Minutes of Regular

The City Council Regular Meeting of Monday, July 13, 2020

BE IT KNOWN THAT, a City Council Regular Meeting of the Regular of City of Richwood was held Monday, July 13, 2020, beginning at 6:00 PM in the Richwood City Hall
1800 N. Brazosport Blvd.
Richwood, Texas 77531.

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m.

II. ROLL CALL OF COUNCIL MEMBERS

Steve Boykin, Mayor - Absent
Mike Johnson, Position 1 - Mayor ProTem
Melissa Strawn, Position 2
Matthew Yarborough, Position 3 - Absent
Mark Brown II, Position 4
Katie Johnson, Position 5

Others present Eric Foerster, City Manager; Kirsten Garcia, City Secretary; Patricia Ditto, Finance Director; Clif Custer, Public Works Director; Stephen Mayer, Chief of Police

III. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Rodrigo Escalante - 2918 Oakwood Shores Dr - Mr. Escalante stated that he was happy to see the roads construction progressing in Oakwood Shores and appreciates the efforts to get that done, Redfish Trail is nearing completion. With that, he would like to know what the budget was looking like for the road repairs that was passed with the $3 million bond. He wants to know if costs are still in line with the last projection considering COVID-19 and the overtime that was paid out to staff. He wants to be transparent about how the bond money is being used for road repair. Mr. Escalante added that he has noticed the approval of minutes on the agenda, but he hasn't seen any minutes that have been approved, so he is curious to see what all is in the minutes and if everything from public comments are mentioned verbatim.

IV. CONSENT AGENDA

Melissa Strawn stated she is not comfortable approving minutes and would like them pulled from the consent.
Mike Johnson stated he would like Item B removed from the agenda regarding the May 2020 Budget Report

Mike Johnson requested a motion on items C,D,E.
Melissa stated she would like to pull item D from consent agenda.
Mike Johnson suggest we pull it all and look at each item individually.

A. Approval of Minutes

1. Minutes from regular meeting held May 11, 2020
2.

Mark Brown stated that minutes are not going to be comprehensive, just recorded actions. If someone was quoted and takes exception to what was written can request a change.
Mike Johnson asked if recordings could be obtained from the meeting.
Kirsten Garcia stated yes, recordings may be obtained by open records request.

Approve minutes from May 11, 2020. This motion, made by Mark Brown II and seconded by Katie Johnson, Passed.
Melissa Strawn: Nay, Mark Brown II: Yea, Katie Johnson: Yea, Mike Johnson: Yea
Yea: 3, Nay: 1

3. Minutes from regular meeting held June 8, 2020

Mark Brown II stated he believes Council Person Strawn had concerns.

Motion to table minutes from June 8. This motion, made by Melissa Strawn and seconded by Mark Brown II, Passed.
Mark Brown II: Yea, Katie Johnson: Yea, Mike Johnson: Yea, Melissa Strawn: Yea
Yea: 4, Nay: 0

B. Approve May 2020 Budget Report

Mike Johnson requested clarification on percentage of fiscal year that has expired.

Tricia Ditto confirmed that his thinking is right, it's not money spent.

Mark Brown II asked for an explanation on why we are ahead on revenues even with COVID-19.

Eric Foerster stated the sales tax revenue did not take a dip as we had thought we'd see.

Tricia Ditto added that we have also received the bulk of our property taxes mid-year.

Mark Brown II added that he is noticing that we are also ahead in the water/sewer fund. So it appears our rate is good if we are running in the black, so where are we on the payback of the General Fund.

Tricia Ditto explained that the ledgers do look good, but she is still going through and verify the accuracy of these numbers. She would not want to make any decisions based on this report.

Approval May 2020 budget report. This motion, made by Mark Brown II and seconded by Katie Johnson, Passed.
Mark Brown II: Yea, Katie Johnson: Yea, Mike Johnson: Yea, Melissa Strawn: Yea
Yea: 4, Nay: 0

C. Approve a resolution establishing a Purchashing Card Policy

Tricia Ditto presented information for the Purchasing Card Policy.

