

710 EAST SAN AUGUSTINE STREET

DEER PARK, TEXAS 77536

Minutes

of

A BUDGET WORKSHOP OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF DEER PARK, TEXAS
HELD AT CITY HALL, 710 EAST SAN AUGUSTINE STREET, DEER PARK, TEXAS ON
JUNE 29, 2020 BEGINNING AT 5:30 P.M., WITH THE FOLLOWING MEMBERS PRESENT:

JERRY MOUTON, JR.
SHERRY GARRISON
TJ HAIGHT
TOMMY GINN
BILL PATTERSON
RON MARTIN
RAE A. SINOR

MAYOR
COUNCILWOMAN
COUNCILMAN
COUNCILMAN
COUNCILMAN
COUNCILMAN
COUNCILWOMAN

OTHER CITY OFFICIALS PRESENT:

JAY STOKES
GARY JACKSON
SHANNON BENNETT
JIM FOX

CITY MANAGER
ASSISTANT CITY MANAGER
CITY SECRETARY
CITY ATTORNEY

1. MEETING CALLED TO ORDER – Mayor Mouton called the workshop to order at 5:30 p.m.
2. COMMENTS FROM AUDIENCE – No comments received.
3. DISCUSSION OF ISSUES RELATING TO REVENUES AND EXPENDITURES FOR THE GENERAL FUND BUDGET FOR FY 2020-2021 – City Manager James Stokes began the discussion by acknowledging and thanking Assistant City Manager Gary Jackson, Finance Director Donna Todd, Purchasing Coordinator Tracy Peterson and Administrative Assistant Libby Blair for their help with the budget process. Mr. Stokes commented, “We started this process as we always do in March and said “this year is going to be a very frugal year.” We knew that going in, even before COVID -19, we knew to expect frugality. With all the issues with COVID -19, the Directors did an outstanding job of keeping their requests to a minimum but emphasizing for that of which they need. I am going to hit the high points of the budget. It is a very similar budget of what you have seen in the past, a lot of what I am going to say is some of what you have heard before. Along the way, if you have any questions that we can answer, please ask. Like Mayor said, if we don’t know the answer, we can write it down and give it to you later. In an ideal situation, it would be good if we could finish it up tonight, but

we are posted to meet again tomorrow if we need to meet. Additionally, if it takes more than two meetings, we can schedule meetings to do whatever Council needs to be done to feel good about the budget. This budget is going to be remembered as the one that was put together in the year 2020, when the whole world was changed and was different, where we dealt with a lot of new realities, like wearing a mask. Deer Park is so extremely blessed. I want everyone to know that. You may not find another municipality in the state, certainly you won't find very many, that are as financially well off to handle this situation as we are, because we have a large fund balance and because we have a long history of very conservative budgets. You are not going to see in this budget, thank goodness, and I truly thank the Lord above, Directors coming up here one by one to talk about how many people we have to lay off. You don't have to look very far around us, like the big city next door, Houston, that is having to go through that. There are cities all over the country that already have a lot of other issues and pension problems that can make life difficult even without COVID -19. We, however, are in phenomenal shape, all things considered. We have taken on about 3 million dollars worth of extra expense to date. Hopefully, we don't have another situation like Pasadena that has closed down and is back on emergency pay policy, which was just done on Friday. At this point we don't envision on having to do that again and I hope we don't. Those costs are eligible for reimbursements from a couple of different sources that could potentially pay for that. The first source would be the money that Harris County has received through the CARES Act and we really hope to get some reimbursement from the county. We are in a unique situation, being a municipality other than Houston, in a county that is the size of Harris County, where we do not get a direct reimbursement. There is no guarantee that we are going to get any funding. The county has put out information where they have requested financial information to help them make determination if they want to give us even one penny or not. They do not legally have to give us one penny. Staff did a good job of getting that information together and ideally, we will get some reimbursement, which will help some with our extra expenses this year. Hopefully, we get some of that and hopefully there will be some kind of discussion between the cities of Harris County besides the City of Houston with the county officials. I know Mayor and I have had this discussion several times, that it should be a very prominent topic. I know we have Senator Cruz coming to the next Harris County Mayor and Council Association meeting."

Councilwoman Garrison asked, "How are they going to do that with the social distancing?"

Mayor Mouton commented, "Senator Cruz is not coming in. Dr. Babin is scheduled, if it happens."

Mr. Stokes commented, "My only point about Senator Cruz coming was just to say, even though he would be the highlight of the evening, that the Harris County Mayor and Council Association, especially, needs to be the voice, in my opinion to let Judge Hidalgo, Commissioner Garcia and the other three Commissioners know we are expecting some form of reimbursement for some of that. I hope that their resolution or whatever appropriate measure is, that the message is communicated."

