

The City Council of the City of Columbus, Texas met in regular session on Monday, August 26, 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 included:

Police Detective	-	Rusty Moulder
Code Enforcement	-	Richard LaCourse
Fire/Code Assistant	-	Duane Naiser

1. Call to Order.

Mayor Lori An Gobert called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

2. Pledge of Allegiance and Invocation.

Gobert led the Pledge of Allegiance and Invocation.

3. Consent Agenda:

- a. Approval of Invoices
- b. Approval of Minutes of the July 22, 2019 Regular Meeting
- c. Approval of Minutes of the August 6, 2019 Special Meeting
- d. Approval of June 2019 Financial Statements

Councilman Swindle made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. Councilman Cummings 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. ¹

James Griffin from Texas Disposal Systems stated he felt there was a great partnership between the City and TDS. He knows there was recent Council approval to go out for an RFP, but he stated you can gain everything you want in an RFP by merely negotiating your contract.

He highlighted the features of the current contract, and asked Council to place on the next agenda an item to allow the City Manager to negotiate the contract so the City would not have to go through the RFP process.

5. City Manager's Report Including the Water Filtration Project, Gas Line Project, Water Line Projects, and Safe Route to School Application Updates.

City Manager, Donald Warschak, gave his report, a copy of which is attached to these minutes. Warschak stated B&D Services would be prepping the filter vessels in anticipation of the painting contractor to start the painting process. Once the painting has been completed, the vessels can be

placed on the concrete supports. Councilman Rankin asked when the project might be completed. Warschak stated he was still shooting for the end of September. Warschak stated he had spoken to WesTech today in order to coordinate a delivery of sand for the filters. There was a discussion of the testing of the piping. Councilwoman Frnka asked which unit would be put online first. Warschak stated any of them could be put online first, but would concentrate on the Tait plant. Councilman Ridlen stated he would recommend the Tait plant first, simply because it is the most visible. Gobert stated we would need to send out postcards since there will be water clarity issues when the filter goes online.

Regarding the gas line project, the City Manager stated a line was being installed between Oak Cluster and Fairview at Walnut Street. When that is completed, the contractor will move to County Road 806 to do the install there. Warschak stated the line would have to be completed on Walnut before the service on 806 could be cutoff in order to maintain service in Memorial Oaks and the Krupka Addition. Frnka confirmed there would be no interruption of gas service during the project. Warschak gave an overview of the project, stating no interruption was anticipated.

For the waterline projects, Warschak stated the plans for the grant project are currently with TCEQ for review with anticipation of bids being taken in October. He stated he was completing the final take-offs for the bond project, and he is hoping to go out for bids at the same time. He feels if the bids go out together, we may receive better pricing.

Lastly, Warschak stated the application for the Safe Route to School sidewalk project has been submitted to TxDOT.

6. Consideration and Action to Award the Construction Contract for the WWTP Generator Platform Project.

Warschak stated this was a FEMA mitigation project for a platform to elevate the generator above the Harvey water levels. He said only one bid had been received even though he contacted a local concrete company and advertised in several publications. B&D Services submitted a bid of \$18,165. Warschak stated his estimate was \$23,000. He also said the project would have a 12-day completion time frame.

Councilman Swindle made a motion to award the WWTP Generator Platform Project to B&D Services. Councilman Ridlen seconded the motion.

The vote was as follows:

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

The motion passed.

7. Consideration and Action Regarding a Noise Ordinance Variance for the use of Sound Amplification Equipment, Live Music, Rodeo, Livestock Show, and Tractor Pull on Thursday, September 5, 2019 thru Saturday September 7, 2019 from 5:00 p.m. to Midnight Daily as Requested by the Colorado County Fair Association for the 41st Annual Colorado County Fair.

The requested hours were discussed. Code Enforcement officer, Richard LaCourse, stated there has never really been any complaints for this event.

Councilman Ridlen made a motion to approve the noise variance as requested. Councilman Rankin seconded the motion.