Mark Brown II asked if we would need to re-approve policy if we change administrators.

Kirsten Garcia stated no, we would just add Patricia on as an additional administrator and we wouldn't need to re-approve the policy.

Mark Brown asked about the difference in the current system we use and the P-Cards.

Tricia Ditto stated that she was advised that Bank of America has been a challenge and we've had issues. With CitiBank we will get cash back by using the SmartBuy program and they also offer tools that provide ease when reconciling and tracking.

Mark Brown asked if there would be training provided to all employees.

Eric Foerster stated yes, that is correct.

Discussion held on cards issued and how usage will be managed

Approve a resolution establishing a Purchasing Card Policy. This motion, made by Mark Brown II and seconded by Katie Johnson, Passed.
Mark Brown II: Yea, Katie Johnson: Yea, Mike Johnson: Yea, Melissa Strawn: Yea
Yea: 4, Nay: 0

D. Approve a resolution updating the City's Purchasing Policy

Mark Brown asked about contracts and capital purchases, is there anything prohibiting any contract without Council approval.

Patricia stated that there are provisions in the policies that prohibit engaging in contracts without Council approval.

Melissa Strawn asked what was changing from the original.

Tricia Ditto stated more controls are being added to the policy for purchases under $50,000.

Eric Foerster stated the limit changes are as follows: >$1000 to $2500 for designee, $3000 to $5000 for directors, $10,000 for finance director and $50,000 for City Manager - with anything over needing Council approval. Any unbudgeted purchases will still need Council approval.

Discussion held on purchasing limits, purchasing procedures and policy changes.

E. Approve a resolution amending the Local Financial Policies.

Approve a resolution updating the City's Purchasing Policy (ITEM D) and Approve a resolution amending the Local Financial Policies (ITEM E). This motion, made by Mark Brown II and seconded by Katie Johnson, Passed.
Melissa Strawn: Nay, Mark Brown II: Yea, Katie Johnson: Yea, Mike Johnson: Yea
Yea: 3, Nay: 1

V. DISCUSSION AND ACTION ITEMS
A. Discussion and possible action regarding the Police Department's Use of Force Policy

Mark Brown II stated he wanted to bring this to the public due to the current environment we are living in. He added that he believes our policy is very thorough, very detailed and very clear in steps that we will take and that our officers are trained in this policy.

Mark Brown II asked if there is a reason why the entire policy shouldn't be online.

Chief stated he is fine with Use of Force policy being online, but there are police procedures he'd rather not have out and open to the public due to risks of them being used against the department by criminals. He added that there are many departments that have their entire policy online and if Council wishes, we can do the same, however his preference is to withhold certain policies.

Mark asked if we could just post the ones that wouldn't be detrimental to the Police Department.

Chief stated yes, that is possible.

City Attorney, Matt Allen stated no action needed, Council can direct staff to publish the records online.

No further discussion was held.

B. Discuss and consider extending deferral of late fees and disconnections to utility accounts.

Kirsten Garcia stated that at a previous meeting, Council had decided to defer late fees and disconnections until after July 15. Staff wanted to get updated guidance on how to proceed since the communities status with COVID-19 has not changed much. Staff's reccomendation is to set a hard date for late fees and disconnect accounts after at $1,000 threshold of delinquency.

Discussion held on current state of accounts and state guidance to Public Utilities.

Mark Brown II stated that not too many accounts were over $500 as of now.

Kirsten Garcia stated that is correct, however, we have had another month of billing that will be added to the numbers presented which will bring many of the past due accounts over the $500 mark.

Mike Johnson asked if we were setting guidelines for here on out or just for COVID relief.

Kirsten Garcia stated that this decision would just affect those accounts who are past due during the pandemic.

