



City of Farmers Branch

Farmers Branch City Hall
13000 Wm Dodson Pkwy
Farmers Branch, Texas
75234

Meeting Minutes

City Council

Tuesday, August 13, 2019

6:00 PM

Inn on Lake Granbury
205 W Doyle Street
Granbury, TX 76048

Granbury Retreat August 13th thru 15th, 2019

Presiding: 1 - Mayor Robert Dye

Present: 5 - Mayor Pro Tem John Norwood, Deputy Mayor Pro Tem Terry Lynne, Council Member Mike Bomgardner, Council Member Cristal Retana, Council Member Bronson Blackson

Staff: - City Manager Charles Cox, Deputy City Manager John Land, City Secretary Amy Piukana, Director of Economic Development Allison Cook, Director of Human Resources Brian Beasley, Building Official Hugh Pender Building Official, Director of Fleet & Facilities Kevin Muenchow, Director of Public Works Marc Bentley, Assistant City Manager Benjamin Williamson, Director of Sustainability & Health Shane Davis, Fire Chief Steve Parker, and Police Chief David Hale

A. CALL TO ORDER - (8-13-19 @ 12:00 P.M.), (8-14-19 @ 9 A.M.), (8-15-19 @ 9 A.M.)

Mayor Dye called the retreat meeting to order at 12:00 p.m.

City Manager Charles Cox provided an overview of the proposed budgets and changes.

A.1 19-367

Discuss and review the City's financial status, revenues, expenditures, projects, balances, financial trends, capital projects, fixed assets, and other issues related to the 2019-20 Fiscal Year Budget.

DAY 1 (8-13-19)

City Manager Charles Cox provided an overview of the proposed budget.

The City Council discussed a long-term plan to fix creek issues, outsourcing verses hiring a City Engineer to assist with creek projects, flexibility on the tax rate, and the need to prioritize critical budget items.

Assistant City Manager Ben Williamson briefed City Council regarding the 2020 Strategic Plan, noting the City had 114 initiatives. He reviewed the 10 Critical Business Outcomes, City Manager's Update used for reporting, and Performance Management Updates.

The City Council discussed Project Promise efficiencies and staffing.

The City Council recessed for a break at 1:05 p.m. and reconvened the meeting at 1:10 p.m.

Director of Finance Sherrelle Evans Jones provided a budget presentation. She explained the City has scheduled two public hearings on August 20th and September 3rd with a budget adoption scheduled for September 17, 2019. She explained the budget is \$122,790,004, which is a 7% decrease from 2018-19 adopted budget with a 6% increase in the General Fund directed primarily toward Public Safety and one time capital items. Ms. Jones reviewed revenues and expenditures, noting the City should consider the impact of Senate Bill 2, which limits the existing property tax revenue growth to 3.5% per year based on the 2020 property tax rate valuation.

Next topic discussed was the Landfill. Council Member Lynne suggested implementing a policy to require bulk and brush separation for other cities or the City to have a mulch operation on site to help preserve the landfill.

Mr. Cox stated the City is researching a long-term plan and the option of onsite mulching.

Mayor Pro Tem Norwood suggested a 10-15% tipping fee increase.

The City Council discussed the loss of red light revenues, the marshal program, warrant collection, uncollected dues, marshal cost verses cost of marshals, and ticket write offs.

Council Member Reyes suggested offering after hours Court to allow working families more flexibility to pay citations.

Mayor Pro Tem Norwood stated he and Council Member Bomgardner would like to meet with Municipal Court Staff to better understand the Marshal Program and Municipal Court procedures. Afterwards, they will provide feedback to the City Council.

Ms. Evans Jones reviewed General Fund expenditures.

The City Council recessed at 2:30 p.m. for a break and reconvened at 2:40 p.m.

Ms. Evans Jones reviewed the Water & Sewer fund. The City Council discussed cycles of billing numbers and base water rate.

Ms. Evans Jones provided a Storm Water overview. The next topic discussed was Economic Development revenues and expenditures.

Council Member Retana suggested adding a single-family residential rehabilitation program to assist lower income property owners an incentive to renovate their existing homes. She suggested collaborating with Developers who may want to assist with neighborhood revitalization.

Assistant City Manager Ben Williamson reviewed the 2019 Resident Survey results.

Mayor Pro Tem Norwood expressed concerns with reaching more residents. He urged Staff to identify better ways to reach out to all residents and obtain feedback.

Council Member Lynne suggested reaching out to residents by mail to see if they wish to join the recycling program and offering them choices on bin sizes.

Council Member Retana suggested utilizing multiple communication efforts and to be strategic with outreach.