The vote was as follows:

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

The motion passed.

8. Consideration and Action Regarding a Request for the Vacation of a Portion of Austin Street.

Frank Howell made a request to Council, a copy of which is attached to these minutes, to vacate a portion of Austin Street. Warschak stated a few years ago there was a similar situation with Mrs. Peterman. The survey of her property showed the Front Street right-of-way going through her house. Ridlen asked the City Manager to bring up a satellite image of the area. There was an extensive discussion regarding the area and the two different surveys. Howell pointed out the area in question. Rankin asked if the City had a right-of-way or easement. Warschak stated it was an old original right-of-way set out during the original plat of the City. Howell stated there is no official statement or reference to a City easement.

There was also discussion of the property ownership, and the suggestion of looking at the deed documents of adjacent properties.

Rankin stated the City can't vacate half of the street, and questioned who would get the rest. He also asked if the street would ever need to be extended all the way to the river. Warschak stated the City would have to maintain an easement for storm drainage, but this should be reviewed by the City Attorney. Warschak also stated he would pull the adjacent deed to see where that property goes and what is referenced in the survey. Gobert stated she feels this needs to go to the attorney for review. Warschak stated the process of vacation would include a public hearing and the passing of an ordinance.

No action was taken.

9. Consideration and Action to Approve Ordinance 218-19, an Ordinance Amending Chapter 12, Article 12.02, Division 2, Section 12.02.043(b) of the Code of Ordinances Regulating Speed Limits in the Columbus High School Zone.

Mayor Gobert stated she had been approached by a citizen regarding speeding in the school zone on Milentz Street. After the Police Chief reviewed the zone, she stated the signage was wrong. School dismissal is actually at 3:00 p.m., and the signage states 3:20 p.m. Rankin asked if the time has to be specified in the ordinance. Ridlen stated the current ordinance contains the time.

Councilman Ridlen made a motion to approve Ordinance 218-19 to change the times of the high school zones. Councilman Rankin seconded the motion.

The vote was as follows:

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

The motion passed.

10. Consideration and Action to Approve Resolution 196-19, a Resolution Denying AEP's Increase to its Electric Transmission and Distribution Rates and Charges within the City.

Warschak stated the resolution was provided by the law firm representing the coalition of cities. It has been approved by the City Attorney.

Councilman Rankin made a motion to approve Resolution 196-19. Councilwoman Frnka seconded the motion.

The vote was as follows:

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

The motion passed.

11. Consideration and Action to Approve the Glidden Fresh Water Supply District No. 1 Contract for Sewage Discharge.

Ridlen asked if this was a separate contract from the one seen previously. Gobert stated that contract approval had been postponed for discussions with Glidden. Warschak stated he and City Secretary, Bana Schneider, had met with Edward Pavlicek and Chris Arthur regarding the contract. Warschak commented the numbers were hashed over with the entities ultimately meeting in the middle. Schneider stated they will be paying their current contract rate next year with the rate being adjusted annually to reflect the change in the CPU. Schneider also stated this would be a cumulative change over the life of the contract instead of starting at the base rate yearly. Frnka asked if this was a five-year contract. Schneider stated it was.

Rankin stated the rate on the prior worksheet was higher. Schneider confirmed. She had figured the rate based on the worksheet used in the past, but with negotiations, some of the methodology changed. Some of the prior expenses or the ratio multiplier were changed, and some expenses not included previously were added.

Schneider stated included in the packet is the information requested previously regarding Glidden's rate to their customers.

Councilwoman Frnka made a motion to approve the contract with Glidden. Councilman Cummings seconded the motion.

The vote was as follows:

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

The motion passed.

12. Consideration and Action, if Necessary, Regarding the Fire Marshal Report.

Richard LaCourse gave the Fire Marshal report. LaCourse stated the Fire Marshal, Brent Gorman, had been working on requirements for the new brewery since the plans have changed after the original plans were submitted. He stated Gorman was also in the process of completing occupancy loads for all of the schools. Currently that has been completed for the high school.

