

The City Council of the City of Columbus, Texas met in regular session on Monday, September 13, 2021, 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	-	Ronny Daley
Councilman	-	Gary Swindle
Councilwoman	-	Sandra Frnka
City Manager	-	Donald Warschak
City Secretary	-	Bana Schneider
Asst City Secretary	-	Dinah Jacobs

Other City Staff present included:

Code Enforcement	-	Richard LaCourse
Police Chief	-	Skip Edman
Code/Fire Assistant	-	Duane Naiser
Fire Chief	-	Dusty Dittmar

**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 August 23, 2021 Regular Meeting
- c. Approval of Minutes of the August 30, 2021 Special Meeting
- d. Approval of the June 2021 Financial Statements

Councilman Swindle made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda. Councilwoman Frnka seconded the motion.

The vote was as follows:

Ayes: Councilmen Rankin, Swindle, Cummings, Daley, and Councilwoman Frnka

The motion passed.

**4. Citizens' Presentations and Comments. <sup>1</sup>**

Roger Wade requested to speak at the respective agenda item.

Brent Gorman asked Council if there was any update on the personnel policy. He gave an update of information he had researched along with his suggestions on the policy.

**5. City Manager's Report Including Sales Tax, the Transportation Alternatives Sidewalk Application, CodeRED System, and Water System Flushing.**

City Manager, Donald Warschak, gave his report. A copy is attached to these minutes. The sales tax payment for the City was \$148,495 compared to \$134,559, up approximately \$14,000 for the time period. The County saw a decrease while the Cities of Eagle Lake and Weimar saw increases.

Regarding the Transportation Alternatives Sidewalk Application, Warschak stated the application was still in the review phase with a determination date of October 21.

Regarding the CodeRED system, Warschak urged citizens to sign up or update their information if they currently are signed up for CodeRED notifications.

Regarding water system flushing, Warschak stated the flushing will begin on the south side of town and work towards the north side of town. There may be a drop in water pressure and possible discoloration during this time.

6. **Consideration and Action to Approve the Closure of Spring Street from Milam Street in Front of the Stafford Opera House from 9:00 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. on Saturday, September 18, 2021 for the Laura Hastedt Art Tea as Requested by the Columbus Christian Women's Organization.**

Councilman Cummings made a motion to approve the street closure. Councilman Daley seconded the motion.

The vote was as follows:

Ayes: Councilmen Rankin, Swindle, Cummings, Daley, and Councilwoman Frnka

The motion passed.

7. **Consideration and Action to Approve the Closure of Milam Street from the North Side of the Alleyway Between the Probation Department and the Gazebo Park to Crockett Street from 12:00 Noon to 12:00 Midnight on Saturday, October 16, 2021 for the Denim & Diamonds Annual Brunson Night Fundraiser as Requested by the Live Oak Art Center.**

Councilman Daley made a motion to approve the street closure. Councilman Cummings seconded the motion.

The vote was as follows:

Ayes: Councilmen Rankin, Swindle, Cummings, Daley, and Councilwoman Frnka

The motion passed.

8. **Consideration and Action to Approve the Closure of County Road 806 from Park Street to Montezuma Street; Montezuma Street from FM 806 to Legion Drive; Legion Drive from Montezuma to Veterans Drive; Veterans Drive from Legion Drive to Milentz Street; Milentz Street from Veterans Drive to Columbus High School Gym Parking Lot from 6:30 p.m. – 7:30 p.m. on Wednesday September 22, 2021 for the Columbus Cardinal Booster Club Homecoming Parade.**

Councilman Daley made a motion to approve the street closure. Councilwoman Frnka seconded the motion.

The vote was as follows:

Ayes: Councilmen Rankin, Swindle, Cummings, Daley, and Councilwoman Frnka

The motion passed.

9. **Public Hearing on the Property Tax Rate for Tax Year 2021 and Fiscal Year 2022.**

Gobert opened the public hearing at 5:41 p.m.

There were no comments.

Gobert closed the public hearing at 5:42 p.m.

10. **Consideration and Action to Ratify the Budgeted Property Tax Increase Reflected in the 2021-2022 Budget.**

Councilman Swindle made the motion stating I move to ratify the budgeted property tax increase as reflected in the 2021-2022 budget. Councilman Cummings seconded the motion.

The vote was as follows:

Ayes: Councilmen Rankin, Swindle, Cummings, Daley, and Councilwoman Frnka

The motion passed.

