

The City Council of the City of Columbus, Texas met in special session on Tuesday, August 6, 2019 at 5:30 p.m., in the Council Chambers of City Hall located at 605 Spring St., Columbus, Texas, with the following present:

Mayor	-	Lori An Gobert
Mayor Pro Tem	-	Chuck Rankin
Councilman	-	Keith Cummings
Councilman	-	Michael Ridlen
Councilman	-	Gary Swindle
Councilwoman	-	Sandra Frnka
City Manager	-	Donald Warschak
City Secretary	-	Bana Schneider

Other City Staff Present:

Police Chief	-	Skip Edman
Library Director	-	Susan Chandler

**1. Call to Order.**

Mayor, Lori An Gobert, called the meeting to order at 5:31 p.m.

**2. Pledge of Allegiance and Invocation.**

Gobert led the Pledge of Allegiance and Invocation.

**3. Consent Agenda:**

**a. Approval of Invoices**

Councilman Swindle made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. Councilman Rankin seconded the motion.

The vote was as follows:

Ayes: Councilmen Cummings, Ridlen, Swindle, and Rankin; Councilwoman Frnka

The motion passed.

**4. Citizens' Presentations and Comments.'**

There were no public comments.

**5. Public Hearing Seeking Citizen Comments Regarding the Martin Luther King Street Sidewalk Improvement Project in Association with the TxDOT Transportation Alternative Set-Aside (TASA)/Safe Route to School-Infrastructure (SRTS) Program.**

The public hearing was opened at 5:33 p.m. by Mayor Gobert.

City Manager, Donald Warschak, gave a presentation of the project. He displayed drawings of the area and where the improvements would be made.

Warschak stated as part of the application process, a public hearing is required. The application is due next week.

Councilman Rankin asked if some of the project area had been reworked during the bridge construction. Warschak went over the changes in the project area during bridge construction and how the sidewalk project will tie into those changes.

Councilwoman Frnka asked if there would be a blinking light, like on Highway 71 for the school crossing. Warschak stated the TxDOT highway engineers suggested the school crossing signs with

children on them with an arrow pointing to the crosswalk should be used. There was a discussion about the current school zone signs and their location.

The public hearing was closed at 5:39 p.m.

**6. Consideration and Action to Declare Library Shelving as Surplus Property.**

Library Director, Susan Chandler, stated the current library shelves were being replaced with new metal shelving purchased with funding from the Dumraese Grant. Some local schools and organizations were interested in the old shelving. Gobert asked if the shelving was being sold or donated. Chandler stated every year libraries list old shelving for sale to other libraries, but there are usually never any takers, so this shelving would be donated. Councilman Ridlen asked if there was a prescribed manner in which inventoried property must be disposed. Warschak stated it must be declared surplus property before anything can be done with it.

Councilman Rankin made a motion to declare library shelving as surplus property. Councilman Cummings seconded the motion.

The vote was as follows:

Ayes: Councilmen Cummings, Ridlen, Swindle, and Rankin; Councilwoman Frnka

The motion passed.

**7. Discussion of Budget Workshop – Tax Rate, General Fund Department Presentations, Glidden Sewer Rate.**

Sales tax projections were discussed along with new property tax rate comparisons. Projected property tax revenues were discussed using last year's rate and a rate increased by ½ cent. There was a discussion comparing the sales tax and property tax revenues. There was also a discussion of the sales tax trend over the last ten years. There was discussion regarding the new property tax laws, and its possible effect. There was discussion regarding the correlation between grants awarded and property tax rate. Council discussed property tax abatement. Mayor Gobert asked the thoughts of the Council on the tax rate, and the consensus was to keep the rate the same as last year.

There was discussion of the fund balance and the tax rate effect on it, and discussion of the long term financial plan.

Susan Chandler made the budget presentation for the library. Chandler stated the operating budget was remaining the same as last year since the library roof will need to be replaced. The estimate for that project would be approximately \$110,000. There was a discussion regarding the type of roof that should be installed. There was also a discussion of the donation of new shelving for the archives.

The Fire Department presentation was made by Chief Dusty Dittmar, and Assistant Chiefs Richard LaCourse and Sydney Schollett. There were a few line item increases asked for as well as a few capital items including an air bottle compressor, the Knox System and gear lockers to protect the very expensive bunker gear. There was a discussion regarding the fire attendance bonus and how that was being administered. The breakdown of the call locations were discussed, and the contributions received from other entities. There was also a discussion regarding the fire apparatus replacement schedule and the transfers to the equipment fund. It was determined to increase the transfers to keep up with the replacement schedule.

The department is also asking for all firefighters to be inoculated for Hepatitis B.

Police Chief, Skip Edman, gave the police department presentation. He stated they are asking for all officers to receive a cell phone provided by the City. The server needs to be replaced in order to be compliant. There was a discussion regarding the fleet replacement.

The Glidden Water District monthly charge was discussed in anticipation of their contract renewal.

8. **Executive Session: In Accordance with Texas Government Code, Subchapter D, Section 551.074, Personnel Matters – Annual Review of City Manager.**

This item was not required.

9. **Reconvene into Regular Session and Consideration and Action, if Any, Regarding Executive Session – Annual Review of City Manager.**

This item was not required.

10. **Items from Councilmembers.<sup>2</sup>**

Councilman Cummings – None

Councilman Ridlen – Acknowledged the Little League Girls Softball Team. Tomorrow's parade to honor them was discussed.

Councilman Swindle – None

Councilwoman Frnka – Drains need to be cleaned in anticipation of hurricane season.

Councilman Rankin – None

Mayor Gobert – Discussed some of the smaller checking accounts and her suggested use of those funds.

11. **Announcements.**

Schneider stated next Monday, August 12<sup>th</sup> will be the next regular meeting.

12. **Adjournment.**

The Mayor adjourned the meeting at 7:03 p.m.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Mayor, Lori An Gobert

ATTEST:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Bana Schneider, City Secretary

<sup>1</sup>During this agenda item, citizens may comment for the record on items, which are not on the agenda. However, the Council may not participate in discussion or deliberation on any item that is not on the agenda. Citizens may request that a topic be added to a future agenda.

<sup>2</sup>Limited to statements. Issues raised by council members under this item cannot be deliberated by Council. The Open Meetings Act does not allow Council to deliberate items that don't appear on the agenda.