Council Member Blackson suggested reaching out to multi-family apartment complexes and offering an incentive for residents who participate and provide feedback.

Mr. Cox suggested community outreach through Farmers Branch Night Out to seek resident input through survey questions.

Council Member Retana suggested a pilot program for multi-family and start with the Brickyard.

Mayor Dye recessed the meeting at 5 p.m. for the day.

DAY 2 (8-14-19)

Mayor Dye called the meeting to order at 9:06 a.m.

Ms. Evans Jones reviewed the CIP budget.

The City Council discussed pay as you go verses bond issuance. Mr. Cox noted in the past City Council has utilized the pay as you go philosophy.

Director of Public Works Marc Bentley discussed the CIP Program and projects.

The City Council discussed outsourcing verses insourcing projects, prioritizing street repairs, asphalt verses concrete paving, and reviewed a street repair map by District.

Mr. Bentley reviewed inflow and infiltration reduction and the storm water utility fund. He noted the City has a three-year plan to fund creek repairs noting erosion issues would result in a 90% resolution.

The City Council discussed creek funding, dredging, water reduction, reviewed storm runoff maps, discussed vaults to capture water runoff, the possibility of utilizing eminent domain, TIF 3, additional park space, inspector staffing needs, and the timeline to complete creek repairs.

Council Member Retana expressed concerns with residents having to wait long time periods for City inspections.

Council Member Lynne requested a future study session to discuss traffic on Midway.

Assistant City Manager Ben Williamson provided an update on the Manske Library.

Mayor Pro Tem Norwood suggested utilizing a vault to capture water runoff when Library renovations are made.

Mr. Cox explained more details would be provided once the consultant prioritizes Library renovations.

Council Member Blackson and Council Member Retana suggested meeting with residents to ensure residents provide input on facade details and proposed changes.

Fire Chief Steve Parker provided a budget overview of the Fire Department.

The City Council discussed grant funding for fire gear, fire trucks and reserve trucks, staffing levels, and growth of the City in regards to fire protection and emergency services.

Mayor Pro Tem Norwood recessed for lunch at 11:52 p.m. and reconvened at 12:37 p.m.

Police Chief David Hale provided a budget overview. He noted with the increase in population, he has requested two additional Police Officers. He reviewed response times, calls for service numbers, Police Beats, Police Department Camera Systems noting the City is required to record with the body cameras.

The City Council discussed officer training, red light camera fund, speed signage, and the need to ensure mental health programs are available for officers.

Director of Human Resources Brian Beasley reviewed the City's Compensation Plan.

The City Council discussed 25 year verses 20 year retirement costs, the number of employees eligible to retire, benchmark cities and the option to remove Plano, Frisco, and bigger cities considered out of range with the City of Farmers Branch population.

Mr. Cox explained the cost to switch to a 20-year retirement would cost the City \$330,000 every year, and staff does not recommend changing at this time.

The Council watched a budget video, which explained the budget process.

Council Member Retana requested the budget video be translated in Spanish to allow all residents to be educated on the budget process.

Mr. Cox stated he would have the Communications Department see if Spanish translation could be added to the video.

Director of Parks and Recreation Michael Mashburn briefed City Council regarding the budget.

Council Member Lynne suggested adding cameras to the dog park and concession area to monitor the park.

Mr. Mashburn reviewed park playground replacement, park usage, and recommended signature parks be Gussie Field and Farmers Branch Park.

The City Council discussed the aquatics budget, recreation center improvements, workout room configurations, equipment, funding and resident feedback on the new design, grant funding, outdoor turf, exploring all options of renovations, park usage, park equipment and the need to seek resident feedback from Recreation users.

Mayor Pro Tem Norwood tasked Mr. Mashburn to think big and not limit his vision, continue to seek feedback and bring back renovation ideas for Council's consideration.

Mr. Mashburn asked for a budget amount that the City Council would consider.

Mayor Dye suggested looking at a budget between \$500,000 to \$1 million and allow City Council to review all options.

Next item discussed was the Barn Project. Mr. Mashburn provided background on barn tours and reviewed costs. Mayor Dye explained he is reaching out to seek better bids noting \$4 million is too expensive for this project.

Mayor Pro Tem Norwood suggested a reasonable amount of \$2.5 to \$3 million.

The City Council discussed the storm water use fund, pay as you go philosophy, benchmark cities for employee pay, Recreation Center and Park funding.

Next topic discussed was Police and Fire Compensation. Mr. Cox explained in the past we have used the following cities as benchmark cities: Plano, Frisco, and McKinney.

The City Council discussed the benchmark cities expressing the need to be more sustainable.

