

CITY OF GLADEWATER
CITY COUNCIL REGULAR SESSION
MINUTES
JUNE 20, 2013
6:00 P.M.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Mayor Harold Wells, Mayor Pro-tem Scott Owens, Elijah Anderson, Delbert Burlison, Leon Watson, J.D. Shipp, Lana Niemann

STAFF PRESENT: Sean Pate, Melba Haralson, Paul Jaap, Casey Chambers, Farrell Alexander

GUESTS PRESENT: Stan Holden, Bryan Wilkinson, Andrew Broome, Jessika Lawrence, Hal Wells, Robert Johnson, John Johnson, Netta Johnson, Richard Yeakley, Marsha Valdetero, Frank Berka

- I. CALL TO ORDER – Mayor Wells called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.
- a) Invocation – Councilmember Watson
 - b) Pledge of Allegiance – Councilmember Niemann

II. CITIZENS COMMENTS

None

III. CONSIDERATION of Consent Agenda

- a) Minutes – May 20, 2013, May 23, 2013 and June 4, 2013
- b) Blanket permit for fireworks display for Truman W. Smith, June 28, 2013
- c) Refund of overpayment of 2009-2012 ad-valorem taxes per Gregg Appraisal District for Lot 9 Block 5 Briarwood Subdivision Phase #2

Councilmember Watson moved to approve, seconded by Mayor Pro-tem Owens. Carried 7-0.

IV. CONSIDERATION of Resolution opposing and vetoing the Upshur County Appraisal District budget for 2013-2014

Frank Berka, Upshur County Commissioner, Precinct 3 requested that the Council veto Upshur County Appraisal District's budget for fiscal year 2014. He said the budget includes a 5.3% pay increase for employees and they have received like pay increases for 4 out of the past 5 years, which is unreasonable based on the economy. Mr. Berka stated the last day to formally oppose the budget is July 10th and it takes 9 of the 17 taxing entities to veto.

Councilmember Watson moved to adopt the resolution to oppose and veto the budget, seconded by Councilmember Burlison. Carried 7-0.

V. CONSIDERATION of contract for Paramedic Ambulance Services with Champion EMS

Stan Holden, CEO of Champion EMS handed out the proposal to be effective July 15, 2013.

Mayor Pro-tem Owens stated the biggest concern is the extreme cost jump; ETMC provided service at no cost plus they paid \$1,000 per month rent. He asked Mr. Holden to explain the \$100,000 swing in cost.

Mr. Holden stated is solely has to do with reimbursement dollars at the federal level. He said they have seen the biggest decline in last 2 years and it will continue for next 5 years due to the Affordable Health Care Act. He said the state provides Medicaid at a reduced rate but Medicare is federally funded and it pays 20% below the cost of service.

Mayor Pro-tem Owens said there is political talk about repealing the Affordable Health Care Act, and if that happens we want a clause to renegotiate.

Councilmember Burlison asked who the judge of the quality of service is. Mr. Holden responded it is Dr. Chris Dunahue, who oversees Good Shepherd Medical Center.

Mayor Pro-tem Owens said ETMC had a policy that residents can buy for coverage and asked Mr. Holden if Champion has a similar program. Mr. Holden replied yes, the subscription is \$48 per year per household. It will cover 100% of ambulance cost if the person is insured or 40% coverage for a person with no insurance.

City Manager Pate said if the City keeps .25 cents of the subscription, could it perhaps be increased to \$1 to offset the cost of service. Mr. Holden said that may constitute a tax and require a vote of the citizens.

Councilmember Burlison asked if we could at least get a security deposit for the building since there is no lease. City Manager Pate said the City is responsible for major repairs and Champion will do minor repairs and upkeep.

Mayor Pro-tem Owens asked once again how we can include a clause that if something happens to change funding from state or federal level we can renegotiate the contract. City Manager Pate said the contract can be approved with that contingency.

Councilmember Niemann stated she doesn't see this contract as quite the partnership she had hoped for. Mr. Holden said he considers the partnership to be that Champion and the City share in the deficit. He said it costs \$524,000 per year to operate one truck with two people 24/7 and there is a \$250,000 projected deficit at the end of the year just for Gladewater. Councilmember Niemann asked if that \$250,000 is based on the worst case scenario and Mr. Holden responded that it is based on ETMC's numbers provided by Neil Franklin. She asked if we can adjust the fee if it comes in less. Mr. Holden said we can look at it.

Councilmember Watson moved to approve the contract contingent upon if the state and federal government reinstitutes funding we can renegotiate. Motion seconded by Councilmember Anderson. Carried 5-1-1, with Owens abstaining and Niemann opposed. Councilmember Niemann stated she had no problem with Champion's professionalism but was looking for more of a partnership. Mayor Wells said we are looking forward to as good a working relationship as we had with ETMC.

