

STATE OF TEXAS

COUNTY OF McCULLOCH

CITY OF BRADY

The City Council of the City of Brady, Texas met in a Joint Work Session Meeting with Melvin City Council on Monday April 1, 2024 at 1:30 p.m. with Mayor Aaron Garcia presiding. Council Members present were Missi Elliston, Larry Land, Gabe Moreno, Jeffrey Sutton and Felix Gomez. City staff present were City Manager Erin Corbell, Police Chief Randy Batten, EMS Coordinator Jeremy Ramon, Street Superintendent Manny Perez, Public Works Director Steve Miller and City Secretary Tina Keys. Also in attendance were Mikki Williams, Carol Anderson, Randy Deans, Frank Trull, Don Bratton Marelina Brown, Carlos Flores, Dale Anderson, Ramiro Castanuela, Marlinda Davis, James Bissonnette, and Lynn Farris.

**Judge**

Mayor Garcia called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m. Council quorum was certified. Judge Trull said Commissioner Beherns was not present. City of Melvin said present was Marlinda Davis, Marelina, Romero, Dale, Charlie, and announced a quorum was present.

**2. DISCUSSION ITEMS**

- a. Discussion regarding Interlocal Agreement with City of Melvin and/or McCulloch County for EMS services. Mayor Brown asked if everyone received what they gave the commissioners and the city and asked why they were excluded from interlocal agreement. Judge Trull said because they are incorporated, but up until the very last minute of the signing of the agreement they had been included in the EMS services. Mayor Brown said her standing is they still need EMS services in Melvin, but they cannot afford it. They want to know and understand when the commissioners made the hospital district, how did they give up their authority in regulating the hospital and why Melvin is not included in the last agreement. Judge Trull said he can't speak for hospital but the first year it was in the budget for \$156,000 but then Erin Corbell didn't have time to figure numbers for next budget, so he added 10%. Being new he didn't realize Melvin was included. Now he has looked into everything. Melvin is an incorporated city like Brady and makes their own decisions for services to provide. The next budget cycle came up and the more he learns he realized McCulloch County doesn't have authority inside the city limits of Melvin or Brady, so EMS services have been provided without an interlocal agreement. Past administration handled things their way. The City of Melvin needs to understand the County cannot make an agreement for Melvin with the City of Brady. The bad part is they were not included in the agreement when it was realized. Judge Trull said part of it is just that he didn't know everything. Every year he is learning more. When he realized it was there, he spoke with them and even got legal council and they reaffirmed that they can't provide service without an interlocal agreement. Council person Castanuela said with the interlocal agreement with the city, there cannot be another EMS service; they can't even bring in another service because of the very low income population they have. Mayor Garcia said he doesn't think our interlocal agreement has anything to do with any competing EMS services. Mayor Brown read portions of the agreement the City of Melvin had on file and said it is not updated. It was signed by James Stewart and Clay Jones so it's an old agreement. Mayor Brown went on to read Texas Local Government Code 791.030 healthcare and hospital services and said there's no way the City of Melvin can get a grant right now. Their CPA hasn't started on the 2022 grants and 2023 audits are due. They tried to apply for emergency grants and they can't get them. Mayor Brown asked "what are we going to do"? Judge Trull asked when their budget cycle starts. Mayor Brown said January. In January 2024 they owed \$15,000, in February owed \$15,373 and March \$15,373. Judge Trull said when they get numbers from the city that's so they can prepare the next year budget so he would assume it would be similar for Melvin. Mayor Brown said they already owe \$6,000 to the city plus EMS. Erin Corbell said we have not reached an interlocal agreement with Melvin so

