



City of Farmers Branch

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

Meeting Minutes

City Council

Tuesday, August 10, 2021

1:00 PM

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

Work Session begins August 10, 2021 at 1 PM and continues through August 12th

Present: 6 - Mayor Robert Dye (Remote via Zoom), Deputy Mayor Pro Tem Cristal Retana, Council Member Traci Williams, Council Member Terry Lynne, Council Member Michael Driskill and Council Member David Merritt (Remote via Zoom)

Staff: 5 - City Manager Charles Cox, Deputy City Manager John Land, Assistant City Manager Benjamin Williamson, City Secretary Amy Piukana and Finance Director Sherrelle Evans-Jones

CALL TO ORDER - STUDY SESSION (1 P.M.)

Mayor Dye called the Budget Work Session Meeting to order at 1 p.m.

A.1 21-367 Discuss and review the City's financial status, revenues, expenditures, projects, balances, financial trends, capital projects, fixed assets, and other issues related to the 2021-22 Fiscal Year Budget

Mayor Dye opened the meeting stating he supports monies to be used for street improvements, pay as you go projects, Signature Park, amenities for the west side, and suggested researching grant funding for additional improvements.

City Manager Charles Cox provided an introduction and overview. Assistant City Manager Ben Williamson reviewed Strategy Map and Critical Business Outcomes for 2022.

Director of Finance Sherrelle Evans-Jones provided an overview of key dates for the budget, reviewed a proposed reduction in the tax rate (1.9 cent), provided an overview of CIP projects, Stormwater Utility Fund, Special Revenue Funds, Property Taxes, and General Fund. Ms. Evans-Jones reviewed the decreased tax rate of .57 cents and its effects.

The City Council discussed tax rate and the increase due to population and budget numbers for Public Safety.

Ms. Evans-Jones reviewed sales tax numbers, she noted 4.3% increase in sales and use tax is proposed for 2021-2022. Ms. Evans Jones reviewed the Water Sewer Fee, Stormwater, and Hotel Motel Fund, Debt Service, Economic Development Overview, and Special Revenue Fund.

Director of Communications Jeff Brady provided an overview of City communications.

Mayor Pro Tem Retana suggested looking into older and newer multifamily complexes to ensure they are receiving City communications, and to ensure translations from English to Spanish, the option of utilizing QR Codes and suggested creating hiring a position in Communications to assist with much needed translations. She suggested utilizing a similar communication blast as Cypress Waters. She further stated that Code Enforcement should have their own page for public education.

The City Council discussed needing the following: a distribution list of talking points for constituents, a media request process, managing City Council social media and sending unified messages from City Council.

City Council adjourned for the day at 3:53 p.m.

Wednesday, August 11, 2021

Mayor Pro Tem Retana called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

Director of Human Resources Brian Beasley provided a compensation study overview reviewing Peer Group Cities.

Council Member Lynne suggested utilizing a different Company next time instead of Evergreen, since we have used them in the past.

The City Council discussed data and tier ranges among pier groups, management positions and line officers and the need to maintain staffing in Public Safety, and being innovative with staffing. Mr. Beasley noted the City is utilizing retention with bonuses, and referrals receive a bonus, and experienced officers are brought in at their appropriate range to start at the bottom of the scale.

Mayor Pro Tem Retana requested a memorandum which shows some of the innovative ideas the City is currently doing.

Council Member Merritt asked to see the multi-year phasing plan for future officers.

The City Council recessed for a break at 10:05 a.m. and reconvened at 10:10 a.m.

Director of Public Works Marc Bentley provided an overview of Capital Improvement Projects, the Street Improvement Program, Utility Replacement and Improvements, Inflow and Infiltration Reduction, homes in the floodplain and non-CIP Funding.

The City Council discussed mosquitos and the need to educate their constituents, grant funds for Cooks Creek, Webb Chapel overflow at the approach, Brookhaven drainage projects, and funding.

City Manager Charles Cox discussed proposed staffing changes. Mr. Cox explained the City has held staffing levels but due to the increase in population and the rising service needs, the proposed budget includes the request for nine (9) full time staff members. He explained the staff break down would be: Police Patrol (4 full time including 2 over hire for training); Fire Prevention - 1 full time fire inspector, Human Resources - 1 Full Time HR Coordinator; Finance Administration - 1 full time (Budget & Purchasing Support); and Innovation & Technology - 1 Full Time (Business Intelligence Analyst). Mr. Cox reviewed the FY 22 salary adjustments and noted the compensation study indicated the City of Farmers Branch is one holiday short in comparison to other cities. He explained the proposal is to add a floating holiday.

The City Council discussed staffing to cover weekends and reduce overtime, staggered work shifts, the Business Intelligence Analyst position required to be certified in ERP.

Director of Sustainability and Environmental Services Shane Davis provided an overview on electric vehicles, charging infrastructure, City fleet, and City facility locations for future electronic charging.