VI. CONSIDERATION of Agreement with Schaumburg & Polk for engineering services for the TxDOT RAMP grant for the airport pavement rehabilitation project

Public Works Director Paul Jaap stated the main runway has severe cracking. He talked with TxDOT Aviation Division about application for a 90/10, \$100,000 grant. He recommended hiring Schaumburg & Polk to engineer the project so they will be ready for the next round of RAMP grant funding. In the meantime, he recommended sealing/stop gap to hold the runway together. Mr. Jaap said the engineering fee is reimbursable by the grant up to 50% and it all needs to be completed and paid for by August 31, 2013.

Mayor Wells asked about the Valentine bid for \$28,500. Charlie Mouton stated they need the cracks filled now. Paul Jaap explained you have to be careful what you put into those cracks and Mr. Valentine's bid was not specific on the material. City Manager Pate added that it has to be done the right way, with an independent mind and expertise. As a good steward of taxpayer money we shouldn't spend \$28,500 unless the project is designed and engineered.

Mayor Pro-tem Owens moved to approve the agreement with the stipulation that it be completed by August 31, 2013, seconded by Councilmember Watson. Carried 7-0.

VII. CONSIDERATION of revised Tower Lease Agreement with Skynet Country, LLC

City Manager Pate explained there was an error in cost in the agreement approved last month.

Councilmember Burlison moved to approve, seconded by Councilmember Niemann. Carried 7-0.

VIII. CONSIDERATION of termination of agreement with McCreary, Veselka, Bragg and Allen, P.C. for the collection of delinquent municipal court fines and fees

City Manager Pate stated we use McCreary, Veselka, Bragg and Allen for delinquent water bill and tax collections, however there is a redundancy in using them for court fines now that we have a warrant officer.

Councilmember Shipp moved to terminate based on the City Manager's recommendation, seconded by Mayor Pro-tem Owens. Carried 7-0.

IX. CONSIDERATION of map of downtown Main Street District (Exhibit A) for the Façade Improvement Grant program

Councilmember Burlison stated the map referred to as Exhibit A was left off the contract that was adopted at the last meeting. He said the map includes a lot of property that should not be part of the downtown business district. He distributed a proposed map with a reduced area of coverage.

Councilmember Watson asked if this was the Council's responsibility or if it should go to the Main Street Board first.

Robert Johnson, Main Street Board member and GEDCO Director stated the map in question was the one on file with the Texas Historical Commission. He expressed concern over changing boundaries to exclude part of the officially defined Main Street area. He said if the boundaries need to be changed it should go to the Main Street Board first, then to Council, then to Texas Historical Commission for final approval.

Councilmember Burlison stated the façade grant comes from the City not the state. City Manager Pate clarified that Councilmember Burlison does not want to change the official Main Street map; only the area that qualifies for the façade grant.

Mayor Pro-tem Owens said he thinks Councilmember Burlison's main issue is that we will have someone outside the intended area apply for the façade grant. He stated there is no grant unless it is approved individually, it is only for businesses and all the safeguards are in place.

Robert Johnson affirmed the grant is only for commercial buildings. Councilmember Niemann added that it is only available if funds are budgeted each year. Main Street Director Marsha Valdetero reiterated the application process; goes first to Main Street Board, to City Council then to Austin. She said the building has to be historic so each application is well scrutinized. Mr. Johnson further stated the core principal is historic preservation. He said we have some architectural marvels in Gladewater that we want to preserve and there is a careful process of checks and balances in place.

Councilmember Shipp moved, since the map was not presented before in its entirety, to accept the official Main Street District map (that is on file with THC) as the map for the façade grant program. Motion seconded by Councilmember Niemann. Carried 6-1 with Burlison opposed.

X. CONSIDERATION of Resolution to request and require audited financial statements from entities receiving funding from the City or whose services are contracted by the City

City Manager Pate explained that we are in the budget cycle and we are receiving requests for money from different agencies. He said when money is given we need to hold the entity accountable. In order to ensure that we are being good stewards of taxpayer money and we are receiving intended benefit or services for those funds, those entities need to provide audited financial statements. He cited a few examples i.e. ETCADA, Gregg County Humane Society, Chamber of Commerce, youth sports organizations, etc.

Councilmember Niemann said she thinks it is a great idea to have checks and balances in place, to see where funds are going and to be transparent.

Mayor Pro-tem Owens moved to approve, seconded by Councilmember Watson. Carried 7-0.

XI. CITY MANAGER REPORT

- a) Dallas force main – This project is near completion, they will be testing the line today.
- b) Siemens implementation – Calendar is in place, supplies will be drop shipped. December 13, 2013 is the target date for full implementation.
- c) TxDOT safety grant – We had a meeting last Friday and talked about 2 areas to widen Highway 80; 1) from Loop 485 to J.O. Williams Ford Dealership or 2) from Locker Plant Road to Shell Camp Road. He said we need to prioritize the two projects. TxDOT is obtaining crash data for past 3 years. There is a 10% match and we need to specify entrances and exits.

XII. ADJOURN

Councilmember Shipp moved to adjourn at 7:22 p.m., seconded by Councilmember Watson.
Adjourned by consensus.

HAROLD R. WELLS, MAYOR

ATTEST:

MELBA HARALSON, CITY SECRETARY