



1111 Bayou
La Marque, Texas 77568
409.938.9202

**City of La Marque
Minutes
August 7, 2013**

Minutes of the City Council Special Meeting and Budget Workshop of the City of La Marque, Texas that was conducted on Wednesday, August 7, 2013 at 1:00 p.m. at 1109-B Bayou Road for purpose of considering the following agenda:

(1) Mayor Hocking called the meeting to order at 1:00 pm.

(2) ROLL CALL

Mayor Hocking

Mayor Pro-Tem Bell

Councilmember Brown

Councilmember Trube

Councilmember Osteen

City Manager Buttler

City Clerk Eldridge

(3) MAYOR PRO-TEM BELL LED THE INVOCATION AND THE PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE.

(4) NEW BUSINESS

a) Discuss and set dates and times for two Public Hearings on Tax Rate (August 12, 2013 and August 26, 2013).

Finance Director Suzy Kou explained the reason that the City would have to conduct two public hearings for the tax rate, which is, if the proposed tax rate exceeds the lower of the effective tax rate or lower than the rollback rate. At this time, we are only proposing the tax rate; the adoption of a tax rate will be taking place in September.

Motion was made by Councilmember Trube to propose the same tax rate of .51436. Motion was seconded by Councilmember Osteen. Motion carried unanimously.

Ayes: Councilmembers Trube, Osteen, Brown, Bell and Mayor Hocking

Nays: None

b) Discuss and Review Proposed Budget for Fiscal Year 2013-2014 with departments.

TAXES:

Ms. Kou began the discussion with property and sales taxes, the two major revenue sources. She explained that the City records sales tax under GAAP (Generally Accepted Accounting



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Principles) for instance, the month of October collections reflect August activities, and November collections reflect September activities.

REVENUES: EXPENDITURES: The following items were questioned and discussed:

- COLAGY Fees- (Collection Agency Fees)- Municipal Court- Contract with Lineberger for collection of delinquent court fines
- Building Permits-based on current and previous year only; but will be monitored and tracked throughout the year for trends and whether we are on/off track
- Coin-operating Machine Licenses- due to refunds and misinterpretation of ordinance, staying conservative
- Demolition Revenue decrease-(demolishing permits are \$25.00) Most homeowners are actually demolishing their own homes and paying this fee to do so. Finance will look into this figure.
- Transfer- (Court Security Fund) paying part of City Marshalls salary
- Fingerprint fees- unpredictable to budget- staying very conservative
- Late- charge payments- Segregation of Sanitation Revenues
- Municipal Court fines- anticipating bringing in the new person around January for traffic enforcement; filling spots of vacant officer positions come first. Not all collected is revenue, some cases are dismissed/defensive driving is granted. Make sure perception is reality
- Notary Fees Collection- not a large enough revenue stream, but still may want to offer as a service provided by the City

MUNICIPAL COURT:

- Professional fees-over budget- temp person was hired for warrant round-up; will come out of Extra Help line item in future
- Some expenses were taken out of Technology Fund, should have been taken out of Professional Fees
- Bottom line revenue differences-Consolidation of Utilities Communications Account into Fund 99
- Payroll-shows increase due to understaffing; overtime went up for past two years warrant roundup but now shows reduction/ reducing participating officers
- Asking for another Deputy Court Clerk; and online software for fine settlement – Kiosk- due to heavy workload- either/or (kiosk benefit for citizens) still need another person
Need to research of how many customers the kiosk will serve
- Lineberger- Do they bring in enough revenue to cover the cost of another employee for this department?
- Court Technology Fund - should be used for new software, new equipment; items cancelled each other out with transfers
- Court Security Fund – totals need to be included in the worksheets (STW) according to what was concluded by audit



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- Child Safety Fund – Is there a plan in place? (Police Dept.) (Get with City Attorney as to what can be used for the fund) Home Program Fund (inactive) but will reconcile with auditors (Section 8)
- Fund 22- PID -new fund (Painted- Meadows- proposed Phase III) - Will be researching on this item, lacking history it is hard to predict
- Fund 86- Landscaping Fund- no activities
- No activities accounts – about \$50,000- researching
- Home Grant Fund- use for demolishing homes also being researched
- Fund 43- not listed (GCWA Bond Issue)- will be reconciling with auditors
- These funds need to be cleaned up

CITY CLERK:

- Professional fees- Include Attorney fees, all contractors are paid out of Professional fees (1) out of HR and (1) out of Records Management (City Clerk).
- Previous City Clerk had HR, and was Assistant City Manager, where is the salary for that position- in the system but not on the printout. Will contact STW. Asked for a printed detail.
- Records Management line/unanticipated Special Legal Consultation- Special Counsel for Charter Related or Elections related

Mayor recessed the budget workshop at 3:15 p.m.