Mark Brown II stated he felt $1,000 was too high for someone who is struggling to get themselves out of a hole. He asked why staff feels $1000 is the limit they reccommend. Eric Foerster stated we really just would like some guidance, and the threshold staff came up with was just a broad suggestion.

Mike Johnson stated he is more comfortable with a $500 threshold.

Discussion held on financial implications of not charging fees or disconnections and on possible solutions.

Motion to defer late fees to 8/10/2020 and disconnect services at $500 past due. This motion, made by Mark Brown II and seconded by Katie Johnson, Passed.
Mark Brown II: Yea, Katie Johnson: Yea, Mike Johnson: Yea, Melissa Strawn: Yea
Yea: 4, Nay: 0

C. Discuss, consider and appoint Richwood's 2020-2022 representative for Brazosport Water Authority.

Clif Custer stated that Mr. Jeremy Fountain has been representing the City of Richwood as BWA rep and he was interested in continuing his service on the board.

Jeremy Fountain stated he woud like to continue that he has enjoyed the last year and been getting the hang of it.

Mark Brown II asked if he would be able to give a report to council on the happenings at BWA.

Mr. Fountain gave a brief overview of what BWA has been working on and stated he would be happy to come and give reports to council.

Approve Jeremy Fountain as 2020-2022 BWA representative. This motion, made by Katie Johnson and seconded by Mark Brown II, Passed.
Mark Brown II: Yea, Katie Johnson: Yea, Mike Johnson: Yea, Melissa Strawn: Yea
Yea: 4, Nay: 0

D. Approve items removed from consent agenda
All removed items were approved earlier in the meeting.

VI. CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

City Managers Report

07/13/20203

We have gained one employee back from Covid-19 quarantine and we still have one Police Officer out. Both were from exposures from outside the work environment. We continue with our proactive measures here within city hall to keep our employees safe. We also have continued our social media outreach for awareness to our citizens. There does not appear to be a quick resolution to the Covid situation on the horizon.

We are continuing work on the budget with several hurdles along the way. We are making good progress and I am optimistic that we can present a well-crafted budget that we can work with moving forward. The hardest part is building the historical data to look at how things have been spent in the past, and what accounts certain funds have been used from. We are trying to clean some of this up as move through the process. This will paint a much better picture for staff and council in the future.

Patricia is doing well, and she is finding her way through the budgeting process as well as can be expected. It is nice to have Marty available should any questions come up with our budget. We have received our invoices from SGR on the Professional Services for Marty. The total bill ended up being 21,000.08, which is considerably less than the 49,999 that was the not-to-exceed amount of the contract with SGR.

We have been notified of a transmission failure on a police vehicle, and this is another 4500.00 expenditure that was not budgeted for. Chief Mayer has also had our K-9-unit air conditioner repaired after several failed attempts before. It ended up being a non-related part to the air conditioner system. It seems it was part of the ignition system that ended up impacting the way the air conditioner performed. We are hopeful that this resolves the problem with this unit.

We have been notified of a 17,055.36-rebate coming back to us from the TML health benefits pool. This will come a 1421.28 credit on each monthly statement next year. For budget stability they do advise to budget for your actual amount of the renewal package.

Respectfully,

Eric Foerster, MPA, CPM

Clif Custer updated Council on Capital Improvement Projects.

VII. COUNCIL MEMBER COMMENTS & REPORTS

Mark Brown II recognized KRB for their events and their community involvement. Second, he recognized the Mayor keeping everyone updated on weather and COVID. Third, he recognized the police officers, doing their patrols and keeping crime low. Fourth, he recognized city staff, seen a lot of change and we are keeping things going, Public Works for getting work done in Oakwood Shores, Tricia for getting numbers together and Eric for working hard with her.

VIII. MAYOR'S REPORT

No report.

IX. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

Parking on Streets
Separate report of transportation fee and streets sales tax
Report on capital item report standing on the agenda

X. ADJOURNMENT

Being there no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:47p.m.

These minutes were read and approved on this 10th day of August 2020.

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Mayor

ATTEST:

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