

MINUTES OF THE CITY COUNCIL

CITY OF AUSTIN, TEXAS

Special Meeting

August 2, 1966
10:00 A.M.

Council Chamber, City Hall

The meeting was called to order with Mayor Palmer presiding.

Roll call:

Present: Councilmen LaRue, Shanks, White, Mayor Palmer
Absent: Councilman Long

Present also: W. T. Williams, Jr., City Manager; Doren R. Eskew, City Attorney; Reuben Rountree, Jr., Director of Public Works; Robert A. Miles, Chief of Police

MAYOR PALMER announced this was a Special Called Meeting of the Austin City Council to issue official statements in light of the tragedy that happened in this City yesterday, August 1, 1966.

MAYOR PALMER stated while this would be a dark day in the history of this great city, he felt in a broader sense this happened in the City of "man". No city today is immune from this type of maniacal mass murder, there are still many questions that remain unanswered and many citizens ask "why", "how", and perhaps "what" might be done to prevent a reoccurrence of this type of event.

People of Austin would like to express their gratitude and appreciation to so many of our Austin citizens. On behalf of all the citizens of Austin, he expressed deep sympathy to those families of the victims and to those who were injured. To the many Austin citizens who acted so courageously under this emergency and at the risk of their own lives rallied to the support of the Police Department he expressed appreciation and praise; and to the hospital a public acknowledgement of sincere thanks and commendation. Mayor Palmer made recognition of MR. ALLEN CRUM, who performed so courageously as a citizen in support of his Police Department at the very risk of his own life, assisting right at the scene.

The Mayor also expressed on behalf of the people of Austin sincere thanks to the Radio, Television and News Media, which called attention to the area around the University asking people to stay away and out of range of fire; and which were instrumental in saving many, many lives. He thanked all of the doctors in Austin, the nurses and the hospital staff who performed so admirably

under emergency conditions, rendering aid and assistance to those who were injured. He thanked the ambulance drivers and all who were under fire at the risk of their lives to render assistance. He said "Thank you" to the people of Austin, and to the students of the University of Texas who also gave assistance at the risk of their lives.

MAYOR PALMER said this was a tragedy in this great city; and one that is deeply regretted; it is one of these events that every city official across America sincerely hopes and prays will never happen in his city. He believed the great minds of the people of America would seek out some answers, and it would be a challenge to all of the doctors and educational people, and citizens, if there be an answer, to find it.

MAYOR PALMER asked that the City Manager instruct the City Attorney to bring in appropriate Resolutions to all of these people.

MAYOR PALMER announced three City employees were victims of this tragedy; MR. BILLY SPEED, a fine young Police Officer who give his life in the line of duty, and two innocent victims, MR. PAUL BOLTON SONNTAG and MR. ROY DELL SCHMIDT, employees in the Recreation Department and Utility System respectively.

The Mayor said that all of the citizens in Austin would want to take this opportunity to point out again the courageous service that the Police Department renders in the protection of person and property. To those who actually ascended the Tower at the risk of their lives, to those who were on the ground trying to stop the sniper's bullets, to the Police Department as a whole, and to Chief R. A. Miles, all of the citizens of Austin would like to express their sincere thanks.

COUNCILMAN WHITE commended the fine Police force for doing the good job they did; and stated he was very, very depressed about the fine police officer who lost his life in line of duty, OFFICER BILLY SPEED, and MR. ROY DELL SCHMIDT with the Electrical Distribution Department. He thanked all of the good people of Austin, all working together giving or offering to give blood when the call went out; also the undertakers who did an outstanding service in the use of their ambulances and emergency personnel. He expressed sorrow that MR. MORRIS HOHMANN was wounded severely, but who was in the intensive care room now with hope of recovery. Councilman White expressed regrets that the grandson of MR. PAUL BOLTON, K.T.B.C. had to be numbered among the victims. He commended the Brackenridge Emergency Staff and doctors for the magnificent job they performed in this emergency.

COUNCILMAN LARUE said everyone was shocked and upset over what had happened. He stated never had he been more proud of the community that he lived in as he was today after watching all the activities of the Police Department and civilians as well. All can be proud of the community. He expressed his sympathies to those who had been injured and for those who had died; and since it is the Council's responsibility to protect the individual in the city it behooves it to determine if there is anything at all possible to prevent such an occurrence as this from happening again, or any other emergency akin to this. He said he wanted to express his deepest regrets to the families of those who had been injured and to express appreciation to all of those who contributed so magnificently to end this conflict.

COUNCILMAN SHANKS said there was no question but Austin was the victim of a mentally ill, and this is a plague that could hit any community anywhere in

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the world--not just Austin, New York or Dallas, but anywhere. He said the Mayor summarized the feeling of the community in his remarks regarding this tragedy.

There being no further business Councilman LaRue moved that the Council adjourn. The motion, seconded by Councilman White, carried by the following vote:

Ayes: Councilmen LaRue, Shanks, White, Mayor Palmer

Noes: None

Absent: Councilman Long

The Council adjourned at 10:15 A.M. subject to the call of the Mayor.

APPROVED

Lucretia E. Palmer

Mayor

ATTEST:

City Clerk