Mayor reconvened the budget workshop at 3:19 p.m.

LIBRARY

- After reducing number of hours of operation last year, is this working or do we need expand hours in next year's budget? They would need to increase staff if hours are increased.
- Longevity over-budget due to back-pay paid out for an ex-employee
- Transfer was done in July to cover the costs for air-conditioning repair in line item 4030
- 7010 library materials- incorrect entry
- Grants discussed (Lone Star and possibly others)
- 4071 has been itemized and moved funds around to fit the correct line items/wants more notes in the future as to what kind of clean-up of funds has taken place and why
- Friends of the Library- non-profit group; separation of funds from Library was discussed in detail; the Friends supply the equipment once funds are raised; tracking of funds;
- Any money made from the usage of the machines, once donated, the machine or equipment stays the City's property; revenue stream needed; in-kind line isn't included in the Library budget at this time; no record of amount received from the Friends; question of money received whether it comes back to the Library or into a general fund; attorney gave an opinion last year, will get back with him to advise; donations come in different forms, not all is money.

CITY COUNCIL:



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- Increase in each Councilmember up to \$2000.00 for each for Training & Travel and \$250.00 for each Council person for Council expenses/miscellaneous (shirts, placards, etc.)
- Mayor not using Council expenditures, but will use EDC funds for any classes related to EDC subjects
- Leave \$1,500.00 in subscriptions and other
- Guidry News (electronic) or Galveston News our newspaper of record? (out of CM fund)- Modify

CITY MANAGER/HUMAN RESOURCES:

- TML - CM will not be attending this year, but would like to attend the City Manager Seminar (Galveston) has skipped the last two years.
- Discussed bringing back the student/Council meeting portion of the Youth/Government Day)
- Consolidation of Human Resources with the City Manager office at this time
- Will be correcting the chart of accounts (City Council still shows a part of Administration)
- EDC Director- none of those expenditures were being taken out of EDC it was out of CM budget then transferred into the EDC account- this will be corrected (should be \$6,000 in automobile expenditures for CM)
- Recruitment line item (\$8,700.00)-for medical testing (new employees), background checks, and drug testing should be (\$1,500.00)
- Discussion followed whether to hire a full-time HR Director (this position needs to be certified). (Tracy and Patty have been splitting the job functions). Discussion followed to have these two persons to be re-numerated for their extra job duties later into the year.
- Is money in the budget for a HR Director position/adjustments would have to be made
- Clarification- Council was discussing 'positions' not individual 'persons'
- The need for positions in other departments were also mentioned
- Flags were discussed

Mayor recessed the budget workshop at 5:09 p.m.

Mayor reconvened the budget workshop at 6:10 p.m.

IT

- Extra help line item- intern from College of the Mainland- to perform updates on computers, and help with routine tasks
- Present employee in IT has taken on overall maintenance at City Hall, in need of a full-time maintenance person to take care of other city facilities also.
- To hire a part-time person, or a person through a vocational program at the College was discussed
- Community service persons to help?



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- PEG- Public information in Government (Television, video recordings of Council meeting – broadcastings) electronic marquee (s) were discussed through donations and some revenue usage
- Gather additional information and get back with Council on marquee (s) (vendors)

Development Services

- Additional training for two current employees in this department was discussed (certification) increasing the part-time to full-time position
- City Marshall also helping with code enforcement at this time, using her vehicle
- Discussed 1 person for Boards & Commissions; 2 employees for code enforcement; 1 Building Official and 1 Planner
- Cody Blair is volunteering as an intern for a few months, working on projects
- Discussed Clean City Commission helping with demolition costs
- CCC receives donations from utility bills
- Additional monies in weed control
- Increased revenue from last year (code enforcement citations, building permits)
- Limited office space, alternate plans are being discussed

Fire Dept.

