

CITY OF GLADEWATER
CITY COUNCIL REGULAR SESSION
MINUTES
FEBRUARY 19, 2015
6:00 P.M.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Mayor Harold Wells, Mayor Pro-tem J.D. Shipp, Lana Niemann, Chris Bland, Leon Watson, Scott Owens

MEMBERS ABSENT: Elijah Anderson

STAFF PRESENT: Sean Pate, Melba Haralson, Rob Vine, Wayne A. Smith

GUESTS PRESENT: Christian Allen, Nick Foster, Karen Jacks, Farrell Alexander, Jennifer Tankersley, Randy Koss, Dennis Robertson, Memori Ruesing, Matt Ruesing, Linda Wells, Paula Ellis, Robert Johnson, Jenna Watson, Pat Watson, Elaine Roddy, Ross Morgan, Ron Stutes, John Hedrick

I. CALL TO ORDER – Mayor Wells called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

- a) Invocation – Councilmember Bland
- b) Pledge of Allegiance – Councilmember Niemann

II. CITIZENS COMMENTS

Randy Koss, 1601 S. Tyler, voiced disagreement with Planning & Zoning Commission's decision to zone the newly annexed property light industrial. He said as an entrance into the city we may not want an industrial business there such as a slaughter house. He recommended the Council zone the area as commercial so the city could have control over what comes in.

III. CONSIDERATION of Consent Agenda

- a) Minutes – January 12, 2015 and January 15, 2015
- b) Blanket permit, including alcoholic beverage sales and consumption, for East Texas Gusher Days Festival to be held on April 17-18, 2015
- c) Ordinance to order City of Gladewater General Election on May 9, 2015

Councilmember Watson move to approve, seconded by Councilmember Owens. Carried 6-0.

IV. CONSIDERATION of financial audit for fiscal year 2014 presented by Karen A. Jacks

Karen Jacks, CPA presented highlights of the audit and stated the city earned the highest rating possible for the financial audit of fiscal year 2014. She said the financials were accurately presented and there were no findings of weakness in internal controls, nor were there any findings of non-compliance. She congratulated staff on an excellent report.

Councilmember Watson moved to approve, seconded by Councilmember Owens who also commended staff. Motion carried 6-0.

V. PUBLIC HEARING regarding zoning for newly annexed area of approximately 200 acres located in the WW Avery Survey Abstract 231

Mayor Wells opened the public hearing at 6:15 p.m.

City Manager Pate stated it is the recommendation of Planning & Zoning Commission to zone the area light industrial. City Secretary Haralson added that would be contiguous to the light industrial zoning already existing along Highway 271.

Paula Ellis, 23859 CR 374, stated she is in favor of the light industrial zoning as it covers her business (Tommy Ellis Trucking). She said there is already interest from another business coming which will create jobs for Gladewater.

There was lengthy discussion regarding concern over slaughter houses being a permitted use in the light industrial zoning. City Attorney Ron Stutes said if the Council wants to change that, it has to be done at a subsequent meeting.

With no other public comments the public hearing was closed at 6:22 p.m.

VI. CONSIDERATION of zoning for newly annexed area of approximately 200 acres located in the WW Avery Survey Abstract 231

Councilmember Owens moved to approve the recommendation of the Planning and Zoning Commission and zone the area light industrial. Motion was seconded by Councilmember Bland. Carried 6-0.

VII. CONSIDERATION of ordinance amending Chapter 98 – Historical Preservation of the Gladewater Code of Ordinances to provide for tax exemption for designated historic landmarks

City Attorney Ron Stutes presented a proposed ordinance for discussion. He stated there is wide discretion on how this can be set up and all cities do it differently. He cited a few examples; 1) apply to entire value of all historical buildings, 2) base exemption on value of improvements over a period of time, or 3) grant an exemption based on a certain percentage of improvements. He said our current historical preservation ordinance is not being used. A liaison has been appointed but is not active. The ordinance is not specific with criteria and a process needs to be established.

Robert Johnson, GEDCO Director, spoke based on his former position at the Texas Historical Commission. He said the current proposal discourages maintenance. There are 3 buildings in Gladewater on the national registry and they have to follow federal laws before any improvements can occur.

Councilmember Niemann thanked Memori Ruesing for bringing this to Council. She said is something needs our attention, and we need time to develop it properly. She said she is definitely in favor of creating the tax exemption but we want to do it correctly and all at one time. She said there is not enough time to develop the criteria for this tax year but it should be ready before next year.

Mayor Pro-tem Shipp said we may have over-simplified the process. There are approximately 83 properties that might qualify and be interested. There is currently no way to qualify and monitor stats.

