible action on Interlocal Agreement between the City of Coldspring and the San Jacinto Emergency Services District. No action was taken on the Interlocal Agreement between the City of Coldspring and the San Jacinto Emergency Services District. Line item was tabled.
- F. Discussion and possible action to accept line-item adjustments made by Julie Gilmer, CPA to balance the General Fund, amend the 2025 Capital Fund Account to use excess funds remaining to bring the Sewer Account Fund into balance. The excess Capital Fund investment will be taken from the City Savings Account and will be transferred to the Sewer Account Fund and bank balance. After a brief discussion, a motion was made by Jessica Sewell to accept line-item adjustments made by Julie Gilmer, CPA to balance the General Fund, amend the 2025 Capital Fund Account to use excess funds remaining to bring the Sewer Account Fund into balance. The excess Capital Fund investment will be taken from the City Savings Account and will be transferred to the Sewer Account Fund and bank balance. This motion was seconded by Dianne Griffith. All in favor.
- G. Briefing on public event application for Harvest Reach International Christian Motorcycle Rally event in May of 2026. Mayor John Benestante briefed council on a public event application for Harvest Reach International Christian Motorcycle Rally event in May of 2026. The City is waiting for additional information from the applicant. This will be on the April 6, 2026 Council meeting agenda.

10. ADJOURN

A motion to adjourn was made by Alderman Jessica Sewell at 8:17PM and was seconded by Alderman Kyle Currie. All in favor.


John Benestante, Mayor

Attest:


Jody Barr, City Secretary