Mayor Mouton commented, "There has been a lot of discussion already and it appears that the County in no way shape or form, is going to give any of that money out. I am talking about almost 500 million dollars that was given in an aspect of a per diem, per person, per city to the County, but if you weren't over a certain size, then it was going to the county to be disbursed. There was not any inclusions to force it to go to the cities and the Judge is taking the position that "We are the County and we have the Health Department so we have incurred all the costs and no one else had any additional expense." I have talked to anyone who will listen including State Representative Mary Ann Perez. She and a lot of State Officials have been in conversation with the Judge, but there is nothing legally that can force them to do it. I know Mr. Stokes had said to me that they had sent out an application process to apply based on justification of expenses, but there is still not guarantee that the County is going to pay."

Mr. Stokes continued the discussion by highlighting some key points of the agenda:

Pertaining to employees, there will be no funding for new positions, merit based increases will be given with a successful evaluation, continuation to buy back 5% for longevity time and the exclusion of the cost of labor adjustment for this year. The information from the health pool for the City's health insurance indicates there will be an expectation of a 3% - 4% rate increase and a return of 8 million dollars of equity, pool wide, to which Deer Park will receive \$209,000 from that.

There will be an \$898,423 increase in Ad-Valorem taxes with the same tax rate of 0.72, with an expectation of a 3.5% cap. Industrial District payments will be decreasing relative to the amount that was received for the current year, which was in the amount of \$230,000.

Sales tax revenues and many other revenues of the General Fund will be decreasing in the current year and is budgeted to decrease the following year. Declines in Municipal Court fines and fees, Parks and Recreation program fees and investment revenues will hit the current budget and the following budget as well as an interest rate drop of 2.5%.

There will be a 5.6 million dollar debt incurred that will fund improvements at the Water Treatment Plant. Water and sewer rates will increase 5% to help pay for new and past debt. There will be no change to the Storm Water rate.

The Golf Course Lease Fund will require a \$481,195 transfer from the General Fund to fund the operations and the capital needs of the golf course.

The City is able to dedicate 1.5 million to fund many drainage projects.

Assistant City Manager Gary Jackson gave an overview of the budget book presentation and explained the tabs and page numbers to Council.

4. DISCUSSION OF ISSUES RELATING TO REVENUES AND EXPENDITURES FOR THE WATER AND SEWER FUND BUDGET FOR FY 2020-2021 – Item highlighted in opening remarks by City Manager James Stokes.
5. DISCUSSION OF ISSUES RELATING TO REVENUES AND EXPENDITURES FOR THE SPECIAL REVENUE FUND BUDGET FOR FY 2020-2021 – Item highlighted in the meeting by Assistant City Manager Gary Jackson.
6. DISCUSSION OF ISSUES RELATING TO REVENUES AND EXPENDITURES FOR THE STORM WATER FUND BUDGET FOR FY 2020-2021 – Item highlighted in opening remarks by City Manager James Stokes.
7. DISCUSSION OF ISSUES RELATING TO THE GOLF COURSE LEASE FUND BUDGET FOR FY 2020-2021 – Item highlighted in opening remarks by City Manager James Stokes.
8. DISCUSSION OF ISSUES RELATING TO MISCELLANEOUS BUDGET ISSUES FOR FY 2020-2021 –

City Hall Virtual Cluster – DR Phase II – IT Director James Lewis began by thanking the IT Staff for their work on the budget. Mr. Lewis advised Council of the IT Services Disaster Recovery Plan that houses three physical servers that host over 20 virtual servers throughout the City. These servers are at the end of their life in terms of every day dependency and is not recommended for continued, uninterrupted service. The existing servers will be not be auctioned off, but rather utilized at the EMS Station Disaster Recover Site in the event City Hall Data Center becomes unusable.

Upgrade Radio System – EMS Director Robert Hemminger advised Council of this project that was re-budgeted from the approved 2019-2020 fiscal year. This project was postponed due to COVID -19 response and limited time to complete the project. This upgrade will touch every vehicle radio system to allow GPS enabling to contribute to the safety measures of the Department.

Re-Mount Medic 3 Ambulance – EMS Director Robert Hemminger advised Council of the current chassis that will be traded in and replaced with a new chassis. This chassis will have the existing patient compartment box mounted onto it which will also be refurbished and upgraded to include new standards.

Councilwoman Garrison asked, “How long will they stay out of service as far as having it remounted?”

