

Email address concern November 2022- 2023

NOVEMBER 14,2023 5:30P.M.	Leo Corona of 409 State School Road provided handouts to the councilmembers and spoke of a concern that he brought up at a previous meeting in regards to citizens contacting councilmembers. Mr. Corona encouraged the Council to place and discuss on a future agenda the 'benefits of city council members having official city email accounts.'
Concern 2 Public Information Act City Email Account for communication with constituents	Included in this handout are two official agenda minute notes, the Texas Open Meetings Act, and information subject to the Public Information Act. I have previously brought this concern to the council's attention and was informed that the process for citizens to contact their council members was through city hall. Having official city email accounts for council members would serve two key purposes. First, it would allow constituents to contact council members directly. Second, it would simplify compliance with public information requests. When council members use private email accounts to conduct city business, fulfilling such requests becomes more intrusive, as the city may be required to search through an entire personal email account to identify relevant communications. Therefore, I encourage this body to consider placing “discussion of the benefits of city council members having official city email accounts” on a future agenda. As outlined in § 551.042 of the Open Meetings Act, the city council, as the head of local government, has the authority to address such matters.
2022 Handbook for Mayors and Councilmembers Chapter Five:	The City Council at Work Meetings Texas Open Meetings Act (Page 43) “Public information” includes any electronic communication created, transmitted, received, or maintained on any device if the communication is in connection with the transaction of official business. “Official business” is defined as any matter over which a governmental body has any authority, administrative duties, or advisory duties. This means, for instance, that the Act now expressly provides that a councilmember’s private computer or cell phone communications, if made in connection with the transaction of official business, are public information.”
Public Information ACT Handbook 2022	III. INFORMATION SUBJECT TO THE PUBLIC INFORMATION ACT (Page-17)“The amended definition of “public information” in section 552.002(a-2) now specifically includes: any electronic communication created, transmitted, received, or maintained on any device if the communication is in connection with the transaction of official business. Section 552.002(a-1) further defines “information . . . in connection with

	the transaction of official business” as: information . . . created by, transmitted to, received by, or maintained by an officer or employee of the governmental body in the officer’s or employee’s official capacity, or a person or entity performing official business or a governmental function on behalf of a governmental body, and pertains to official business of the governmental body.”
AGENDA REGULAR CITY COUNCIL MEETING NOVEMBER 15, 2022 AT 5:30 P.M.	“Leo Corona of 409 State School Road spoke to the Council about Council Member communication with citizens of Gatesville and requested a way that residents could contact Council Members in their Ward to be able to discuss any issues or concerns as not everyone can attend a council meeting. Mr. Corona said that there needs to be a way for citizens to reach out to Council Members by -way-of telephone or email”.
AGENDA REGULAR CITY COUNCIL MEETING JANUARY 10, 2023 AT 5:30 P.M.	“Leo Corona of 409 State School Road spoke to the Council regarding communication to citizens of the City of Gatesville. Mr. Corona said that communication is key to make a community successful and noted that there is not a Councilmember Ward Map on the city website and no Councilmember contact information on the website. City Manager Parry said that Councilmembers are elected to individual places in two (2) Wards but are elected from the City at large so a citizen can speak to any councilmember about any concerns. <i>Mr. Corona thought that contact information for the councilmembers is something that is needed and suggested that it be posted on the website.</i> Mayor Chumley said that the process to contact councilmembers has been to contact City Hall and then staff would provide the citizen’s phone number to the councilmember that the citizen wished to speak to. Mr. Corona said that a citizen having the ability to contact a councilmember would be easier and might be able to find the answer to a question quicker instead of coming to a Council meeting and wasting Mayor and Councilmembers time during a meeting. Mayor Chumley noted Mr. Corona’s request and said that the current process to contact a councilmember has worked fine for many years”.
§ 551.042. Open meetings ACT.	Inquiry Made at Meeting (a) If, at a meeting of a governmental body, a member of the public or of the governmental body inquires about a subject for which notice has not been given as required by this subchapter, the notice provisions of this subchapter do not apply to: (1) a statement of specific factual information given in response to the inquiry; or (2) a recitation of existing policy in response to the inquiry. (b) Any deliberation of or decision about the subject of the inquiry shall be limited to a proposal to place the subject on the agenda for a subsequent meeting