

BOGATA CALLED COUNCIL MEETING

September 18, 2025, 4:00PM

Bogata City Hall , 128 N Main St, Bogata TX

I. CALL TO ORDER

II. NEW BUSINESS - DISCUSS TAKE - ACTION ON

1. City Financial issues including .status of budget, money transferred among accounts within the last budget year, use of CDs to supplement budget, budget amendments .
2. Mayor's spending authority.
3. Signatures on City accounts
4. Donations collected on water accounts for the Volunteer Fire Department
5. Authorization of transfers between City financial accounts.

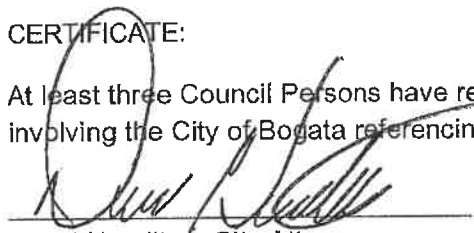
III EXECUTIVE SESSION: The City does not routinely list Executive Session items. This provision has been added to the agenda with the intent of meeting all elements necessary to satisfy TEX GOVT CODE 551.144(c). The council may vote and/or act upon each of the items set out in this agenda. In addition, the City Council of the City of Bogata has the right to adjourn into executive session at any time during the course of this meeting to discuss any matter authorized by Texas Government Code Sections 551.071 (Consultation with Attorney); 551.072 (Personnel Matters)551.076 (Deliberation regarding the deployment of security devices or the implementation of security policy; 551.087 (Deliberations regarding Economic Development negotiations).

IX. ADJOURNMENT-

Attendance by Other Elected or Appointed Officials- NOTICE OF POTENTIAL QUORUM: It is anticipated that members of City Council or other city board, commissions and/or committees may attend the meeting in numbers that may constitute a quorum of the other city boards, commissions and/or committees. Notice is hereby given that the meeting, to the extent required by law, is also notice as meeting of other boards, commissions and/or committees may participate in discussion on the same items listed on the agenda, which occur at the meeting, but no action will be taken by such in attendance unless such item and action is specifically provided for on an agenda for that board, commission or committee subject to the Texas Open Meetings Act.

CERTIFICATE:

At least three Council Persons have ~~requested a~~ called (special) meeting on financial issues involving the City of Bogata referencing the agenda items listed above.


David Hamilton, City Attorney

I hereby certify that the above Notice of Meeting was posted on the front door of City Hall on September 12, 2025, at a place convenient and readily accessible to the public at all times, and to the city's website, <https://cityofbogata.com> in compliance with Chapter 551, Texas Government Code.


Bobbie Jarvis, City Secretary

City of Bogata Council Special Called Meeting Minutes

Date: September 18, 2025

Location: Bogata City Community Center

Presiding: Larry Hinsley Mayor

Council Members Present:

- Teresa Allison
 - Melissa Kirby
 - Cecil (Tex) Loftin attended by phone
 - Chris Kennedy
 - Dakota Ross
 - Presiding Larry Hinsley Mayor
- Quorum was confirmed.*
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1. Call to Order & Opening Proceedings

- Meeting called to order at 4:03 p.m. and opened with the **Pledge of Allegiance**.
 - An **invocation** was delivered by Larry, asking for wisdom and guidance in city business.
 - It was noted that **public comment** was not formally on the agenda, but members of the public were still offered a chance to speak under standard 3-minute rule.
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2. Clarification on Investigations

- Concerns were raised about **rumors of investigations** involving council members.
 - Several members publicly asked if they were under investigation.
 - The **City Attorney** stated that **all council members are currently under investigation**, despite rumors or threats of involving external law enforcement (e.g., Texas Rangers).
 - Frustration was expressed over ongoing accusations and the toll on city operations.
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3. Financial Review & Budget Discussion

CD Accounts and Transfers:

- Discussion centered around **CDs (Certificates of Deposit)** used to supplement the city budget.
- Two key CDs were identified:
 - **#9204**

- #6202
- One was unallocated and the other designated for the **Police Department (PD)**, based on the **May 23, 2024** meeting minutes.
- Funds from **Fire Department accounts** were transferred into these CDs.
- At least one CD had **\$100,000+**, another **\$48,327.80**.
- There is uncertainty about **which CDs are allocated**, and **some are missing documentation**.

Police Department Funding:

- Estimated **\$25,500** needed for PD operations.
- Petty cash accounts and allocation of CD funds were discussed.

Fire Department Account Concerns:

- Historical **\$2 donations** from utility bills were supposed to support the **fire truck fund**.
- Since **mid-2023**, these donations appear to have **stopped being collected**, possibly due to legal issues with automatic charges.
- There's at least **\$600–700 missing** from fire fund accounts.
- CD rollover procedures and recordkeeping for the Fire Department appear inconsistent or undocumented.
- It was suggested a **letter be sent to residents** requesting opt-in for donations again.

