

STATE OF TEXAS

COUNTY OF BRAZORIA

CITY OF BRAZORIA

The City Council of the City of Brazoria convened in a Budget Workshop on August 15, 2017 at 6:30 p.m. with the following to-witt:

BobbyJo Newell	Mayor
Stephanie Cribbs	Council Position #1
Gail Logsdon	Council Position #2
Gary Kersh	Mayor Pro-Tem
Roger Shugart	Council Position #4 - arrived 6:57 p.m.

City Personnel Present:

Teresa Borders	City Manager
Sheila Williams	City Secretary
David Jordan	Public Works Supervisor
Neal Longbotham	Police Chief – arrived 7:02 p.m.
Luis Garza	Equipment Operator
Derrell Travis	Wastewater Plant Operator
Kendra Wagner	ACO/Code Enforcement
Cadie Davis	Public Works Admin Assistant
Keith Alexander	Equipment Operator
Duane Stahl	Fire Chief
Bill James	City Judge

A. CALL TO ORDER WORKSHOP.

Mayor BobbyJo Newell called the budget workshop to order at 6:30 p.m.

B. INVOCATION AND PLEDGE TO THE AMERICAN AND STATE FLAGS.

Tim Fox gave the invocation and Mayor Newell led the pledges.

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

City Manager Teresa Borders explained what she changed on budget since last workshop. With the excess rolling over she would like to change the remainder to do the streets. It will lower the roll over at 2017/18 budget. Teresa explained Councilwoman Parker would like to see an overhead projector along with the microphones and a recorder for City Secretary Sheila Williams. Teresa handed out a sheet showing the losses on the American Legion Hall. Teresa suggests raising the rates for rental and removing the \$75.00 rental fee for non-profits and others. She suggested raising the rental for American Legion Hall to \$400.00, American Legion Hall & Pavilion \$425.00, Pavilion \$200.00 and Commercial rental for hall or pavilion \$525.00. Mayor Newell said other Posts pay full price to use their halls. Teresa said also the water and sewer rates will be raised because Brazosport Water Authority is raising the rates for us. We have enough

right now to do some engineering on the next project. We would like to engineer a couple projects that could be put into a bond. Also the water tower, well that needs to be done. Councilman Kersh asked if we have a surplus in this budget. Teresa explained \$215,704 when we move for streets. Councilwoman Cribbs asked if we have a method to pay back the General Fund. Teresa explained no since we have never done it before. We can do that and put something together. Councilwoman Cribbs said she feels that could be a safety net for the city. Councilman Kersh asked about the tax rate. Teresa explained going to the effective tax rate would drop the taxes to .7219/\$100. Mayor Newell said we opted to pay the Magnolia Gardens loan off. She wanted to know how far that would go into our budget. Councilman Kersh said if it's before we get a bond we could go to a bank and get another loan. Teresa explained we don't have an engineered project. That is the reason we needed the funds this year to get an engineered project. David Jordan said the Magnolia Gardens is part of the Garden Acres study. It would just need to be re-prioritized. Teresa said we need to look at the main lines where we had the cave in. That could be our next cave in.

Councilwoman Cribbs asked if we have a long range plan that is excluding any emergency. This way it would show citizens what we are doing. It would be beneficial that when items do come up then we can visually see and remember what our vision was. She also asked if it could be broke down so we could get something worked on. She also said the Bonnen legislation will not affect us because we are a smaller city. Pearland is what city it will affect. Teresa Borders said that the explanation of taxes in the newspaper will be more understandable.

Teresa said our main shortfall is in utilities side. Councilman Kersh said the issues could be our billing is not perfect, too many employees or our meters not reading correctly. We need to target where the problem is. Mayor Newell asked if there is a way to project what the problem is. Teresa said what she puts in budget is what she is projecting. She tries to be conservative on her figures. Mayor Newell said that City of Richwood was looking at how many employees they have and water rates. Edith Ray asked if we just arbitrarily put employees in department or is that employee only working in that department. David Jordan said they are all crossed trained and work in whatever department is needed that day.

Councilwoman Cribbs asked if we can have them identify on the sewer jobs what would be most shovel ready. Teresa said yes we can do that.

Mayor Newell explained the dues are going up with the Alliance due to miscalculation on the abatement that the county pays them. There is a program they will offer all the cities for free that you can go look at all the properties that are for sale. Teresa explained they are also doing the GSI with the demographics on it at no cost to the city. Mayor Newell said she would like to see the ½ cent tax put into economic growth and he said he would help educate the citizens. Councilman Kersh said in his opinion we are raising taxes for our citizens. Teresa explained you are trying to achieve more sales tax that would offset property tax.

