



City of San Marcos

630 East Hopkins
San Marcos, TX 78666

Meeting Minutes City Council

Tuesday, January 20, 2026

3:00 PM

City Council Chambers

630 E. Hopkins St. - Work Session

I. Call To Order

With a quorum present, the work session of the San Marcos City Council was called to order by Mayor Hughson on Tuesday, January 20th, 2026 at 3:00 p.m.

This meeting was held in-person and online

II. Roll Call

Deputy Mayor Pro Tem Garza arrived at 3:30 PM.

Present: 6 - Mayor Pro Tem Shane Scott, Council Member Amanda Rodriguez, Mayor Jane Hughson, Council Member Lorenzo Gonzalez, Council Member Matthew Mendoza and Council Member Josh Paselk

Absent: 1 - Deputy Mayor Pro Tem Alyssa Garza

III. Citizen Comment Period

Jessica Urbizu introduced herself as the current chairperson of the San Marcos Housing Authority. She informed the Council that she had submitted her application for reappointment to the Housing Authority Board. Ms. Urbizu acknowledged that her first year of service had been challenging but educational. She emphasized that her purpose on the board was to continue bringing transparency, accountability, improved policy, and community support for residents. Her mission was to bring positive changes as they welcome a new executive director next month and improve working relationships with the city and community.

Zack Phillips, President of the Hays County EMS Association (CWA Local 6115), spoke on behalf of EMS workers serving San Marcos. Mr. Phillips recognized that periodic review of EMS delivery was appropriate but noted inconsistencies in the study results. He urged the Council to consider whether now was the right time to move forward with a new EMS delivery model. He emphasized that San Marcos Hays County EMS has provided high-quality care

for over four decades with patient outcomes that exceed state and national benchmarks. Mr. Phillips expressed concern about regional instability with multiple new and reorganized EMS agencies still in early stages. He stressed that if the Council moves forward with changes, preserving the existing EMS workforce would be crucial for continuity of care, system reliability, and patient safety.

Ashley Harlow, a resident of Springtime Bill Apartments, thanked the Housing Authority board members for their support during recent challenges with the previous executive director. Ms. Harlow described difficulties residents had faced but expressed optimism about improvements being made with a new executive director arriving in February.

Maxfield Baker addressed the police staffing study. He expressed disappointment in what he perceived as skewed demographic representation at the public input session for the study and the lack of detailed information about call types related to Texas State University. Mr. Baker voiced concerns about recommendations for increased police spending during budget shortfalls and suggested exploring regional partnerships and grants. He expressed frustration that initiatives previously requested by the Criminal Justice Reform Committee were now being recommended in an expensive study.

PRESENTATIONS

2. Receive a report on the San Marcos Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Feasibility Study, and provide direction to the City Manager.

City Manager Stephanie Reyes asked council members if item 2 could be heard before item 1. Mayor and Council Members agreed.

Assistant City Manager Lonzo Anderson introduced the EMS Feasibility Study, explaining it was undertaken in response to increased medical call volume, sustained population growth, and changes in regional EMS participation that have shifted greater financial responsibility to the city. Mr. Anderson provided historical background on EMS service in San Marcos, noting that in the early 1980s, emergency medical transport was provided under Hays Memorial Hospital. After the hospital discontinued this service in 1983, San Marcos Hays County EMS was incorporated as a non-profit provider.

Mr. Anderson described significant changes occurring in the EMS landscape, with Emergency Service District 1 (North Hays EMS) terminating its contract effective May 2025, and Hays County Emergency Service District 9 preparing

to launch standalone services in April 2026. He explained that these transitions have fundamentally reshaped the local EMS environment while rapid population growth has increased service demands within the city.

Robert Finn, Vice President of Matrix Consulting Group and project manager for the study, presented the findings. He outlined three service delivery models that were evaluated: continuation of the regional EMS model, integration of EMS services into the fire department, and establishment of a standalone city operating EMS department.

Mr. Finn presented data on current system performance, noting that medical calls comprise about 81% of EMS activity. He discussed response time metrics, staffing levels, and projected costs for each model. The study showed that San Marcos Hays County EMS would cost approximately \$9.46 million, fire-based EMS would cost \$9.86 million, and city-based EMS would cost \$9.2 million.

Mr. Finn explained that patient revenues could offset approximately \$2 million of these costs.

Mr. Finn recommended the city-based EMS model as the optimal choice, citing benefits such as direct oversight, dedicated leadership, financial transparency, and cost controls. He presented an implementation timeline of approximately 21 months and an organizational structure for the proposed city EMS department.

Council members asked numerous questions about the transition process. Concerns were raised about workforce continuity and employee protections. Council Member Gonzalez expressed concern that EMS employees would lose union protections by becoming city employees without the same civil service protections afforded to police and fire. Council Member Rodriguez asked about billing processes and patient care outcomes. Council Member Paselk emphasized the importance of treating current EMS employees fairly during any transition.

Fire Chief Les Stephens provided additional context, noting that when he was hired in 2009, San Marcos Hays County EMS was in a very different place financially and operationally. Chief Stephens explained that the fire department has 106 operational staff certified at least to the EMT level, with 58 certified as paramedics. He clarified that firefighters would continue to provide first responder services regardless of which EMS model was selected.

After extensive discussion, the Council provided direction to staff to move forward with planning for a city-based EMS service, with the understanding that staff would return with more information on employee protections, hiring processes for current San Marcos Hays County EMS employees, and quality of care metrics.

1. Receive a report on the San Marcos Police Department workload and staffing analysis, and provide direction to the City Manager.

The Council agreed to postpone this item to a future meeting due to time constraints. We may wait for the 10-year plan to be ready before we see this again.

3. Receive a staff presentation on the Vision SMTX Comprehensive Plan implementation report.

The Council agreed to postpone this item to a future meeting. City Manager Stephanie Reyes clarified that this was simply an implementation update with no action required. However, this information may be included during the Vision Workshop.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

4. The City Council will convene in executive session pursuant to Section 551.071 (Consultation with Attorney) of the Texas Government Code to receive legal advice regarding the duties and responsibilities of the San Marcos Housing Authority Board.

A motion was made by Council Member Rodriguez, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Scott to enter into Executive Session at 5:20 PM.

Council reconvened back to Work Session at 5:55 PM

IV. Question and Answer Session with Press and Public.

Maxfield Baker participated remotely and asked several questions:

- **He questioned why staff had not communicated the EMS decision timeline more effectively**
- **He asked Council Member Paselk to clarify his position on unions**
- **He asked why the Vision SMTX presentation was postponed**

Mayor Hughson clarified that the Vision SMTX item was only an implementation update report with no action required and had no relation to the data center project. Council Member Paselk responded that he was not anti-union and wanted the best outcomes for both parties. City Manager Reyes explained that the items were postponed due to time constraints.

V. Adjournment.

Mayor Hughson Adjourned the meeting at 6:03 PM.

POSTED ON TUESDAY, JANUARY 13, 2026 AT 9:30 P.M.

ELIZABETH TREVINO, CITY CLERK

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