those amounts due are not enforceable. We work the numbers from our last fiscal year applying our actual number of calls so it can be worked into their next fiscal year. Corbell said we never reached an interlocal agreement so the \$6,000 is not per year. Mayor Brown said they do have the helipad and it has been used by EMS several times and asked if there is any way to compromise on something like that. Randy Deans asked if the volunteer department built it. Mayor Brown said no, the City of Melvin got a grant. Council Member Land said we would have to separate out the Melvin calls from the county total. Mayor Garcia said Corbell has done that. Their next fiscal year would be \$13,659. Their number of calls doubled. Mayor Brown said they aren't going to hold people's health in jeopardy. The helipad is there, if they make an agreement with the county for \$13,000 and the City for \$13,000. Erin Corbell said the city is the service provider so the agreement would be with the City of Brady, excluding the county. Erin Corbell said she said they would not cut off EMS services to Melvin while they were working on the agreement. Mayor Brown said that's not what was said, and went on to say the County Judge knows, and they know the price went up ridiculous; it went up way too high. Mayor Brown said the judge told them the City is hurting for money. Erin Corbell said she gave the county a heads up that there would be a significant jump due to the 7% increase in pay to the EMS personnel. Mayor Brown said the prices haven't come down at all. Corbell said prices for fuel have gone up as well as the cost of ambulances and supplies. Unless those costs come down, our prices won't come down. A Melvin council member asked how often our ambulances get replaced. Corbell said they're on a 5 – 7 year replacement program. We have 3 right now. Council Member Land asked if the formula for Melvin would be the same as a county. Corbell said the base price is \$1,564 to \$2,220 having to do with what's used on the ambulance, mileage, etc. If the patient has insurance there is a contractual allowance that reduces that charge. It cuts the billed amount. The average was \$1,823 the last time they checked. Council Person Castanuela said their budget is very low. Of their population, 60% is over 50 -55 years old. They are having more people grow old so more are going to need ambulance services. Mayor Brown said they do get sales tax, franchise tax, but they don't get road tax and they don't get liquor tax. Their tax base is not that big. The wind turbines have dropped their property rates. They're broke. They need help but don't want a handout. Council Person Castanuela said the Melvin fire department keeps asking why they pay county taxes and does it help them out. Their people are very upset. Judge Trull said county taxes pay for every county office. Council Person Castanuela said he understands but the elderly cannot comprehend. Council Member Land asked what other communities do. Mayor Brown said the commissioners are supposed to step in and take care of their citizens. Mayor Garcia said the biggest obstacle he is hearing is their incorporated status. If the city of Melvin doesn't make enough, why not unincorporate. Mayor Brown said right now they have a grant for the water system for 7 more years. It was 10 years. They cannot do anything with it. If something happens with the city, an entity can come in. The brokers that paid in for the \$837,000 wants their money back. So, this entity will come in and sell everything the city has. What's left the citizens of Melvin will have to pay for. Then it will go to everyone in the county to pay back that amount plus interest. Mayor Garcia said as people get older, without some type of agreement, those costs are going to continue to get higher. We want to figure out what's the best way to help Melvin. What's preventing the county from helping is the incorporated status. Carol Anderson said it was her understanding that the hospital district was supposed to take care of those who can't take care of themselves. Mayor Brown said they have reached out to the hospital district without anything in return and said if we have a hospital district and are not utilizing the indigent program what are we paying taxes for. Don Bratton asked when was the last time anybody saw when the hospital district was having a meeting? Carol Anderson said Melvin might want to talk with the hospital district to see if there is anything they can do to help. Council Member Land asked if the council of governments could help. Corbell said she has not heard of them doing anything like this. Mayor Brown said the only thing they can offer is the helipad. Council Member Land said that should be worth something. A Melvin council member said he believes when you unincorporate, one of the things you give up are water rights and then towns just dry up and go away. He doesn't think the citizens of Melvin would vote to unincorporate. Carol Anderson suggested they contact their senator for help. Council Member Moreno said we would prefer Melvin talk to the hospital board

then come back to the city. The revenue comes from the hospital board. Mayor Brown said they are considering charging to use the helipad. Carol Anderson asked who they would charge. Mayor Brown responded "EMS". Randy Deans said the use of the helipad should be in the interlocal agreement. Mayor Garcia said we want to get this resolved. We're not cutting service off, today. It hasn't even been in the discussion. The county went for several years without paying, Melvin hasn't even gotten a bill yet. These meetings are a starting point to find out what's best for everybody. We all have to work together. We need to make sure Melvin has done their due diligence and gone to the hospital board so we can work it out. Mayor Garcia said we aren't going to come to an agreement today, but we are getting the ball rolling.

- b. Discussion regarding modification of Interlocal Agreement with McCulloch County for Road Maintenance Services to include waste project material. Erin Corbell said she handed out a copy of what the interlocal agreement would look like with changes in red. Carol Anderson said the county has to have the agreement to accept donations. It's material that the city crews removed that's not usable material for the city. Carol said if it's a real problem, we can go back to the old agreement. Steven Miller said it's good wording, but they don't want to imply there is any hauling done by the city. Carol Anderson said she doesn't think anywhere in the agreement does it say anything about the city or county moving material.

### 3. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Mayor Garcia adjourned the meeting at 2:51 p.m.

  
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Aaron Garcia, Mayor

Attest:   
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Tina Keys, City Secretary

