

Regular meeting of the City Council

Austin Texas Oct 15th 1885

Hon. J. W. Robertson Mayor presiding

Present Aldermen. Schneider, Hancock, Wells
 Campbell, Schmidt, Mason, Watson, Crockett, Carrington
 Hill, Black & Bruck. — 12.

Absent Aldermen. Hill, Lillard, Underhill, Oriskill
 Calk, Coleman, Ervin, Brunner. — 8

Minutes of Sept. 7 & 8 & 9 adopted.

Petition of George Washington asking pay be
 allowed him for time lost by sickness, was read
 and referred to the Finance committee

C. H. Miller petitioned for permission to open
 a shooting gallery at 110 east Pecan street. Referred
 to the Street Committee

Laura Brinknell petitioned for permission to
 open a shooting gallery on east Pecan street.
 Referred to the Street committee

C. C. Worthington petitioned for permission
 to erect on the corner of Congress avenue and
 Pine street, a wooden frame, for the purpose
 of exhibiting a windmill. Referred to the street
 Committee

City Marshal's report for the month of Sept
 1885

Total arrests.	Total fines.	cash
from fines	fines worked out	fines
apprehended	due by escapes	Cash from
back fines	back fines worked out	

The City Sexton's report for Sept 1885 was read
 and ordered filed

Report of the city Physician for Sept 1885

Austin Texas Oct. 1st 1885

To Hon Mayor, and City Council

Gentlemen:— Up to the 1st inst. the hospital has been clear of Dengue, except 2 cases. Up to 1st in hospital, 18 admitted since, 5 died, 10 dismissed 14 remaining, Oct 1st 1885

It is not necessary to say that an epidemic of dengue has prevailed in the city recently. The Hon. Council no doubt has had a sufficient experience. In my November report I propose giving a brief history of the epidemic, and its work in the city.

Respectfully submitted

W. J. Bush, M. D.

City Health Officer

Report of the City Treasurer for the month of Sept 1885

Balance on hand Aug 31 st	\$ 27,639.24
Received from Assessor & Collector	5,246.49
Total	\$32,885.71
Credits	
Paid Warrants	\$5838.32
Interest on Bonds	50.00
Cash Balance Sept 30 th	78997.39
	\$32,885.71

Unappropriated Balance, \$13,540.71

The following report of the city Engineer was read and referred to the Street Committee

To the Hon. Mayor and Board of Aldermen of the City of Austin.

Gentlemen:— In a report submitted to the city council on April 7, 1884. Their attention was called to the condition of the bridges over Little Shoal creek at the crossing of North Avenue, West Walnut, and Peach streets. The two latter bridges have been rebuilt but the bridge on North Avenue has not been repaired and is in an unsafe condition and I would therefore respectfully recommend that an arch bridge be built at that point, which will require 120 perch of masonry at \$322 per perch - \$41200

Respectfully

W. J. Bush
City Engineer

October 5th 1885

Alderman Underhill came in and answered to his name.

Hon. J. W. Robertson, Mayor, and members of the City Council

Gentlemen:— I herewith propose to sell to the city my line of sewer pipe and branches running from the governors mansion to the river, for the sum of six thousand dollars, three thousand to be paid cash. Balance to be paid on the first of April 1886. Or if the city preferred to pay me cash down it will be satisfactory to me. The sewer lays in the Alley east of the Hornum, and is 15 inch in diameter with 8 openings every 46 feet. for the purpose of connecting with every house on the line.

Respectfully yours

G. A. Brush.

Referred to the sewer committee

Alderman Platt introduced the following resolution which was referred to the sewer committee,

Resolved that a committee of three be appointed to confer with Mr. George A. Brush, with a view to negotiate for the purchase of the sewer now running from the governors mansion to the Colorado river, and report the same to the next meeting of the council

Referred to the sewer committee

Alderman Wittz come in and answered to his name.

The following message of the Mayor was read
Mayors Office

Justin Six Oct 4th 1885

Gentlemen of the City Council

It is proper that I should lay before you some report of what has been done in the effort to identify and bring to punishment the persons who have committed the recent crimes of murder, rape and other like crimes in this city.

In obedience to your instructions I respectfully

skillful and trustworthy detectives, who have been at work on these cases for some weeks. They have collected much valuable information concerning the perpetration of these crimes, and have made several arrests.

It would be imprudent for me to lay the facts and details before the public, as that would tend to put the guilty parties on their guard. It would have been far better could absolute secrecy have been maintained to a much later period, I may say however that it is confidently believed that some of the authors of these outrages are now in custody, with facts and circumstances that give promise of an early conviction.

The grand jury of Travis county is now in session, and it will become a most potent factor in the investigation of these crimes. Much is expected from their deliberations.

We have had on duty one detective for about thirty days and another for more than half that time.

It has been necessary to spend some money in prosecuting these cases. I have made the expenses just as light as it was possible under the circumstances, but nearly or quite half the sum placed at my disposal has been expended. The services of the detectives have not yet been paid, no bill for compensation having been presented.

I am decidedly of the opinion that the further services of the detectives are essential to final success, and, while this may require an additional appropriation, I believe it to be our duty to the public to exhaust every means in our power to bring the guilty parties to punishment, regardless of the cost. I therefore, recommend that the detectives be continued in service for a reasonable time in the future, and that the necessary appropriation be made.