The City Council discussed cost, charges for electric vehicle charging, and liability for vehicle damage. Mr. Davis explained initially the service will be free to gauge usage, then a fee could later be implemented to recoup costs.

Mayor Pro Tem Retana suggested have a map on the website for residents to know locations that provide charging services, and suggested working with developers to add these types of stations with new developments.

Council Member Williams requested a graphic and key talking points when this becomes available so the City Council can share with constituents.

Mr. Davis provided an overview of Camelot Landfill closure processes. He noted monies must be set aside for closure and the City is required to monitor 30 years post closure per TCEQ.

The City Council discussed ways to reduce usage, working with other cities to help educate them on a bulk program to alleviate fees and preserve the landfill, and discussed monies being set aside annually for future closure.

Mayor Pro Tem Retana suggested having a discussion with the Sustainability Committee regarding this topic.

Mayor Dye noted he is partnering with other Mayors to help work together towards zero waste. He stated the discussions have begun. Mr. Cox explained if other cities could participate in a brush/bulk program, it would alleviate fees.

The City Council recessed for lunch at 11:45 a.m. and reconvened at 1 p.m.

Mayor Pro Tem Retana introduced Fire Chief Gabe Vargas. Chief Vargas reviewed the Fire Inspection Program Data, Texas Ambulance Services Supplemental Payment Program, Firefighter gear, Fire Operations and Performance Standards.

The City Council discussed the reimbursement program, net cost of service, and loss. The City Council discussed the timeline for training new firefighters and numbers of employees.

Mayor Pro Tem Retana suggested having a mental health first aid training for citizens, staff, and elected officials.

Police Chief David Hale reviewed Police Department's General Funds, service calls, response times, population growth and trends.

The City Council discussed joint efforts in dealing with mental illness, the amount of time it takes officers to assist, cameras to prevent crime in closed garage areas and innovative ideas to reduce crime.

The City Council recessed for a break at 2:35 p.m. and reconvened at 2:45 p.m.

Director of Parks and Recreation Michael Mashburn reviewed the following proposed FY 22 American Rescue Plan Projects: Recreation Center Phase II renovations, Signature Park, Mercer Park, and The Branch Connection renovations.

The City Council discussed phased approaches, the need for seniors to congregate with younger residents, effects of the basketball court and parking availability, and wooden picnic. She suggested mixed age activities. Mr. Mashburn reviewed a senior living project which indicated a landscape design coordination with a basketball court. Council Member Lynne requested older wooden picnic tables to be replaced at parks.

Mayor Pro Tem Retana adjourned the meeting at 3:51 p.m.

Thursday, August 12, 2021

Mayor Pro Tem Retana called the meeting to order at 9 am.

Director of Economic Development Allison Cook provided an overview of a TIF No. 4 and the action items needed to fund items such as rezoning, station area expansion, corridor enhancements, property acquisition and roadway/sidewalk accessibility and improvements.

The City Council discussed funds for demolition and rebuild, creek funding, infrastructure needs, and options for attainable housing.

Council Member Merritt requested a flow diagram which indicates how the program would work.

The City Attorney Kevin Laughlin reviewed 2022 City Council redistricting. Mr. Laughlin reviewed the City Charter requirements to establish review and revise City Council District boundaries. Mr. Laughlin reviewed commission appointee qualifications and limitations, procedures and guidelines, and next steps.

The City Council discussed demographics, population of the Hispanic community being over 50% and the need for Hispanic representation on the Redistricting Commission.

Mr. Laughlin explained the City is working with Attorney Robert Heath who handled the last redistricting process, and explained the redistricting would be effective for the May 2023 City Elections.

Mayor Pro Tem Retana recessed at 10:25 a.m. and reconvened the meeting at 10:40 a.m.

Mayor Pro Tem Retana discussed the idea of having a residential essential repair program. She explained with the increased population, residents may be eligible to receive Federal funding. Mayor Pro Tem Retana explained with Community Development Block Grants the City could create a Pilot Residential Repair Program. She suggested a partnership with Metrocrest Services to review eligibility for the program so that residents could receive assistance for emergency repairs (safety and health), HVAC, Exterior Improvement Program (related to Code Enforcement), and Home Owner Accessibility Program (Structural assistance for Seniors or Disabled).

The overall consensus from the Council was to move forward with the creation of a program for City Council to review.

In summary, the City Council discussed next steps, Police hiring, pay as you go projects, reduced tax rate, and flexibility of future meetings. Council Member Merritt asked for more details on the 70 Public Works projects and future funding to cover these.

The City Council expressed gratitude to staff for the retreat. The City Manager thanked City Council for taking time to be at the retreat.

The meeting adjourned at 12:02 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

Signed: _____
Mayor Robert C. Dye

Posted by: _____
Amy M. Piukana, TRMC, City Secretary