He is also working on an amendment to the fire code regarding addressing. Councilman Cummings asked why there is a cost for the Knox system because what he has read, the individual would pay for it if they want it. LaCourse stated the system that goes in the fire trucks and what will actually go on City buildings is what is in the budget. It is an accountability system which keeps track of when the system is utilized and by whom.

Frnka asked if exit signs in businesses were inspected. LaCourse stated those are inspected whenever Gorman inspects a new or existing business.

No action was required.

13. Consideration and Action, if Necessary, Regarding the July 2019 Code Enforcement Report.

LaCourse gave the report. He highlighted the permits issued during the month. He also stated he had been redlining the ISO building codes in order to get the changes submitted to the City Attorney. LaCourse stated the substandard property worksheets have been updated. He sent out letters regarding high grass and weeds. All but two had been taken care of, but one of the properties just changed hands, and the new owner will get it mowed. The other property the City ended up mowing, but he has to wait 30 days before he can put a lien on the property. LaCourse also discussed the McDonald's property. He said about 80 percent of the lot has been cleaned, and they are continuing to work on it.

There was discussion regarding several substandard properties in the City.

LaCourse stated Duane Naiser has been working on 84 permits for the apartment rehab, and he has put together a packet for electrical contractors in order to let them know what will be expected during an inspection.

Gobert spoke about a rental property over near St. Anthony's. She stated there are several vehicles and trailers parked on the street, and one of the trailers has no reflective material on it. She is afraid someone will run in to it during the night. Also, traffic is very congested there during school drop off and pick up times and it is a safety issue with these extra items on the street. LaCourse stated he would go over and speak to the renter again.

No action was required.

14. Consideration and Action, if Necessary, Regarding the July 2019 Police Report.

Detective Rusty Moulder gave the police report. He highlighted the online and offline firearms training the department had received during the month. He also told Council about the different local activities department personnel had attended.

No action was required.

15. Discussion of Budget Workshop – General/Utility/HOT.

Schneider stated the budget assumptions were on the first page of Council's packet. She also stated she had received a written request from CASA for financial support. That request along with ticket writers and software for the Police Department and two additional Enterprise lease trucks were all included in the attached budget. Schneider also stated there was an estimate for a new bucket truck for public works along with a couple of financing options.

There was a discussion regarding the current bucket truck. Discussion of the fund balance and the need to cut somewhere else in order to include a bucket truck in the budget. Other purchase options were also discussed.

Council discussed the HOT fund budget with the trolley expenses.

Warschak explained the capital items in the utility fund budget as well as some infrastructure projects in the general fund.

There was also a discussion of the utility fund ending balance. Gobert stated FEMA project funding had been received, but the projects will not commence until next fiscal year.

16. Executive Session: In Accordance with Texas Government Code, Subchapter D, Section 551.072, Deliberations about Real Property – Softball Fields.

Mayor Gobert adjourned the regular session at 7:06 p.m., and Council went into executive session.

17. Reconvene into Regular Session and Consideration and Action, if Any, Regarding Executive Session – Deliberation Regarding Softball Fields.

The regular session was reconvened at 7:50 p.m., all Council members present before the executive session remained present.

Councilman Swindle made a motion authorizing the mayor to speak with CISD regarding the City softball fields. Councilwoman Frnka seconded the motion.

The vote was as follows:

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

The motion passed.

18. Items from Councilmembers.²

Councilman Cummings – None

Councilman Ridlen – Need to consider at some future date to cover the stands at the Little League Field.

Councilman Swindle – None

Councilwoman Frnka – Thanked the City for clearing the drainage ravine going through Memorial Oaks

Councilman Rankin – None

Mayor Gobert – None

19. Announcements.

There were no announcements.

20. Adjournment.

The Mayor adjourned the meeting at 7:52 p.m.



Mayor, Lori An Gobert

ATTEST:



Bana Schneider, City Secretary

¹During 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.

²Limited to statements. Issues raised by councilmembers 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.