Much has been said about the inefficiency of the police force in preventing and suppressing these crimes. But we should look at all the facts and surroundings before joining in

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wholesale condemnation of these officers. These crimes are abnormal in their character. They occur when and where least expected, they are shrouded in mystery. A motive is wanting. They have baffled the power of the most skillful experts in the detection of crime. I believe I can safely assert that the police force of the city have discharged their duties to the best of their abilities under the circumstances, and that they have been faithful and vigilant.

The sheriff of Travis county and his deputies have likewise displayed great interest and activity. I think this concession if such it may be termed is due to the police force of the city.

I believe, in view of the extraordinary circumstances attending these crimes, that the night Police force should be increased to the extent of five members, or to such number as the council may deem proper. The additional cost of five would be about \$300 per month but any arrangement now made could not be continued beyond the coming in of the new council in December next.

If such increase is made I would suggest that the city marshal or his assistant be required to assume personal charge of the force at night time.

I also recommend that a more rigid ordinance be passed in reference to persons found upon the public streets or private grounds after midnight. A person who is unknown to the officer or who cannot give a reasonable account of himself, or who is found under suspicious circumstances after midnight should be arrested and detained until his conduct and purposes are explained.

I will earnestly join you in any measures or proceeding that promises to prevent a recurrence of these dastardly crimes in our midst and to bring to justice those who are guilty.

Very truly

your Obedt. Servant

J. W. Robertson
Mayor

An Ordinance entitled "An ordinance providing for the suppression and punishment of crime in the City of Austin and making an appropriation to carry the same into effect, was called up and read a second time.

Section one was amended by in the blank a reward of not more than two hundred and fifty Dollars.

Section 2 was further amended by adding "Providing that no peace officer or detective of the City County or state shall participate in any such reward."

Section 3^d was amended by filling in: "the sum of one thousand Dollars."

The ordinance was read third time under suspension of the rules, and passed by the following vote. Yea Aldermen Metz, Schneider, Hancock, Wells, Campbell, Scherler, Underhill, Maddox, Warran, Crooker, Carrington, Bell, Clark & Brush, — 14 nays none

Alderman Crooker call up the report of the Finance committee on application of chief of the City of the fire department, asking for new hose. The report recommended the purchase of new hose. The city attorney was instructed to draw up an ordinance providing for the purchase of 300 feet of hose.

Report of the Finance committee on the claim of A. W. E. Nixon

Sept. 9th 1882

To the Hon Mayor & City Council of the City of Austin.
Gentlemen:— Your committee to whom was recommended the account of Mr. Nixon by leave to state that Mr. Nixon having agreed to a compromise of the account at \$175⁰⁰ hereby recommend, that the sum of \$175⁰⁰ be paid him in full of all claims against the City of Austin.

Wm. O. Hill

J. W. O. Hill
Wm. Maddox. Finance Committee

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Alderman Maas called up an ordinance appropriating one hundred and seventy five dollars to pay Mr. Nelson for plans to remodel the city market house. The ordinance was read second time.

The motion to lay the ordinance on the table was carried by the following vote. Yeas Aldermen Metz, Hancock, Campbell, Schubert, Warren Crooker, Carrington & Platt - 8 Nays Aldermen Schneider, Wells, Underhill, Maas, Hill, & Brush - 6.

Alderman Crooker introduced an ordinance appropriating the sum of \$2500. for the purpose of purchasing hose for the use of the Fire Department. The ordinance was read then read second and third times under suspension of the rules and passed by the following vote yeas Aldermen Metz, Schneider, Hancock, Wells, Campbell, Schubert, Warren, Crooker, Carrington Hill, Platt & Brush - 14. Nays none.

The Finance committee introduced an ordinance appropriating the sum of \$3303⁹⁷/₁₀₀. for the pay roll for October 1885 and sundry accounts.

The ordinance was read second and third times under suspension of the rules and passed by the following vote yeas Aldermen Metz, Schneider, Hancock, Wells, Campbell, Schubert, Underhill, Maas, Warren, Crooker, Carrington Hill, Platt & Brush - 14. Nays none.

Alderman Platt introduced an ordinance appropriating the sum of two thousand dollars for the purpose of widening the iron bridge on East Pecan street and the approaches thereto. Read first time then laid over.

Alderman Brush introduced the following resolution.

Resolved that the street committee be authorized and instructed to contract with some parties to number houses and put up names of streets on the streets south of water street in the 10 wards same to be paid out of the appropriation now existing for said wards. Adopted.

Alderman Hill introduced an ordinance providing for the increase on the Police force to twenty men exclusive of the Marshal and sergeant of Police.

The motion to suspend the rules and read the ordinance a second time was lost. Referred to the Police committee

James Fitzgerald petitioned for a reduction of a fine of \$100.00 imposed against him in the recorders court for carrying a pistol

The mayor submitted the following recommendation

In view of the extreme youth of this petitioner and the fact he was traveling, I recommend that all of the fine be remitted, except \$25.00 and the costs, and upon payment of which he be released

J. W. Robertson,
Mayor

The recommendation of the mayor was adopted by the following vote yeas. Aldermen Schneider, Metz, Wells, Campbell, Schubar, Underhill, Macae, Warden, Crooker, Clath, & Bruck - 11
Nays Aldermen Hancock, Carrington Hill - 3.

On motion the council adjourned

J. L. Turner
City Clerk