Mr. Hemminger responded, “It will be 10 to 12 weeks before we get that back.”

Councilman Patterson asked, “Who will do the drive train, engine and transmission differential?”

Mr. Hemminger responded, “That is the chassis that is being replaced. There will be a whole new Ford chassis.”

Councilman Patterson asked, “As far as the body and the box, that will stay the same?”

Mr. Hemminger responded, “Yes, They will refurbish and make sure the markings are on there. Sometimes, the striping package has to be replaced because it has to be reflective to meet all the safety standards. All of the inside patient compartment and the equipment will be inspected to make sure it is up to current standards which is all included in the price.”

Flashing Yellow Turn Signals – Public Works Director Bill Pedersen advised Council of the request for flashing yellow left turn signals along Center Street and East Boulevard. This will allow motorists to make a left-hand turn after yielding to oncoming traffic and will be estimated at \$242,500. This amount includes \$25,000 for traffic engineering warrant analysis and \$17,500 to prepare the details and plans for the bid documents.

Traffic Signal Preemption Equipment – Public Works Director Bill Pedersen advised Council of the request for all 24 traffic signals within the City to be equipped with preemption equipment which will allow all emergency vehicles to gain access through an intersection during an emergency by turning the lights green in their direction. An emitter can then be installed which broadcasts a visible light or invisible infrared signal to a receiver mounted on or near a traffic signal. The amount requested will only cover the cost of installation of the preemption equipment at all 24 traffic signal intersections, but does not include emitters for the emergency vehicles.

Drainage Projects – Public Works Director Bill Pedersen advised Council of the agreement with Cobb Fendley for professional engineering services for drainage analysis on six areas identified as the most damaged by Hurricane Harvey. Funding is being requested for the construction of a detention pond and channel improvements near Deer Park Manor Subdivision. There has been a 1.5 million dollar addition to the budget fund to help offset some of the costs.

Replacement Rear Loading Garbage Truck – Public Works Director Bill Pedersen advised Council of the request to replace this older garbage truck due to the constant repairs in the done in the shop 15 times for various mechanical issues. The amount requested for the replacement of the garbage truck is \$195,000.

Walking Floor Trailer – Public Works Director Bill Pedersen advised Council of the Wilkens walking floor trailer that is used to carry debris to the landfill is no longer cost effective to continue to make repairs on. This trailer has a lot of wear and tear and has extensive rust and

metal fatigue. The requested amount for a replacement of this trailer is \$91,000.

Generator at Transfer Station – Public Works Director Bill Pedersen advised Council of the generator requested in preparations of tropical events where it can provide emergency personnel the ability to shelter-in-place in a facility with air conditioning and refrigeration during an event allowing them to get out on the streets to start clearing storm debris as soon as it is safe to do so. The amount requested, \$175,000, will cover the cost of a 200 kw generator, transfer switch, concrete pad, electrical wiring and installation.

Emergency Water and Sewer Maintenance Agreement – Public Works Director Bill Pedersen advised Council of the budgeted \$400,000 emergency maintenance agreement that enables a contractor to perform work required when a need arises due to the project being much larger than the Public Works crew can handle. This saves time in having to call an emergency Council meeting, process budget amendments, find a company or the City having to go out for bids. The request for the funds is to continue with the maintenance agreement for any unforeseen emergency or work.

Water And Sewer Maintenance Contingency Fund For Unforeseen Emergency Projects, Purchases Or Repairs – Public Works Director Bill Pedersen advised Council of the contingency fund where the request for \$100,000 will be set aside for unforeseen work or emergencies. This contingency fund requires a “Contingency Approval Form” approved by the Director and City Manager before the funds can be used. As of April 2020, \$38,000 of the funds have been used to replace two pumps that were not budgeted.

Waste Water Treatment Plant Contingency For Unforeseen Equipment Repairs Or Replacement – Public Works Director Bill Pedersen advised Council of the requested amount of \$100,000 that mirrors the same principal to the prior contingency fund discussed.

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Water Treatment Plant- Replacement of Syphon & Vacuum Tank On Filter Set 1 – Public Works Director Bill Pedersen advised Council of the \$100,000 request to replace the vacuum tank, syphon and flumes that is full of rust and thin in multiple locations, with stainless steel parts. The failure of this equipment would mean many months of no service until a new one is built and shipped.

Councilwoman Garrison asked, “Are we going to have another restroom at the Transfer Station?”

Mr. Pedersen responded, “Yes.”