4. Accountability, Oversight, and Recordkeeping

Key Issues Raised:

- Lack of transparency around **CD usage, budget amendments, and receipts for spending**.
- Concerns over **loose receipts**, missing files, and absence of clear authorizations for financial decisions.
- Lack of recent **annual audits** (last complete audit was in **2019**).
- Attempts at a **forensic audit** halted due to missing records.

Legal & Administrative Comments:

- The **City Attorney** expressed difficulty obtaining necessary documents from the city.
 - Emphasized **legal requirement** for records retention and **proper documentation** of council actions and financial decisions.
 - Criticism was made of the city's approach to finances, particularly the use of emergency meetings to move funds without prior transparency.
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5. Suggestions for Reform:

Recommendations Included:

- **Hiring a city administrator** for professional financial oversight.
 - **Improving recordkeeping**, particularly for meeting minutes and receipts.
 - **Clarifying budget amendment procedures** and adhering strictly to legal requirements.
 - Consider **reinstating proper annual audits**.
 - Emphasize **proactive financial planning** to avoid emergency decisions.
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6. Final Notes & Questions Raised:

- Ongoing confusion over:
 - Who authorized CD rollovers?
 - Where funds were allocated or spent.
 - Why audits and documentation have lapsed.
 - Calls for greater **council oversight**, financial stewardship, and transparency.
 - Concern over volunteer-run operations and lack of professional staff support.
 - Acknowledgement that **issues have been predicted** in previous meetings but not acted upon.
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Action Items:

1. Identify responsible parties for past CD transfers and missing funds.
2. Re-establish \$2 fire department donation program legally and with consent.
3. Resume annual audit process and locate missing documentation.
4. Formalize financial authorization procedures.
5. Increase council training and administrative capacity.

1. Mayor's Spending Authority

- **Motion passed to remove the mayor's spending authority.**
- **Motion made by:** Dakota Ross
- **Seconded by:** Chris Kennedy
- **Motion carried:** Unanimous
- Concerns were raised about transparency and accountability in mayoral spending.
- Questions were asked about who would sign checks in emergencies.
- The city secretary and water secretary were discussed as possible alternatives for check signatories.

2. Financial Oversight & Procedures

- Ongoing frustration from council members and others about:
 - Lack of itemized monthly reports
 - Unclear budget tracking
 - Employees using cards without clear oversight
 - Clarification was made that two signatures are required for checks.
 - No clear process exists for a third-party approval before checks are issued.
 - The bank doesn't verify signatures; internal checks are relied upon.
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3. Check Signatures & Emergency Authority

- **Motion passed to maintain current signature authority.** Mayor, Mayor Pro-Tem, City Secretary, and Water Secretary.
 - **Motion made by:** Teresa Allison
 - **Seconded by:** Melissa Kerby
 - **Motion carried:** Unanimous
 - Acknowledged that removing the mayor as a signatory may cause delays, especially during emergencies.
 - Discussion acknowledged the need for **balance between oversight and operational efficiency.**
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4. Fire Department Donations & CD Funds

- Fire department requested:
 - Transfer of **two CDs** totaling approximately **\$14,500** into their name:
 - \$2,329 (fire truck savings)
 - \$12,173 (fire station fund)
 - Purpose: Use as matching funds for a **pending fire truck grant.**
 - Council was **supportive but tabled the decision until October**, pending legal review on fund transfers.
 - **Motion:** Remove from the table decision to transfer fire truck CD and fire station fund till October meeting.
 - **Motion made by:** Dakota Ross
 - **Seconded by:** Teresa Allison
 - **Motion carried:** Unanimous
 - Fire department emphasized urgency, rising equipment costs, and lack of active volunteers.
 - Council agreed on the importance of preserving funds until official approval and confirmation.
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5. Volunteer Fire Department Challenges

- Fire department leaders expressed:
 - Concerns over lack of volunteers (most live outside city limits)
 - Equipment aging past useful life
 - Increasing difficulty responding to calls due to lack of manpower
 - Public comments supported the fire department and encouraged more transparency and planning for future needs.
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6. Transfers Between Financial Accounts

- **Motion passed to require city council be notification before any and all fund transfers between accounts.**
- **Motion made by:** Dakota Ross
- **Seconded by:** Chris Kennedy
- **Motion carried:** Unanimous
- Discussed consolidating accounts (22 total considered excessive).
- **Payroll** is handled via **ADP**, but **Water Works employees' salaries** must be properly allocated to the water fund.

Meeting Adjournment

- **Motion:** Adjourn meeting at 5:34 p.m.
- **Motion made by:** Melissa Kerby
- **Seconded by:** Dakota Ross
- **Motion carried:** unanimously

Minutes submitted by: City Secretary's Bobbie J Jarvis



Date: 10.6.2025

Approved by: Mayor's Hinsley:



Date of Approval: 10/6/25