

MINUTES Budget Work Session

ROCKWALL CITY COUNCIL SPECIAL MEETING

Tuesday, August 27, 2019 - 8:00 a.m.

Municipal Court Building - 2860 SH-66 Rockwall, TX 75087

I. CALL PUBLIC MEETING TO ORDER

Mayor Pruitt called the meeting to order at 8:04 a.m. Present were Mayor Jim Pruitt, Mayor Pro Tem Dana Macalik and Council Members Patrick Trowbridge, John Hohenshelt, Trace Johannesen, Bennie Daniels and Kevin Fowler. Also present were City Manager Rick Crowley, Assistant City Managers Mary Smith and Joey Boyd, departmental directors, the public information officer and city secretary.

II. OPEN FORUM / PUBLIC COMMENTS

At 9:32 a.m., Mayor Pruitt opened Open Forum, asking if anyone would like to speak at this time. Paul Johnson, a city police employee, came forth, indicating that he is the current Vice President of the Rockwall Police Officer's Association. He thanked the city council for the market adjustment raises. He pointed out that the data that HR collects pertaining to the market is not reflective of what those other municipalities will actually be adopting come October 1st of each year, so, essentially, our staff's salaries are already behind other, competitor cities.

Nick Grant
1569 Old E. Quail Run Road
Rockwall, TX

Mr. Grant came forth and asked for more information about plans for SH-205 where it exists going out of the city limits and in other areas along its route. Mayor Pruitt indicated that the city won't be bulldozing homes along the roadway near downtown like what TXDOT may have been proposing to do; however, the city will need to be innovative regarding how it will deal with traffic in that area in the future. Mr. Crowley shared that the \$44 million bond election related to John King Boulevard was put forth to voters in a way that indicated the future roadway would be utilized as a SH-205 bypass. He went on to further explain the history of the roadway construction as it relates to TXDOT standards when it was first built and afterwards. No action was taken as a result of the dialogue exchanged with Mr. Grant.

There being no one else wishing to come forth and speak, Mayor Pruitt closed Open Forum at 9:41 a.m.

III. HOLD WORK SESSION TO DISCUSS AND CONSIDER THE PROPOSED FISCAL YEAR 2020 CITY OF ROCKWALL MUNICIPAL BUDGET

Mr. Crowley began the budget discussions, indicating that the proposed budget was prepared based on the effective tax rate of 38.7991 cents per \$100 of valuation. This will essentially result in a decrease of the tax rate itself. Staff has been able to begin transferring water / wastewater funds over to the General Fund to "pay it back," essentially. New state legislation will result in an estimated loss of about \$175k in franchise-related fees that will no longer be collected by the city. The sales tax rate increase is estimated at about 5.44%, as compared to an increase of 3% projected by the current fiscal year budget. In addition,

there will be added police and fire personnel as well as a four-person parks maintenance crew and water operations staff. There will be a market pay rate adjustment of 3% for non-sworn personnel and a 4% for some public safety positions to address market deficiencies and ensure internal equity in pay.

At 8:50 a.m., Pruitt asked if those present would like to hold Open Forum now or later in the meeting. A (then) unnamed gentlemen present in the audience expressed a desire to hold it after the budget discussions have taken place.

General discussion ensued pertaining to the budget, expenditures, and 'wants' versus 'needs,' including police department seized funds; use of funds for sidewalks (and associated citywide policy); the potential for an additional pickle ball court or two in the future; and possible additional parking at the Harry Myers Community Center/Pickle Ball Court/Park area. Discussions also took place regarding future, additional neighborhood parks and The Harbor 'beach park.' Councilman Trowbridge indicated a desire for staff to evaluate how our city's departmental and General Fund budgets compare to other, comparable, nearby cities (i.e. what percentage of our overall budget goes to Parks and Parks Maintenance and how does our percentage compare to that of other, similar cities nearby?).

Mayor Pruitt called for a break after Open Forum and recessed the public meeting (9:41 a.m.). He reconvened the meeting at 9:59 a.m.

