

STATE OF TEXAS

COUNTY OF BRAZORIA

CITY OF BRAZORIA

The City of Brazoria convened in Special Meeting & Budget Workshop August 1, 2017 at 6:30 p.m. with the following to-witt:

BobbyJo Newell	Mayor
Stephanie Cribbs	Councilman Position #1
Gail Logsdon	Councilwoman Position #2
Gary Kersh	Mayor Pro-Tem
Susan Parker	Councilman Position #5

City Personnel Present:

Teresa Borders	City Manager
Sheila Williams	City Secretary
Neal Longbotham	Police Chief
David Jordan	Public Works Director
Duane Stahl	Fire Chief

A. CALL TO ORDER SPECIAL MEETING.

Mayor BobbyJo Newell called the Special Meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

B. INVOCATION AND PLEDGE TO AMERICAN AND STATE FLAG.

Bill Lott gave the invocation and Mayor Newell led the pledge to the American and State Flag.

C. CONSIDERATION/ACTION TO APPROVE WINDSTORM INSURANCE FOR THREE YEARS.

Motion was made by Councilwoman Logsdon to approve windstorm insurance for three years. A second was made by Councilman Kersh. Motion carried unanimously.

D. ADJOURN SPECIAL MEETING AND CALL TO ORDER BUDGET WORKSHOP.

Mayor Newell adjourned Special Meeting and called to order Budget Workshop at 6:33 p.m.

E. DISCUSSION ON 2016/17 AND 2017/18 BUDGET.

City Manager Teresa Borders gave each councilperson a budget. Teresa explained the tax rate if left from last year's rate or the effective tax rate and the rollback rate. If we go with the effective tax rate of .7219 we would have \$631,142 or keep at last year's tax rate of .7907 would be \$721,855. That would mean at the effective tax rate the city would have an increase of \$27,150 and leaving at the same tax rate would be an increase of \$90,680. Councilman Kersh and Mayor Newell would rather see it go to the effective tax rate because our taxes are high enough now with our appraisals. Councilwoman Logsdon said our property values have gone up so much. Councilman Kersh said he thinks there is a happy medium in there somewhere. Mayor Newell said she would like to give the citizens a break.

Teresa Borders explained General Fund Revenues line by line. Councilman Kersh explained about the game room taxes. Mayor Newell asked how we charge for the machines. Councilman Kersh explained \$115.00 per machine per year and they are not pro-rated. Teresa Borders said we are collecting Hotel-Motel Tax. Mayor Newell said we have a Bed & Breakfast that is owned by the Langston's. Councilman Kersh asked Public Works Director what is the cost of the electrical and plumbing permits now. We are in line with other cities at

less than \$100. As of September 1st we can only charge for electrical permits on new construction. The only thing we are not doing is a re-inspection fee. Most cities is \$50 for a re-inspection. Commercial buildings is way off. Councilman Kersh said we don't need to get too strict but we need to cover ourselves. We need a separate fee for commercial like \$200 or \$300.

Councilwoman Cribbs asked to define Peddler's for the Peddler's permit. City Manager Teresa Borders explained if you go door to door selling something. They have to get background check and ID badge to wear. You can't charge insurance salesman or alarm salesman because the state won't let us charge them. The only ones that the city exempt's is a religious organization or youth organization like the Boy Scouts from Brazoria. Mayor Newell asked if we are going to add the trailer fees. \$50.00 permit fee for all the trailers in town.

Councilwoman Cribbs said her brother & brother in law owns a sign company and said we are missing out if we are not charging a permit fee. She said she would like us to consider a fee on these big billboard signs. At the Legislative Update she went to last Friday they mentioned the billboard regulations have changed and they are not grandfathered. Some of the Legislation change is you have to buy the property where your sign is.

Teresa Borders said it is hard to enforce. David Jordan said when they are picked up and not registered that is where the enforcement comes in. Edith Ray asked about some citizens after city hall is closed let their animals out and they are not licensed. Teresa Borders said if you call it in to the police dept. they will know. David Jordan said if you can't have more than 4 animals total. Since Brazoria is a bird sanctuary we can't regulate ducks or chickens. David Jordan said we were up to 80% in animal shelter of finding good homes for them. We hold the animal as long as possible and try to adopt out. In the last 3 years we have had 3 dogs become service dogs. Kirby Jordan asked if we have anything in our ordinance that keeps a dog from being tied up all day. David Jordan said there are 2 that the judge ordered to keep tied.