Park Maintenance Dow Park Bridge Replacement Phase II – Parks and Recreation Director Charlie Sandberg advised Council of the eight bridges that need to be replaced. The funds requested totaling \$100,000 would be utilized to update and replace two bridges per year until all eight bridges are replaced as part of Phase II. The bridges would be decorative and part of the new construction within Dow Park. (Exhibit A1-A8)

Annual Park Lighting – Parks and Recreation Director Charlie Sandberg advised Council of the requested amount for \$40,000 to establish an electrical service and install security park lighting at one City park per year. This is in accordance with the Parks and Recreation Master Plan and also in response to citizen requests for security lighting.

Athletics and Aquatics – Fence Replacement at Swimming Pool – Parks and Recreation Director Charlie Sandberg advised Council of the requested amount for \$105,000 which will be used to replace the fences throughout the City parks and Athletic Complexes as part of an annual fence replacement plan. The fences are often improperly used and are continually in need of repairs or in need of replacement which has proven to be costly. The funds will be utilized to replace fencing with one that is less susceptible to trespassing, easier to maintain and will follow code requirements and standards.

Court And Theater - Canopy Installation In Front Of Building – Parks and Recreation Director Charlie Sandberg advised Council of the \$80,000 request to allow the replacement of the water and rust damaged arches that have been removed from the front of the building with a new decorative cover or awning. Mr. Sandberg also gave an overview of the cost estimate for the exterior glass.

Councilwoman Garrison asked, “Will this proposed canopy back up to the new glass doors?”

Mr. Sandberg responded, “Yes.”

Councilman Patterson asked, “What happened to all the marble?”

Mr. Sandberg responded, “Across the top of it, in a circular motion is where we will place the black decorative marble that we were able to save. It will give a really nice look to it.”

Councilman Patterson asked, “On top of the arch way?”

Mr. Sandberg responded “Yes, as you go into the building.”

Councilman Patterson asked, “Will the archway have to support the marble?”

Mr. Sandberg responded, “The wall is already going to be there and the marble will just go

on top of the wall.”

Mr. Sandberg gave an overview of the ongoing drainage project at the Courts/Theater building.

Golf Course- Equipment Lease To Own Agreement – Parks and Recreation Director Charlie Sandberg advised Council of the new EZGo golf carts that have arrived and the new system that has been implemented with Park Staff to put into place a better “check and balance” for any issues that should arise with the golf carts, with Assistant Park Operations Supervisor Noe Mendoza visiting the golf course monthly to ensure all issues are, if any, are handled in a timely manner. (Exhibit B1-B12)

Councilwoman Sinor asked, “Is Mr. Mendoza going to be inspecting the carts closely?”

Mr. Sandberg responded, “Yes, and will also take pictures.”

City Manager James Stokes commented, “Just a side note, Golf Course General Manager Reagan Davis has taken another job. We just found out.”

Councilman Patterson commented, “They have good guys over there, Golf Course Superintendent Johnny Skinner and his Staff, Director of Golf Cody Scarcella and Tyler Smith. I don’t anticipate any issues with the transition.”

Mr. Sandberg advised Council that many of the items that have been brought forth to Council have also been discussed with the Golf Course Committee.

Mr. Sandberg continued the discussion by advising Council of the 2020 Cushman Oasis beverage cart that is anticipated to be paid off.

Councilwoman Garrison asked, “Will they have a person who will handle the maintenance of all the carts and give you all a monthly update?”

Mr. Sandberg responded, “Correct.”

Councilwoman Sinor commented, “The problem has been when it is time to trade these carts in, they are so beat up and misused.”

Councilman Patterson commented, “In the past, Touchstone were the ones responsible for that and not the City.”

Councilwoman Garrison asked, “Are we responsible for the golf carts or is Touchstone responsible?”

Mr. Sandberg responded, "Touchstone will be responsible for the up keep of the maintenance and working on them, and we will be the "check and balance". We want to make sure the carts stay in good shape so we can keep the equity up on the them when we turn them back over on the lease."

Councilwoman Garrison asked, "It's our equipment, but Touchstone has someone who is maintaining it?"

Assistant City Manager Gary Jackson responded, "Yes. It is their responsibility per the lease."

Councilwoman Garrison commented, "It just kind of bothers me that they are maintaining our equipment. Is that what happened in the past when things got beat up? Is the same thing going to happen again? I just want to make sure this time, that it will not happen again."

Councilman Patterson responded, "We all want to make sure of that."

Councilwoman Garrison asked, "Is it possible when we have a Council meeting after the Golf Course Committee has met, a report can be given so we will know what is going on?"

Councilman Patterson responded, "By all means, we will bring you a report."