**11. Consideration and Action to Approve Ordinance 243-21 to Establish the Property Tax Rate of \$0.29000.**

Councilman Swindle made the motion stating I move that the property tax rate be increased by the adoption of a tax rate of \$0.29000, which is effectively a 6.67 percent increase in the tax rate. Councilwoman Frnka seconded the motion.

The roll call vote was as follows:

Councilmen Rankin - aye  
Councilman Swindle - aye  
Councilman Cummings - aye  
Councilman Daley - aye  
Councilwoman Frnka – aye

The motion passed.

**12. Discussion Regarding the Creation of a Commercial Historic District in the City of Columbus.**

Roger Wade gave a presentation on "A Better Columbus" group forming and historical district information. There was discussion. He would like for this to be considered and will present a formal proposal at a later date.

**13. Consideration and Action to Approve Resolution 234-21, a Resolution Authorizing the Application to the Texas Parks & Wildlife Local Park Grant Program.**

Councilman Daley made a motion to approve Resolution 234-21. Councilman Rankin seconded the motion.

The vote was as follows:

Ayes: Councilmen Rankin, Swindle, Daley, and Councilwoman Frnka  
Abstain: Councilman Cummings

The motion passed.

**14. Consideration and Action to Approve Resolution 235-21, a Resolution to Prevent Mining and Drilling on City Property Being Utilized for a Texas Parks & Wildlife Park Development Project.**

Councilman Daley made a motion to approve Resolution 235-21. Councilman Rankin seconded the motion.

The vote was as follows:

Ayes: Councilmen Rankin, Swindle, Cummings, Daley, and Councilwoman Frnka

The motion passed.

**15. Consideration and Action, if Necessary, Regarding the August 2021 Golf Association Report.**

City Secretary, Bana Schneider gave a recap. The payroll was questioned. Schneider stated that it was up about \$3,000 and there is one full time employee. Rankin questioned their public hearing at the course. Gobert stated she was the only one there.

No action was needed.

**16. Consideration and Action Regarding Personnel Policies and Procedures Manual.**

There was discussion on the policy manual the attorney had submitted. Gobert stated the holiday schedule was incorrect. Schneider confirmed, and stated it was a general handbook that the City would need to tweak. Rankin pointed out and questioned numerous items for consideration. There is homework to do on this. This item was tabled until members have more time to review.

**17. Consideration and Action Regarding City Meeting Procedures.**

Schneider stated there are things we needed to do regarding meetings. Some are very straight forward, and others solidify what we do. Police Chief Skip Edman stated there needed to be something done regarding the media. Swindle questioned the open records act. Schneider stated anyone can request a recording of the meeting.

This item was tabled until the next meeting, giving more members time to review.

**18. Consideration and Action Regarding the Mansfield Library Property.**

There was discussion regarding the condition of this property. Gobert and Warschak met with the judge to discuss this property, and what to do for the citizens that use it. The building is in a state of disrepair. Since the property was donated to the City for a library, there was discussion on if and how it could be sold. Warschak submitted all of the deeds to the attorney, and it can be sold. It is a forty seven and a half foot piece of property. There are restrictions on who we can sell it to. It is not remotely close to being ADA compliant. Warschak stated it would cost more than it is worth to renovate and keep it. Rankin stated Council could read the documents, but ultimately Warschak needed to decide. Gobert stated we should sell it "as is", with proceeds going to the library. Code Enforcement, Richard LaCourse, questioned where the groups who use this property would meet. Gobert stated she was working with the judge to find alternate locations for them. Gobert ask Warschak to put this into a formal proposal.

There was no action taken.

**19. Items from Council members.<sup>2</sup>**

Councilman Cummings – none

Councilman Swindle – none

Councilwoman Frnka – none

Councilman Rankin – none

Councilman Daley - none

Mayor Gobert – thank you to all who came out and participated in the fair parade; thank you to Donald who helped with the travelling Memorial Wall.

**14. Announcements.**

LaCourse stated the Fire Marshal wanted to inform them of the High School bonfire on September 22<sup>nd</sup>. A bonfire can be held even though there is a burn ban.

Edman stated the Special Olympic Torch Run that was scheduled to be held September 18<sup>th</sup>, has been canceled due to COVID.

**15. Adjournment.**

The Mayor adjourned the meeting at 6:48 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.