

CITY OF STARBASE

City Commission Special Meeting

MINUTES

Date: Tuesday, July 14, 2026

Time: 9:06 a.m. – 9:17 a.m.

Location: 48491 State Highway 4, Starbase, Texas 78521

A. CALL TO ORDER AND QUORUM DETERMINATION

The special meeting of the City Commission of the City of Starbase was called to order at 9:06 a.m. by Mayor Bobby Peden. Commissioner Jordan Buss was also present in the meeting room. City Administrator Cayetana Polanco and City Clerk Gretchen Norton were also in attendance. Public Safety Director/Police Chief Glenn Bennett was also present. Commissioner Lois Wallace was absent.

Two (2) of three (3) Commissioners were present in person, constituting a quorum.

B. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mayor Peden led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance.

C. PUBLIC COMMENT ON ALL AGENDA ITEMS

Mayor Peden opened the public comment period for all listed agenda items. Citizens wishing to speak were required to have submitted a speaker card to the City Clerk at least five (5) minutes before the start of the meeting. Comments were limited to two (2) minutes per individual, as set forth in the agenda.

City Clerk Gretchen Norton reported that one speaker had submitted a card.

Public Speaker – Anthony Gomez, City of Starbase, Texas

Mr. Gomez offered two items of comment. First, he extended a public welcome to incoming Public Safety Director/Police Chief Glenn Bennett, who was present at the meeting. Second, Mr. Gomez congratulated the City on the July 4th celebration at Boca Chica Beach, describing the event as a great success. He noted that the beach was clean and well-organized, the fireworks show was impressive, and the event created positive memories for many attendees.

City Clerk Norton confirmed no additional speakers had submitted cards. The public comment period was closed.

D. CONSENT AGENDA

Mayor Peden introduced the Consent Agenda, noting that it includes routine, non-controversial matters that may be approved in a single motion. City Administrator Cayetana Polanco presented the following three items:

Item D.1 – Meeting Minutes: June 19 and June 23, 2026

City Administrator Polanco presented the minutes of the City Commission meetings held on June 19, 2026 and June 23, 2026 for approval. Approval of the minutes confirms that the record of actions taken at those meetings is true and correct.

Item D.2 – Official Bonds for Mayor and Commissioners

City Administrator Polanco presented the renewal and consolidation of official surety bonds for the Mayor and both Commissioners, as required for elected officers before taking office. She noted that the existing bonds for the Mayor and Commissioner Buss were approaching expiration, and that a bond for Commissioner Wallace was also required. Upon review, staff confirmed that the bond requirement applies to all three elected officials.

The bonds are being consolidated under a single bonding company so that the City receives renewal notifications directly, in addition to the individual officeholders, ensuring continuity of coverage. Mayor Peden confirmed this is a continuation of the existing bonding arrangement. The bonds being renewed are for the same coverage amounts as previously held.

Item D.3 – Ordinance No. 2026-20: Acting City Clerk Designation

City Administrator Polanco presented Ordinance No. 2026-20, which designates the Data Governance and Project Manager as Acting City Clerk during the City Clerk's absence. She explained that the City currently has no designated person to step into the City Clerk role if City Clerk Gretchen Norton is sick or otherwise unavailable. The ordinance designates the Data Governance and Project Manager — currently Keila Tuttle — to assume all statutory and administrative duties of the City Clerk whenever the City Clerk is absent or temporarily unable to perform the duties of the office. The Acting City Clerk is authorized to attest official documents and affix the City seal to the same extent as the City Clerk. The authority activates automatically upon the City Clerk's absence, with no additional Commission action required. The ordinance also provides that if the Data Governance and Project Manager is unavailable, the City Administrator may designate another City staff member to serve as Acting City Clerk.

Commissioner Buss indicated no questions. Mayor Peden invited a vote.

Motion: Commissioner Buss moved to approve the Consent Agenda as presented.

Second: Mayor Peden

Vote: 2–0. Motion passed unanimously.