Teresa Borders said we lose money on the renting of the American Legion Hall. Councilman Kersh asked since we have an active group now would they be willing to help with the expense. Mayor Newell said we could also increase the rental fees. We have put a lot of money in this building. Councilman Kersh thinks we need to meet with the new group and see if we can work something out. Teresa Borders said they also don't notify the city hall when they are going to be in there. Teresa Borders said they have mentioned taking it back. Councilman Kersh said he hates giving it up because it is a good park for the city. If anything happens to the old school then we wouldn't have anything here. Teresa Borders feels we need to negotiate a new contract. Councilman Kersh said we just spent \$15,000 on remodeling the bathrooms. We would not be able to rent it at any time and it is a nice building for the city. Councilwoman Cribbs said since there are different parameters now we need to look at another contract. Teresa Borders said we may need to go up on non-profit prices.

Chief Longbotham said with the dispatch and jail fees we revisit every year and we are ok with that. Dispatch and jail fees are two different things. We get \$16,000 every year on dispatch fees and \$5,000 on jail fees.

Jones Creek pays us to house their prisoners. Councilwoman Cribbs would like to see an estimate of how much Jones Creek uses our jail each year. Teresa Borders said Jones Creek and Oyster Creek pays for our Animal Control and officer use also.

Teresa Borders then explained the expenditures starting with administration. She explained the utility clerk, insurance and electricity was moved to admin to help with money in utilities but the auditor wants it moved back. That is why there is a decrease. The insurance has gone up but our insurance guy is shopping it.

Councilman Kersh asked to add more for the schools in case some of the council wants to go to a class.

Councilwoman Parker asked if we go out for bids for the auditor. Mayor Newell said she thinks maybe we need to this year. Teresa Borders explained when we went out for bids no one but his firm even put a bid in.

Bill Lott asked about how the bills were printed so small. Teresa said we are trying to get that fixed.

Councilwoman Parker said we need to look into electronic billing and we wouldn't have to send them out.

Councilwoman Cribbs asked what all was involved in the library fee. Teresa Borders said it is just a fee we pay. The Library pays us for their insurance. The Library Association owns the building and that helps them. It has been put under tab 2 what all we pay for the library.

Teresa explained there is a budget from the fire dept. showing where the money goes we pay them. Councilman Kersh said he thinks the deductible fund insurance may need to be cut so they can have insurance. If we compound with other cities then maybe we can negotiate a better price. He thinks it is important that our employees keep their insurance. Teresa Borders said if employees lose insurance we would lose them to the plants making more money.

Teresa explained the expenditures in Police Dept. There is no raises in this budget but they received the pay rate change when they restructured. Councilwoman Cribbs asked if we have a service agreement for servicing our vehicles. Chief Longbotham said he tries to give everyone a piece of the pie. If we got a service agreement then it would have to be the whole city and not just the police dept. We had only 2 that wanted to do anything like

that out of 4 shops. Councilwoman Cribbs said when you have the entire fleet and in an agreement would save money. You would have better spending of your money and have a cost savings. Mayor Newell said the Police Dept. was going to require a new hire to sign an agreement if they leave before a certain time they will pay for their stuff. Chief Longbotham said he is planning on doing that. He also explained how the state pays for schools and Travel/Tuition/Dues line item is for backup on travel and hotel when they attend a school.

Councilwoman Cribbs asked if we have a contract on the copiers. Teresa explained they are contracted as a city but paid out of each department. Teresa explained the Police Dept. had a leak and it got fixed when the eaves were repaired. It has been turned into the insurance company but haven't heard anything back yet.

Councilwoman Parker asked about the equipment & machinery line item being a large \$ amount. Teresa explained that was for the radars, ticket writers and sirens. Councilwoman Cribbs asked about the computer & maintenance under a contract. Teresa explained everyone is on Incode and they are our software company. We do have a maintenance contract with them other than the Police Dept. that has programs that go through the state.