Monument Repair and Replacement – Parks and Recreation Director Charlie Sandberg advised Council of the requested amount of \$27,200 for the monument repairs at the golf course. The Public Works Department poured new concrete bases to enable the marble monument markers to be erected and prevent them from leaning. There are two tee signs that will need to be replaced with an estimated cost of \$6,620 that includes installation as well.

Golf Course Bulkhead Repairs – Parks and Recreation Director Charlie Sandberg advised Council of the need for immediate repair of three holes that are in extremely bad shape.

Bunker Improvements – Parks and Recreation Director Charlie Sandberg advised Council of requested \$169,000 for the improvements needed for the bunkers to include demolition of bunker contents for 18 holes, rough grade and compact bunker areas, shape and edge, install a ZLINE bunker liner, transport and install 4" of bunker sand, complete sodding installation and clean up areas damaged during construction.

Replacing Driving Range Cart – Parks and Recreation Director Charlie Sandberg advised Council of \$10,300 requested for the golf course Range Picker Unit replacement. The current unit has a broken tie-rod. A new Range Picker Gang Unit is also being requested at an amount of \$2,495.

After a lengthy discussion pertaining to the funding and the leasing of the equipment, it was

recommended to move forward with the “lease to own option” for the equipment that proposes an amount of \$7,029 per month bringing the total to \$21,000 more than previously presented. Mr. Sandberg emphasized the new protocol of preventative measures that will be taken to maintain the equipment more soundly moving forward.

TMRS Contribution Rate – Human Resources Director Bill Philibert advised Council of TMRS receiving, for the 32nd consecutive year, the Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting for the 2018 CAFR and the award for Public Pension Standards 2019. The investment in assets is 31.9 million as of 12/31/2019 with a time-weighted rate return of 14.96%. The funded ratio for the City of Deer Park’s plan has consistently increased year to year. The current city rate is 14.30% with an employer rate for 2020/2021 at 13.80%. It is recommended to continue the pre-funding process at 14.30% level which is estimated to reduce costs over time of over 1.55 million dollars and reduce the amortization period by 7 years. Mr. Philibert also discussed the medical current loss ratio that are ten percentage points below the 85% target, generic prescription usage (5 out of 7 being generic), the Board’s decision for the return of 8 million dollars in equity across the board to include Deer Park’s return of \$209,105.72, and an estimate renewal rate between 3.5% - 4%. The private sector trend is staying between 7% - 10%. Currently, Methodist Hospital facilities are now included in the medical plan, and the Deer Park Family Clinic and Alliance Health Partnership is considered the employee clinic and workers compensation facility. Telemedicine has increased in usage during COVID -19 pandemic and it has shown to be very popular, convenient and helpful. The salary survey generally is done at a 2-3 year cycle. This year, the plan is to go out for a request of proposal (RFP) to find a new consultant that will assist in finding a similar comparator of cities and benchmark group to be utilized in gathering survey data. (Exhibit C1-C8)

HOT Fund – Assistant City Manager Gary Jackson gave an overview of the Hotel and Motel Fund and highlighted the budget to include the history of the Hotel and Motel Fund, special events, City promotions, Arts program and historical activities with an estimated requested amount of \$631,580 for total expenditures. Mr. Jackson also advised Council of the preliminary budget status that shows the proposed revenues and expenditures for the General Fund, the Water and Sewer Fund’s expectation of being in the black this year due to a 5% increase that is being proposed for revenue, the total proposed expenditures for the Capital Improvement Fund, totaling 3.2 million dollars and a transfer in from the General Fund to the Capital Improvement Fund, to be issued by the end of FY 2020, would bring the ending fund balance for next year to 4.5 million.

City Manager James Stokes gave closing comments and acknowledged the fantastic job done by the Directors and Staff that were involved in the budget process and presentations. Mr. Stokes also advised Council of the decision to postpone the Special Election (Type B) to November 2020, but a Workshop could be scheduled to discuss postponing the Special Election even further to the following May of 2021. In conjunction with the Type B, there has begun the discussion of what the debt capacity is for the City and how much more money can be borrowed with the same tax rate to sponsor needs of a new fire station and future drainage

projects among other needs the City may have.

Mayor Mouton closed the meeting by acknowledging and thanking City Manager James Stokes work on the TMCA Board and Human Resources Director Bill Philibert's work with TMRS and commented, "Thank you all for the effort and thank you Staff for another great budget."

9. ADJOURN – Mayor Mouton adjourned the workshop at 7:33 p.m.

ATTEST:

APPROVE:

Shannon Bennett, TRMC
City Secretary

Jerry Mouton, Jr.
Mayor