E. REGULAR SESSION

Item E.1 – Ordinance No. 2026-21: City Administrator Powers, Duties, and Compensation Update

City Administrator Polanco presented Ordinance No. 2026-21, which repeals and replaces Ordinance No. 2025-05-29-J02-OR in its entirety and updates the office, duties, and compensation of the City Administrator. She highlighted two substantive additions to the position's authority:

- Authority to sign no-cost agreements. The existing ordinance authorizes the City Administrator to sign contracts within the thresholds set by the City's Purchasing Policies, but does not address agreements that carry no financial obligation — such as MOUs. Ordinance No. 2026-21 expressly grants the City Administrator authority to negotiate, execute, modify, and terminate such instruments, enabling the City to move forward more efficiently on administrative arrangements that do not require Commission approval.
- Tax rate responsibilities. Ordinance No. 2026-21 designates the City Administrator as the officer responsible for calculating the City's no-new-revenue and voter-approval tax rates under Section 26.04 of the Texas Tax Code, and for performing the related certification, submission, and posting duties. City Administrator Polanco noted that the substantive work associated with this function is performed by the City's financial team; the designation fulfills the county's requirement for a single-named responsible officer. She also noted that this designation must be submitted to Cameron County before the end of July 2026.

Mayor Peden observed that the authority to sign no-cost agreements appeared to have been an oversight when the City Administrator's responsibilities were originally established, and agreed the update was appropriate. No further questions or comments were offered by the Commission.

Motion: Commissioner Buss moved to approve Ordinance No. 2026-21 updating the powers, duties, and compensation of the City Administrator, and repealing and replacing Ordinance No. 2025-05-29-J02-OR.

Second: Mayor Peden

Vote: 2–0. Motion passed unanimously.

F. COMMISSION / CITY ADMINISTRATOR COMMENTS

Item F.1 – Items of Community Interest

Pursuant to Texas Government Code Section 551.0415, the following items of community interest were shared:

- City Administrator Polanco noted that Public Safety Director/Police Chief Glenn Bennett was present at the meeting, it being his second day on the job. She expressed enthusiasm for his onboarding progress and looked forward to introducing him more formally to the broader community and integrating the Police Department into future City Commission meetings.
- City Administrator Polanco reported on the results of the Boca Chica Beach cleaning operation. The initial beach cleaning effort removed approximately 17 tons of material — a significant and successful first pass. She outlined the ongoing maintenance schedule going forward: debris hand-picking twice per month, surf rake operation once per week, and beach entrance grading every other week. She noted that the entrance in particular requires sustained attention to remain drivable. She credited Gulf Coast Contractors for the successful effort. She encouraged residents to notify the City of any large debris items or cleanliness concerns via email or message so that issues can be addressed promptly rather than accumulating.
- Mayor Peden confirmed that a recent visit to the beach showed it still in good condition following the cleaning.
- Commissioner Buss echoed praise for the July 4th celebration, thanking SpaceX and all event participants, and commended Mayor Peden for remarks made at the event. He extended a personal welcome to Chief Bennett and expressed interest in meeting with him to discuss the path forward for the Police Department.

Item F.2 – Future Agenda Item Requests

Mayor Peden invited Commissioners and staff to submit requests for future agenda items. No items were requested. No discussion or action was taken on this item.

SUMMARY OF ACTIONS TAKEN

Item	Description	Vote
D	Consent Agenda: Minutes of June 19 and June 23, 2026 meetings; official surety bonds for Mayor and Commissioners; Ordinance No. 2026-20 (Acting City Clerk designation)	2-0 Unanimous
E.1	Ordinance No. 2026-21: Updating powers, duties, and compensation of the City Administrator; repealing and replacing Ordinance No. 2025-05-29-J02-OR	2-0 Unanimous

G. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Commission, Mayor Peden moved to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Buss. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 9:17 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Signed by:

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Gretchen Norton, City Clerk
City of Starbase



Approved by the City Commission on: August 19, 2026