Teresa Borders explained the Court items and Councilman Kersh said we need to look at her starting at \$35,000 with no experience. He thinks when she gets her certification she will not have much to look forward to. Mayor Newell asked who sets the pay. Teresa said we work on that together and it takes more today than when Cheryl started. He feels we need to look at starting salaries in the future. He feels there is no incentive for her to stay here 20 years because she will be almost to the top of the cap. Teresa explained the travel/dues line item is higher because of the state not paying as much. Teresa explained the warrant fees where the officers work during the holidays to make more money. We have a warrant officer now so they are not worked by officers as much. Chief Longbotham is working the newest because they are gone soon. Bill Lott asked how that was paid. Chief Longbotham explained the \$75 is added to the warrant and the officer is paid that.

Teresa Borders explained the Street Dept. Capital Improvements is where the garbage fees is pulling in to do street work. Councilwoman Parker how many signs have been replaced. David Jordan said we are replacing quite a bit because we are trying to replace with the high intensity signs. They are bought through the county contracts.

Teresa Borders explained the Environmental which is Animal Control & Code Enforcement also. David Jordan explained she is moving into the paper side of code enforcement now. Councilwoman Parker said she has noticed orange stickers on some vehicles. David Jordan said that is code enforcement. Councilwoman Parker asked about the trailer parks needing cleaned up. Councilwoman Logsdon said they are awful with extension cords running and no water. David Jordan said we shut the water off and the DA made us turn it back on. No major rules on trailer parks. David said we are limited to what we can do because we are not zoned. Sweeny & West Columbia are zoned but West Columbia is having trouble enforcing theirs. Frank Quinty asked if a trailer has to remove the wheels to be tagged even if living in it. David Jordan said no not if it is your residence. Councilwoman read the Ordinance on Mobile Homes referring to the wheels. David Jordan explained that State law supersedes our city ordinance. Mayor Newell asked if they are inspected when moved in. David said yes and we charge for that inspection. Mayor Newell asked if we have a Fire Marshal still. David Jordan said yes but on call basis for commercial. Teresa Borders explained she has put money in for Fire Marshal but he has never billed us. Mayor Newell asked if Demolition Reserve meant taking down buildings. David Jordan said that we get reimbursed or have to file a lien on property that could be years down the road getting reimbursed. Teresa Borders explained each line item in Parks Dept. Teresa we pay the Softball, Little League and Soccer Association each year instead of paying utility bills. This year we did not pay Softball. Councilwoman Parker asked about the field being grown up and see if Little League could take it over. David Jordan explained that one field belongs to the Badge Estate and the other belongs to the Softball Association. Councilwoman Parker asked who is responsible for mowing the field. David Jordan said the Softball Association. Councilwoman Cribbs said with the State of Affairs we are in we need to consider cutting back on some of our donations. State law said we have to provide a benefit for all tax paying citizens. We have a service charge on our utility bills because we need to generate money. This is what we need to look at so we can get back on our feet. We need to be more in the black. She has the statute on giving to different funds. Doesn't mean we can't give donations but it is tax payer money. You have to have it voted on. Councilwoman Parker said she doesn't want especially the Little League to not donate. If Little League was able to expand then that would bring in more revenue.

Councilwoman asked where they spend their money if we don't have hotels. Councilwoman Logsdon said they have to eat and purchase gas. Mayor Newell said we need to find out who is responsible for keeping the field up. Councilwoman said she is not trying to take things away from our city. She is just trying to help our city get in the black. David Jordan said there was only 3 people on the board and they played in West Columbia. Teresa Borders said one vehicle is wanted and it is by the Parks Dept. Councilwoman Parker asked if we go out and get