Councilmember Owens stated that is more than Elaine Roddy (current Historical Preservation Liaison) should be called on to do. He said we don't have a board or commission set up but we don't have the criteria set up yet.

Memori Ruesing said Section 11.24 of the Tax Code just refers to Texas recorded landmarks and her property has already met that designation. She said she just needs a yes or no vote to know whether she can continue with the application process.

Councilmember Watson asked how many registered landmarks are in the City. Robert Johnson replied there are three.

There was continued discussion regarding criteria needed, qualification process, monitoring, and timeline.

Councilmember Niemann suggested that Mrs. Ruesing apply for a paint grant through Main Street to possibly give her some benefit this year of what she may have from exemption. Councilmember Niemann then moved to work with liaison and staff to better detail the ordinance and put a tax exemption in place for next year. Motion seconded by Councilmember Bland. Carried 5-0-1 with no vote from Councilmember Owens.

VIII. CONSIDERATION of Tier 1 – Partial Exemption Racial Profiling Report

Police Chief Vine presented statistics of the report and stated it was in line with City demographics.

Mayor Wells commended Chief Vine for a great job and moved to approve, seconded by Councilmember Watson. Carried 6-0.

IX. CONSIDERATION of resolution opposing Senate Bill 343 and any other legislation which would erode the authority of a Home Rule municipality

Councilmember Watson moved to approve the resolution, seconded by Councilmember Owens. Carried 6-0.

X. CONSIDERATION of request by East Texas Council of Governments to re-address North Loop 485

Fire Chief Wayne Smith explained that ETCOG does the 9-1-1 addressing and they have a formula that they apply to make addressing consistent. There are only 2 businesses on the north loop at this time. Councilmember Owens stated this is the time to do it before further development.

Councilmember Niemann agreed and moved to approve, seconded by Councilmember Watson. Carried 6-0.

XI. CONSIDERATION of endorsement of proposed grant application by East Texas Council of Governments for a GoBus East Texas United route

John Hedrick, Director of Transportation for ETCOG explained the grant request. He said the GoBus service had to be suspended about a year ago since Gladewater was included in the urbanized zone. He said the bus will make two round trips in the morning and two in the afternoon. He said there is no cost to the City but he asked for in-kind services by including notices in utility bills, posting in city facilities, etc.

Mayor Pro-tem Shipp asked the duration of the grant. Mr. Hedrick responded one year and anticipated the grant would be awarded September 1st with service to start in November or December.

Mayor Pro-tem Shipp moved to approve, seconded by Councilmember Owens. Carried 6-0.

XII. CONSIDERATION contract with AuctioneerExpress.com to auction surplus property

Councilmember Owens moved to approve, motion was seconded by Councilmember Watson. Carried 6-0.

XIII. CONSIDERATION of board appointments to the Ball Park Advisory Board

Mayor Wells stated he would like to table in order to review applicants. City Manager Pate stated the Softball Association representative is John Mackey and the Baseball Association representative is Kris Wynn.

Mayor Pro-tem Shipp moved to appoint other three applicants who are not already on other City boards; Mike Timmons and Colt Edwards for 2 year term and Christian Allen for 1 year term. Motion seconded by Councilmember Watson. Carried 6-0.

XIV. CONSIDERATION of board appointments to the Beautification Advisory Board

Councilmember Owens stated this board will have to work diligently with code enforcement and staff to know what we can and cannot do under the law. City Manager Pate stated that he and Code Enforcement Officer Al Harrison and Police Chief Rob Vine have already been discussing that the first few board meetings will be educational.

Lana Niemann moved to appoint Suzanne Bardwell, Dennis Robertson, Matthew Ruesing and Tracy McKnight until November 2017 and Farrell Alexander, Wanda Allard and Marilyn Sorrels until November 2016. Motion was seconded by Councilmember Owens. Carried 6-0.

XV. CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

- a) Update on Ball Park complex – Contractor identifying trees to save next week. Hayes Engineering to assist staff with relocation process of tank battery.
- b) Update on relocation of Public Works facility – Survey of property is nearly complete. We have reached a fair and equitable agreement with GEDCO for in-kind services in exchange for market value of the property. Gregg County will assist in leveling and fencing.
- c) Update on 12" water line project – The contract has been executed and sent back to engineer. RUS has to give approval then construction can commence possibly in April.

- d) Update on seal coat project – Whitehouse dropped out for this budget year but we picked up the City of Chandler.
- e) Reminder – March City Council meeting is moved to March 26, 2015

XVI. ADJOURN

Mayor Pro-tem Shipp moved to adjourn at 8:07 p.m., seconded by Councilmember Niemann. Adjourned by consensus.

HAROLD R. WELLS, MAYOR

ATTEST:

MELBA HARALSON, CITY SECRETARY