IV. DISCUSS WATER / SEWER SERVICE AREA

Mr. Crowley discussed with the Council two residential developments north and south of SH-276 by the Rockwall Tech Park, indicating that they have a combined total of about 950 lots. He went on to discuss the future infrastructure needs of the city as related to these developments and future development elsewhere in the city. He talked about the potential of working with Fate, Wylie and Lavon to discuss the feasibility of joining together for a possible new sewer treatment plant sometime in the future, which may be the most financially viable thing to do. Discussions touched on a large, regional plant versus a 'package plant,' which is much smaller, and that may be a consideration too.

Mrs. Smith, Assistant City Manager/Finance Director, discussed with the Council the city's current water service area and the fact that the City of Rockwall has traditionally only serviced properties that are located within our own city limits. She explained that, in the past, when annexations have occurred, the City negotiates with those water supply corporations to buy the right to serve properties that have newly been brought into the city. However, recent state legislation that limits a city's ability to annex may pose a limiting factor in the future. She mentioned that Mt. Zion Water Supply Corporation may want the City of Rockwall to, over time, take over their system, indicating that our rates are about half of what Mt. Zion's current rates. Discussion took place regarding analyzing what the "cost of delivery" is to the City. Brief comments were made concerning other water corporations, such as Blackland, too. Council expressed that it is generally not opposed to the idea of the City of Rockwall potentially servicing water customers outside of our city limits / ETJ.

V. DISCUSS BEST PRACTICES FOR NETWORK SECURITY

Denny Lassetter, IT Director, came forth and discussed network security, including ransomware threats that have been impacting computer networks of both private businesses and government entities. He went on to share some of the 'best practices' that are utilized in order to protect our own municipality's network from these sorts of hackers. He also provided numerous recommendations for how individual

network and e-mail users may proactively work to protect the network too. Furthermore, he recommended that the same password never be utilized over multiple devices and accounts and that software always be kept up-to-date on mobile, tablet and desktop devices.

VI. DISCUSS FUTURE LEGISLATIVE PLANNING

Mr. Crowley discussed this item with the Council. He briefed them on the role that the TX Municipal League (TML) has generally played on behalf of cities at the state legislature. In general, TML has taken the approach that if a piece of proposed legislation will support / enhance 'local control,' then TML has rallied for the bills, and if the proposed legislation generally aims to take away local control, it has taken a stance against said legislation. Mr. Crowley expressed that he would like to know if the Council is generally okay with him proactively working with other cities to encourage that they and TML begin to more solely focus on pieces of proposed legislation that truly, truly matter to cities. The Council was generally agreeable to Mr. Crowley doing so.

VII. DISCUSS FIREWORKS PLANNING

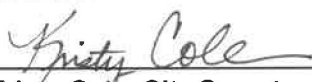
Mr. Crowley reminded the Council that Mr. Scott Self had recently spoken at a council meeting regarding the idea of having 5 lower level fireworks shows for this coming July 4th holiday – with 4 being over Lake Ray Hubbard / on the lake, and one being at Harry Myers Park (the typical location for the city sponsored fireworks show). Mr. Self wanted the city to financially participate to some extent, and he planned to recruit a lot of volunteers to train them and assist with 'pulling off' all of the proposed shows. Mr. Crowley indicated that staff recently met with Mr. Self, and the general gist of the conversation resulted in several 'unanswered' questions and/or several things for which no good, sound answers exist (i.e. from how far away might the 'lower level' fireworks be able to be seen? ; where would people park and/or congregate to watch said shows? ; will they be parking along IH-30 and/or in neighborhoods, some of which are gated, where residents may not appreciate them congregating to watch the fireworks shows? ; is it smart to change the "big show" at Harry Myers to a "lower level" show the very first year? , etc.). Mr. Crowley went on to share that his recommendation is that the city continue to pursue discussions with Mr. Self about the four, other lower level shows over the lake, that staff study (thru GIS mapping and analysis) how far away they will be able to be seen, and that the 'big show' at Harry Myers Park remain a 'big show,' at least for this first, upcoming year (and perhaps beyond). Council generally agreed with Mr. Crowley. It was also clarified that everything about the 4th celebration at Harry Meyers will remain unchanged (i.e. there will still be bands playing that day too).

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Pruitt adjourned the meeting at 11:44 a.m.

PASSED AND APPROVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF ROCKWALL, TEXAS, THIS 3rd DAY OF SEPTEMBER, 2019.

ATTEST:


Kristy Cole, City Secretary




Jim Pruitt, Mayor