bids for vehicles. David Jordan said we have open bided, public auctions and also on state contract. David Jordan explained the last vehicle we bought was on an online auction so it satisfies the bidding law. Teresa Borders explained the Utility Fund Revenue. She explained we will have to raise water rates this year because BWA is going up. Gas should cover but it is slow due to not having a cold winter. Teresa said David requested a backhoe. Teresa said she would like to see us take \$20,000 from vehicle & equipment fund to put down on backhoe and then finance the rest. We will bid out to get best interest rate. Councilman Kersh asked David Jordan if the old backhoe would be sold. He said yes and put it on Rene Bates Auctions. A backhoe older and in worse shape than ours sold for \$28,000. Whatever we get on old backhoe would go on the new backhoe. We have to put \$150,000 in sewer each year to keep from getting penalized. We need to look at the area south of the tracks to Erwin Street on those old concrete lines and South of New York Street to Highway. Have engineers come in and use this money for sewer replacement and then go out for bond for the rest and paint the water tower and replace the ground storage tank that is leaking. We will look at May election for bond election. Teresa explained the 2 bonds we have will be paid off in 2018. David Jordan said we will try and keep it where we have the payment where it is now. The bonds are from 1987 and that is when we built the water tower and loop water system around the city. Councilwoman Cribbs explained some of the grants that H-GAC is offering. She also explained we could get a grant writer on contract in Lake Jackson very reasonably. She is a firm believer in getting free money. Teresa Borders explained they received information on the GIS Mapping for \$6,000. They will input the information in system but we gather the information for them to put in. Mayor Newell said that H-GAC will help with the mapping. David Jordan explained we don't qualify for some of these grants because we are guaranteed for money from Community Development Block Grant. Teresa said we are an entitlement city and you have to be out of that for 3 years to qualify for their grant. Mayor Newell said we pay them a yearly fee and if they aren't going to do us any good why pay fees. David Jordan explained the Police Dept. has used their grants and Teresa explained the Fire Dept. received money for radios. We also received a police car on H-GAC grant. David explained they don't have grants for utilities but we use their Buy Board for purchasing vehicles. Councilwoman Cribbs said a good resource document would be we need to put in writing what places we are a member of and how one X's out the other then weigh the feasibility of staying in one versus the other. H-GAC benefits the police dept. and CDBG benefits the Public Works Dept. Chief Longbotham explained the COPS grant that he received a few years back. Councilwoman Cribbs said knowing when you go into a grant you have to adjust the salary knowing you have to make adjustment down the road. Grants always a stipulation.

Teresa Borders explained the Utility Fund Expenditures are broken down in each department. Teresa explained the Utility Debt. The loan from South Star Bank is paid down by the funds from Emergency Account and Line Relocation loan. The Gas & Water Meter loan will be paid off this year and the drainage Loan through First National Bank. Teresa explained the I & S Bonds that will pay off next year. Mayor Newell asked about Debbie Larsen when she will be coming back. Teresa explained she has surgery Friday and should be coming back. Mayor Newell said we are paying the temp and bringing the salary back and benefits you could put together a pretty good paying job.

Councilman Kersh asked where it shows us in the red but we just found \$34,000 in electrical bills. Teresa Borders said it was in Admin not Utilities. She also showed them where she has the water & sewer rates and how it will be bringing up and not in the red. We will adopt the utility rates when we pass the budget and tax rate. Councilwoman Cribbs asked about the trash rates outside the city limits because they are the same for outside and inside now. Councilman Kersh said what he likes about raising utilities is it catches everyone and not just the homeowner. Teresa Borders explained since we missed the last two meetings we can have another budget workshop after the next meeting or on the 15th. Mayor Newell said we need one next week after the regular meeting.

Ruby Jordan asked what can be done about mechanic shops taking parts off a vehicle for another vehicle and then leaving the vehicle. Can there be a fence that could be built. North side is looking good but we have a mechanic shop next to us that looks terrible. David Jordan said our ordinance does not address this. Mayor Newell said we would put that on the next agenda. She said she appreciates everyone coming and voicing their opinion. Our city is coming alive again. Kirby Jordan said he is very disturbed about our dog ordinance. There is a dog tied up 24 hours that the Judge ordered. That is in-humane treatment. They have no water or food and the Judge needs to look at the situation. Teresa Borders said she will look into this.

F. ADJOURN BUDGET WORKSHOP.

Mayor Newell adjourned Budget Workshop at 8:45 p.m.

Mayor BobbyJo Newell

ATTEST:

Sheila Williams, City Secretary