



The City Council of the City of Columbus, Texas met in special session on Thursday, September 19, 2024, at 5:30 PM, 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 – Ronny Daley
Councilwoman – Paige Sciba
Councilman – Michael Ridlen (Absent)
City Manager – Donald Warschak
City Secretary – Bana Schneider
Assistant City Secretary – Dinah Jacobs

Other City Staff present included:

Police Chief – Skip Edman

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 and invocation.

3. Citizens' Presentations and Comments¹

Citizens requested to speak during agenda items.

4. Consideration and Action to Approve the Closure of Park Street from Milentz Street to Cardinal Lane, Cardinal Lane from Park Street to Montezuma, Montezuma from Cardinal Lane to Legion Drive, Legion Drive from Montezuma to Veterans Drive, Veterans Drive from Legion Drive to Milentz Street, and Milentz Street from Veterans Drive to the Marley Giddens Center from 6:30 pm until 7:30 pm on Wednesday, September 25, 2024 for the Columbus High School Homecoming Parade, as Requested by CHS. [HOMECOMING PARADE.pdf](#)

Motion to approve the street closure as presented.

Moved by: Paige Sciba

Seconded by: Ronny Daley

Aye Paige Sciba, Chuck Rankin, Keith Cummings, and
Ronny Daley

Carried 4-0

5. Public Hearing on the Property Tax Rate for Tax Year 2024 and Fiscal Year 2025.

[TAX RATE NOTICE.pdf](#) 

Public Hearing was opened at 5:32 p.m.

Roman Footnick addressed Council regarding the property tax notice in the paper, its wording and clarification on the tax rate increase. Gobert explained that the tax rate will be the same as last year, but since we will be generating more revenue due to new property added to the roles and the increased property valuations, the notice has to state a tax rate increase.

Chris Christensen addressed Council regarding the tax rate ordinance and his interpretation. City does a pretty good job of using tax funds. He was unhappy with the Council passage of the tax abatement approved for a new corporation coming into the City. He feels the citizens are being expected to pay more taxes while a corporation coming into the city is being given a break. He would like to see future abatement rejected.

Gobert responded. The Council is trying to do their due diligence and keep the City from having to take out huge bonds. We can't keep up with our current demands. Council is trying to be good stewards by not raising rates and still not taking out large debt.

Regarding the tax abatement, that is standard business protocols when there is job creation along with all of the goods they will be producing.

Schneider stated they are not getting an abatement on inventory. Council rejected that portion. And there is no abatement on the land.

Christensen stated what will the fixed income citizens get from the new business coming in?

Gobert, Schneider, Warschak stated that every dollar spent within the City gets touched by someone in some form or fashion.

Rankin stated that in his 20+ years, that property has not generated anything. After the 5-year abatement, it will be fully taxed. And it will be productive. It makes a significant difference.

Rankin went back to the tax rate increase only generates \$110,000. Sales tax is the primary driver. The more business there is in the community, the more sales tax generated. Vacant land has produced no additional dollars. The whole premise of the Industrial Park was to promote business. (along with the abatement)

Cheryl DeLeon asked what kind of business is going into the business park? How many jobs will they be providing? Gobert stated this is a property tax hearing. DeLeon stated there is also a school bond with taxes.

Gobert replied, the school tax rate is going down.

DeLeon felt the CCCAD doesn't do values consciously.

Gobert stated we don't do the values; we contract with them for appraisal and collections. Schneider stated she did not know their procedures, and they are always open to answer questions taxpayers have.

Rankin stated we need to encourage anything that will cause sales tax to increase.

With no further comments, the public hearing was adjourned at 6:04 p.m.

6. Budget Workshop

Combined Fund Summary

General Fund

Special Revenue Funds

Utility Fund

Capital Projects

Schneider led a review of the final budget, highlighting the changes made since the last budget workshop.

7. Public Hearing on Proposed 2024-2025 City of Columbus Operating Budget.

[BUDGET PUBLIC HEARING 2025.pdf](#) 

Public hearing was opened at 6:17 p.m.

With no comments from anyone, the public hearing was closed at 6:17 p.m.

8. Consideration and Action, if Necessary, to Approve Ordinance 279-24, an Ordinance Amending Ordinance 270-23 to Adopt the 2024-2025 Budget. [ORD 279-](#)

[24 - BUDGET.pdf](#) 

Motion to approve Ordinance 279-24.

Moved by: Keith Cummings

Seconded by: Chuck Rankin

Aye Paige Sciba, Chuck Rankin, Keith Cummings, and
Ronny Daley

Carried 4-0

9. Items from Councilmembers²

Cummings - none

Daley - none

Sciba - none

Ridlen - absent

Rankin - none

Gobert - comment there were a lot of bags not cleaned up after the paving; the so-called complaint made it seem like trash bags, but it seems they may have been talking about the weight bags for the signs; there were comments regarding the other highway improvements; county fair - nice to see county law enforcement there; the fair was really nice and well done; Gobert thanked admin for all of their hard work on a not fun subject

10. Announcements

Warschak stated he and Schneider and a couple of others from management attended a conference this week. It was well attended. Several other management staff attended during the previous month. A lot of useful information was dispersed. He stated we would plan to have a debriefing with both groups for discussion of everything we learned.

11. Adjournment

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:23 p.m.



Lori An Gobert, Mayor

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.