Mr. Cox explained you could eliminate the high and low paying cities to assist.

After discussion, the consensus from Council was to remove the larger cities from the benchmark list (Plano, McKinney, Frisco) to allow the city to be more sustainable.

Mayor Dye recommended holding off on changes to the benchmark Cities list until the next compensation study is completed.

Mayor Dye recessed the meeting at 4:54 p.m.

Day 3 (8-15-19)

Mayor Dye opened the meeting at 9:07 a.m. Director of Economic Development Director Allison Cook briefed City Council regarding the Economic Development (EDC) budget.

Council Member Retana requested a map of all the EDC incentive programs the City offers.

The City Council discussed restaurants at Mustang Crossing, Station Area Master Plan, Demo Rebuild Stats, Neighborhood Renaissance, El Mio site update, TXDot Property Update, I35 Corridor, onramp at 635 to access Valley View, Metrocrest Chamber and Farmers Branch Chamber of Commerce services and funding.

The City Council discussed the donation amount of \$40,000 to the Farmers Branch Chamber and suggested giving them one more year to allow the new Director time to reestablish the Chamber.

Council Member Blackson stated he prefers to spend \$15,000 to \$20,000 on Chamber support.

Director of Sustainability and Public Health Shane Davis briefed City Council regarding the landfill.

Council Member Lynne suggested reaching out to other cities to require material diversion when dumping into the Camelot Landfill. He explained the City would benefit from onsite mulching be funded through Republic Services and not the taxpayers.

Mr. Davis explained City of Arlington has similar program and with the recent completion of the landfill expansion, he plans to review all options.

Mayor Pro Tem Norwood suggested offering cities who separate bulk from brush that utilize the landfill a discount to help incentivize.

Next topic discussed was Sustainability. Mr. Davis explained the City is currently conducting a study with all City facilities.

The City Council discussed solar panels, how long they last, and how they work, stability and costs. Mayor Dye stated the City should look at energy efficiencies whenever upgrades are made throughout the City, noting the City may be able to qualify for tax credits on the purchase of solar panels.

Mr. Davis provided a Water Conservation overview noting the City has a 30 year contract with Dallas water utilities. He reviewed water usage and trends.

Mayor Dye noted City of Carrollton has a pilot program which allows the City to flush water lines and the water is discharged is used to irrigate neighboring properties.

Mr. Davis noted the City would see increased water usage with the new developments on the west side.

The City Council recessed at 11:11 a.m. and reconvened at 11:16 a.m.

In summary, Mr. Cox explained the City Council could transfer \$3 million to the General Funds to assist with creek repairs. He noted this dollar amount includes bank stabilization through the REACH concept, 50/50 participation and a Freese and Nichols Study. Afterwards, the City would have a strategy.

Mr. Cox asked if the City would like to move forward with Bella Road and if a 15% increase to storm water is enough.

The City Council agreed to move forward with a 15% storm water increase.

Council Member Bomgardner suggested delaying landscaping for Fire Station No. 2 to allow for additional funding.

Council Member Retana suggested creating a subcommittee to review nonprofit funding requests to help formalize the program. Council Member Bomgardner explained you could utilize Chamber and Rotary participants to assist with selection. Council Member Retana suggested Staff explore adding a contract position for an additional building inspector to ensure we have better service times for residents.

The City Council agreed to move forward with the Town of Addison on conversations regarding construction of Bella Road.

The City Council recessed for a lunch break at 12:08 p.m. and reconvened at 12:18 p.m.

The City Council discussed tax rate options. Council Member Blackson stated he prefers the effective rate. Mayor Dye stated he would like to see a decrease to .58999 resulting in a \$568,000 decrease.

Council Member Blackson and Mayor stated they support a senior exemption increase of \$10,000. Ms. Evans Jones noted the deadline has been missed for next year.

Council Member Lynne, Council Member Bomgardner and Mayor Pro Tem Norwood asked to see a reduction and what it would mean for the budget.

Council Member Bomgardner stated we do not celebrate enough of what we do, noting this has been a wonderful year and expressed his gratitude to all City Staff for their assistance.

Deputy City Manager John Land asked the Council if they prefer an offsite meeting for a planning session.

Mayor Pro Tem Norwood stated he supports offsite to allow the Council to focus on budget items.

Council Member Lynne suggested everyone list five things they wish to accomplish while in office. Mayor Pro Tem stated the Council could review and prioritize projects in February.

The City Manager thanked City Council for their leadership and support.

B. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 1:22 p.m.

Approved by: _____
Mayor Robert C. Dye

Attest: _____
Amy M. Piukana, City Secretary