Councilwoman Logsdon asked what we need to do now. Teresa explained we can have our meeting on the 22nd and cancel the meeting Thursday. We won't need to have public hearings. Vote the tax rate at the September meeting.

Councilwoman Cribbs would like to see a line item of what we collect from the waste company. Teresa explained it is already there under garbage revenue account. The account is called garbage fees.

Edith Ray asked if we were going up on water & gas again. Teresa explained just water & sewer because BWA is going up. Teresa explained what the water rates were going up to.

Mayor Newell asked about increasing the Code Enforcement Officer salary. David Jordan explained it is built in. Edith Ray said we need a full time code enforcement and part time animal control officer. When you drive through our city it is a full time job. Councilwoman Logsdon said that is all a part of her training.

Kirby Jordan asked if BWA had said when they start producing Rosenberg that the rates would come back down. Teresa explained they hoped but didn't promise.

Patsy Howard said the citizens know when the ACO is off and let their dogs out.

Councilwoman Cribbs asked about the vehicle maintenance should go out for bids in our city. It may lower the cost some. They will be competing now. It will stabilize the budget. Chief Longbotham explained we get tires from a company in Houston that offers at a lower rate. He has them shipped here and have Davis Tire put on.

Councilwoman Cribbs asked about the lady out on sick leave. There is a verification form that FMLA has that could be a guideline for if or when she could come back. We need a full time employee in that position. Teresa explained she should be back after 6 weeks of not doing anything and then completing her therapy. She wants to come back really really bad.

Teresa said we need to go through the personnel police and tweak it and make it better after we are done with budget.

Mayor Newell said the guy that was over softball had a heart attack and passed away.

Councilwoman Cribbs said for this budget year allocate the \$4,000 money sitting there to use on Garden Acres streets. She asked if the miscellaneous under streets be renamed Lion Park lights. She said we are in line with the Police Dept. and Fire Dept. with other cities. She is also confused on the janitor at the Library. Teresa explained the difference with the two janitors. She read the agreement between the county and city for the library. \$7,000 or over is for cleaning of Library. Why do we have a separate allotted amount? Teresa explained she looked at her average hours is what she put down. She said after the budget is done she has some questions that she would like to talk about in executive session.

Councilwoman Cribbs said she would like to look at medical. Councilman Kersh said since we are not giving raises this year we should not look at cutting insurance this year. Councilwoman Logsdon said it would be like cutting them twice. Councilman Kersh said he looked into it and feels we need to not touch it this year. Councilwoman Cribbs said she would like to see the employees pay for their elected insurance like Long Term Disability, Vision and Dental. We could amend down the road for raises. Mayor Newell said it is an eye opener on seeing employees pay rates. If you take away their deductible compared to their elected insurance. Cadie Davis commented that you are spending \$400-\$500 on glasses and with your insurance a co-pay. She feels that is crazy. Keith Alexander said if you start cutting the benefits you would not have anyone working. Councilwoman Cribbs said some cuts have to be done. Councilman Kersh said it is a balanced budget and it has a surplus with things left alone. He feels we need to prepare employees for next year. He does not think it is the right thing to do to take the insurance. Teresa Borders said we are still looking to see if we can get the insurance lower.

Mayor Newell said the American Legion wanted in the budget cleaning and stripping the floors at the hall. Teresa Borders said it was in the budget. Mayor Newell said it was a good educational talk with the Legion post. She didn't realize you had to be in active war to be in the American Legion.

Councilwoman Cribbs asked about the commissary account in Public Works dept. showing what it covers. Change the title because the way it reads make you think they are buying drinks. It lets the auditor know what the account is for.

Mayor Newell announced the prayer circle for Dale Frankum at the Assembly of God Church on Friday at 7:00 p.m. Councilman Kersh said if you know Dale Frankum you might want to attend

because he is going down fast. Teresa Borders asked if we are meeting Thursday. Councilwoman Cribbs said she would rather not meet Thursday and set tax rate on the 22nd. Councilwoman Cribbs said on the Fire Dept. budget there was not listed a line for their insurance. Teresa Borders said the building insurance is paid through the city.

D. ADJOURN BUDGET WORKSHOP.

Mayor Newell adjourned the Budget Workshop at 7:30 p.m.

ATTEST:

BobbyJo Newell, Mayor

Sheila Williams, City Secretary