

**THE STATE OF TEXAS §  
CITY OF BROWNSVILLE §  
COUNTY OF CAMERON §**

**MINUTES** of a **Regular Meeting** of the Audit and Oversight Committee of the City of Brownsville, Texas, held on **Friday, December 1, 2023, at 12:17 P.M.**, with the following members present in person at City Commission Chambers, located on the Second Floor-City Hall/Federal Building, located at 1001 East Elizabeth, Brownsville, Cameron County, Texas, 78520 or **via Webex Teleconference Meeting by logging on at:**

<https://brownsvilletx.webex.com/brownsvilletx/j.php?MTID=mc31badfa88a233dad1a5364c2a6c4dea>

Meeting number: 2535 792 6314

Password: audit (28348 from video systems)

Access code: 253 579 26314

**COMMISSIONERS/COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:**

|                                       |   |                         |
|---------------------------------------|---|-------------------------|
| <b>MAYOR JOHN F. COWEN, JR.</b>       | ) | <b>CHAIR</b>            |
| <b>COMMISSIONER Roy De los Santos</b> | ) | <b>COMMITTEE MEMBER</b> |
| <b>GERARDO GARCIA</b>                 | ) | <b>COMMITTEE MEMBER</b> |
| <b>FRANCISCO J. OROZCO</b>            | ) | <b>COMMITTEE MEMBER</b> |

**OTHERS PRESENT:**

|                            |   |                                      |
|----------------------------|---|--------------------------------------|
| <b>KEILAH FOLKERTSMA</b>   | ) | <b>CITY AUDITOR (virtually)</b>      |
| <b>LUIS SALINAS</b>        | ) | <b>DEPUTY CITY AUDITOR</b>           |
| <b>DANIELA G. GONZALEZ</b> | ) | <b>ASSISTANT CITY AUDITOR</b>        |
| <b>JENNIFER AVENDAÑO</b>   | ) | <b>FIRST ASSISTANT CITY ATTORNEY</b> |
| <b>LAURA MARTINEZ</b>      | ) | <b>CMO EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT</b>       |

**ABSENT:**

|                                      |   |                                       |
|--------------------------------------|---|---------------------------------------|
| <b>COMMISSIONER ROSE M. Z. GOWEN</b> | ) | <b>COMMITTEE MEMBER (not present)</b> |
|--------------------------------------|---|---------------------------------------|

**1. CALL TO ORDER:**

A quorum being present, Ms. Daniela G. Gonzalez, Assistant City Auditor, read the call to consider the following matters as posted and filed for the record in The Office of the City Secretary on December 1, 2023. The meeting was called to order at 12:17 p.m. by Mayor Cowen, Chair.

**2. PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD:**

No public comment.

### **3. ITEM(S) FOR INDIVIDUAL CONSIDERATION, DISCUSSION, AND POSSIBLE ACTION:**

#### **A. *Discussion and possible action to appoint an Interim City Auditor.***

Keilah Folkertsma submitted a memo recommending Mr. Luis Salinas as Interim City Auditor. Motion entertained by Mayor Cowen, motioned by Commissioner De los Santos, seconded by Francisco Orozco, motion carries.

#### **B. *Discussion and possible action for approval of compensation of Interim City Auditor.***

Keilah Folkertsma's memo included recommended salary. Commissioner De los Santos motioned to approve the Interim City Auditor recommended salary for the duration of time the position is held, seconded by Gerardo Garcia, motion carries.

#### **C. *Discussion and possible action to start the process for search of the City Auditor.***

Mayor Cowen conferred with HR Director, Perla Cepeda and agreed that utilizing a search firm warranted quality results. Commissioner De los Santos agreed on maintaining consistency. Francisco Orozco motioned to proceed via a professional search firm, seconded by Commissioner De los Santos, motion carries.

#### **D. *Discussion on the transitional plan related to current and pending audits.***

Keilah Folkertsma offered details of the transitional plan, the onboarding of Mr. Salinas involving the review of current projects and attempting to update him as much as possible. Keilah Folkertsma provided minimal review of the current BCIC Audit, Ethics follow-up, and discussed the increase in compliance due to leadership involvement which yielded great results. Continued to discuss upcoming deadlines. Mr. Orozco inquired if there would be a change in the expected deadline for the BCIC Audit due to the transition of City Auditor to Interim City Auditor, to which Interim City Auditor, Salinas replied that an ideal target date would be in February.

Further inquires regarding file storage scheme, and SharePoint cloud-based storage accessible to anyone with access.

Prior to moving forward with Future Agenda Items, Commissioner De los Santos moves to revisit item 3.A. *Discussion and possible action to appoint an Interim City Auditor*, seconded by Mr. Orozco, the motions carries.

Commissioner De los Santos wanted to clarify that it is on the record to ensure that Interim City Auditor maintains full authority to fill the vacancy of Assistant City Auditor.

### **4. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS:**

#### **A. Consider and take ANY NECESSARY ACTION, if any, regarding the City Auditor.**

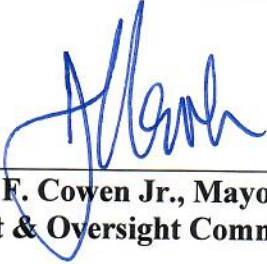
Bylaws were discussed, and Jennifer Avendaño confirmed that bylaws and ordinances are still being worked on, further suggested she would be updating Interim City Auditor with those details.

Commissioner De los Santos recommended amending the charter to have seven members instead of five so each member could have an appointee. The mayor expressed being in agreement with that recommendation.

Frank Orozco requests keeping the Bylaws as a standing item for Executive Session.

5. **ADJOURNMENT** There being no further business to come before the Audit & Oversight Committee, upon duly made motion by Commissioner De los Santos, seconded by Gerardo Garcia, the meeting adjourned at 12:33 p.m.

Approved this 2<sup>nd</sup> day of February, 2024.



**John F. Cowen Jr., Mayor**  
**Audit & Oversight Committee Chair**

**Attest:**



**Luis Salinas, MACC**  
**Interim City Auditor**

*Respectfully Submitted by:*  
*Laura Martinez, Executive Assistant*  
*Office of the City Manager*