- Increase in payroll reflects filling the positions that are now vacant, collective bargaining, certification pay has own line item, shift differentials
- Operating supplies-moved some money from the Fire Marshall budget
- Discussed overtime spending, no quick fix, we have to staff vehicles adequately, employees to take their scheduled holidays, (Kelly Days) alleviate the need to pay the part time under FSLA, but creates overtime. Need to increase staff, or allow one off at a time.
- Cross-trained in EMT first and in fire suppressant
- One pumper truck out of service at this time
- Volunteer firemen compared in surrounding cities
- Fire calls have decreased and have had increase in EMS calls (73%)
- Fire-fighters doing fire inspections, fire hydrant testing
- Preventative maintenance on vehicles have been put off this year, due to lack of funds, needs to be contracted out
- Enterprise not used for first response, but are checking into what can be worked out
- Improved screening calls through dispatch software

Mayor recessed the budget workshop at 7:45 p.m.

Mayor reconvened the budget workshop at 8:03 p.m.



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Motion was made by Mayor Hocking to rescind the public hearing dates for the tax rate that were set on July 29, 2013 for August 12, 2012 and August 26, 2013 and seconded was made by Councilmember Osteen.

Motion was made by Mayor Hocking to set the public hearing for the tax rates for August 19, 2013 and August 26, 2013. Councilmember Trube. Motion passed unanimously.

Police Department

- Total figure under salaries reflects all positions
- All current vehicles are aging
- Tasers are also aging and are not in great repair (4)
- Overtime separated out of regular police department overtime budget to go into separate overtime line for Bayou Fest (Hotel/Motel)
- Events should have their own budget line items or project codes
- Small tools, too conservative in estimated amount
- Mandated training required
- Assess areas in need in La Marque, seek out training conditioned to situations we have locally
- Training Officer (Gilcrest) looks at training requests
- Covered parking pad for trailer (Special Operations bus)
- Communication for CTY- into 99 Fund (Emergency Management)
- Animal Control Services – additional \$6000.00
- Double dip/ for paying these services (County & City) unincorporated areas of County also pays, so it balances
- Child Outreach Fund- DONATIONS- was in wrong account
- Drug Seizure- reflected Federal/State lumped together, now we are in compliance (segregated)

Mayor recessed the budget workshop at 9:02 p. m.

Mayor reconvened the budget workshop at 9:12 p.m.

PUBLIC WORKS

- Playground equipment cut last year; added back to proposed budget
- Two employees are in the Parks department, both are vacant at this time
- Hail damage deductible still has to be paid out of this account
- Open P.O.'s
- Will transfer out of another shop fund to cover overages in professional fees
- Frozen position in shop, an employee has been assuming duties, maybe compensated
- Depends on Enterprise agreement, present time there are two mechanics
- Discussed compensation study
- Any raises given, collective bargain also receives

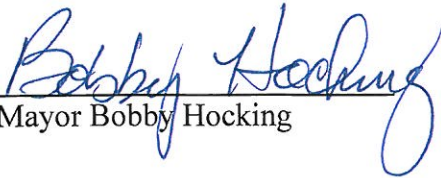


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- Operating supplies (bid notifications, grant (might recoup some of this) for overage- high price for newspaper publications
- Wreath Across America as a separate fund- for potential donations and carries over year after year
- Fence at the Cemetery- discussed replacement, start putting aside monies
- Suggested asking designation of cemetery a Historical
- Discussed concrete platform around the flag pole- split out into project codes
- Discussed contracting maintenance and mowing of cemetery, every other year a cemetery clean-up days
- Separate line item for Cemetery Maintenance Fund to keep separated from donations into Cemetery Fund
- Cemetery Tax?
- Three bids for fence to add to the existing \$1,500.00
- Suggested splitting the current \$2.00 from water bills into 1/3: Park \$.75, Clean City \$.75 and .75 for Cemetery Fund
- Equipment Fund in future?
- Longevity line item – as if vacancies were filled - some that left were long-term employees
- Put money into a Street Maintenance- about \$53,000.00 left/ look into \$170,000.00 that was frozen at one time- needs to verify availability
- Looking at subcontracting costs/ versus actual labor
- Mylar maps with mowing areas given to Cobb Fendley, waiting on a quote
- GIS system -looking into (supplemental)
- Go over full-time positions and frozen positions

(6) ADJOURNMENT

Councilmember Bell made a motion to adjourn the budget workshop at 10:14 p.m.
Councilmember Osteen seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.


Mayor Bobby Hocking

ATTEST:


Robin Eldridge, TRMC
City Clerk