

**Minutes of the Blythe City Council Special Meeting  
August 23, 2022**

The August 23, 2022 Special meeting of the Blythe City Council was called to order at 2:30pm in the Council Chambers by Mayor Reynolds. Also in attendance were Vice Mayor DeConinck and Council Members Rodriguez, Halby and Burton. Staff in attendance included: Interim City Manager and City Clerk Crecelius, City Attorney Roberto and Police Chief Dale.

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Mayor Reynolds.

The Invocation was offered by Councilman Burton.

**CONSENT CALENDAR:** *Items on the Consent Calendar are considered routine and will be enacted with one motion of the Council. If any item requires individual consideration, it will be removed from the consent calendar and acted upon separately.*

Councilman Halby moved approval of the Consent Calendar. The motion was seconded by Councilman Burton with a unanimous aye vote.

**1. Posting of the Agenda.**

The summary of agenda items were posted on the bulletin boards on the outside of the public entrance to the Council Chamber and near the inside entrance of the Council Chamber on Friday, August 19, 2022.

No public comment. Vice Mayor DeConinck moved approval of Consent Calendar. The motion was seconded by Councilman Burton with a unanimous aye vote.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

**Law Enforcement Services Agreement between City and PVUSD.** Police Chief Dale stated over the last several years critical incidences on school campuses across the nation have increased in frequency and severity. Most recently the tragedy at Robb Elementary School in Uvalde, Texas has prompted school districts and law enforcement to reevaluate how resources are spent on safety and security for students and staff. Putting officers on campus as School Resource Officers (SRO) has been the answer in the past. However, SRO programs often focus on mentorship and building positive relationships with students. This is only part of the solution. A patrol officer properly trained in active shooter tactics, critical incident response planning and prevention, threat assessment and target hardening fills a void that a busy local law enforcement agency cannot do without additional personnel, training and equipment. Over the last six months Blythe Police Department administration has been in discussion with the PVUSD Superintendent's office to develop a new model of interagency collaboration between law enforcement and the school district. On August 16, 2022 the PVUSD Board approved the attached MOU and are committed to this program. The model will not replace; but will augment the Riverside County Sheriff's Department Deputy assigned as an SRO. A uniformed Blythe Police Officer will be assigned day shift during school hours and will patrol all PVUSD schools. Duties of the officer include responding to all safety and security incidences requiring law enforcement action; and to provide backup assistance to the SRO. Officers will closely patrol campuses, conduct threat assessments, make recommendations for target hardening, prepare response plans, maintain keys, codes, and information needed to gain immediate entry into all schools. The assigned officer will develop contacts within every school administration and direct

staff in the event of an emergency. The officer will have specialized tactical equipment available while on duty. In the event of a law enforcement emergency, the assigned officer will be responsible for establishing an incident command post, assessing the incident, and forming immediate response to active or potential threats to the safety of staff and students. PVUSD will fund up to \$185,000 per year to cover the cost of this officer, equipment and training. The estimated cost of the program is \$191,000 per year. This program will cost the City about \$6,000 per year. It is recommended the City Council approve the addition of one full time police officer position and authorize the Interim City Manager to execute the MOU to provide law enforcement services to the Palo Verde Unified School District.

Councilman Halby asked about tactical equipment and what they would be wearing on a regular basis at the School. Chief Dale stated it's a standard uniform with an outer vest. Councilman Halby prefers they not wear the outer vest. I think they should look friendly and approachable.

Councilman Rodriguez stated this is not a PR position. It will be for command presence. I understand where you are coming from. Law enforcement is transitioning to the outer vest. The only one who still wear the inner vest is Highway Patrol. I have worn both and like the look of the inner vest better, but when I have to move and perform tactically, there is nothing better than an outer vest. You can carry more, its safer for the officer, you get less heated. It puts more command presence for this officer on the streets.

Chief Dale stated the full weight of the duty belt you wear on patrol causes lower back conditions for law enforcement. The outer vest puts the weight from your hips onto your shoulders. Its less of a medical problem for the hips and lower back.

Councilman Burton thinks this is proactive, not reactive. With everything going on, sometimes we get comfortable and think this would not happen in Blythe. When we have a prepared mentality, being former law enforcement, I am for being proactive. I think this is great.

Councilman Rodriguez commended the Chief and School District for jumping on this as fast as they can and pushing it as fast as they can to get it done.

Vice Mayor DeConinck asked if this officer would be available at all schools. Police Chief Dale stated the Officer will be dispatched through Dispatch. If someone called 911, they would be dispatched to respond, it would not be a call to their cell phone. This makes it recorded and makes the supervisor and other officers aware that there is an incident. This is part of the shift and supervised by the shift supervisor. Vice Mayor DeConinck thinks its great to have in place and hope that something never happens, but all we can do is try to be proactive.

Mayor Reynolds asked what type of equipment would be issued.

No public comment. Councilman Rodriguez moved approval of staff's recommendation. The motion was seconded by Councilman Burton with a unanimous aye vote.

**ORAL REPORTS:** None

**MEMBER COMMENT:** None

**PUBLIC COMMENT:**

**ADJOURN:** The City Council meeting was adjourned at 2:43pm.

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Dale Reynolds, Mayor

**ATTEST:**

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Mallory Crecelius, City Clerk