

**MINUTES
SPECIAL MEETING
HITCHCOCK CITY COMMISSION
HITCHCOCK CITY HALL
7423 HIGHWAY 6, HITCHCOCK, TEXAS
AUGUST 12, 2019, 6:00 P.M.**

Members Present: Mayor Randy Strickland, Commissioners Fard Abdullah, Chris Armacost, Wayne Newton, and Mark Cook

Members Absent: None

Others Present: City Administrator Marie Gelles, City Secretary Lucy Dieringer, City Attorney Kyle Dickson, Court Clerk Ruth Ann Sorrell, Police Chief Wilmon Smith, Police Captain Tim Underwood

Call to Order

Mayor Strickland called the meeting to order at 6:00 P.M.

Citizen Comments:

PLEASE NOTE: Public comments and matters from the floor are limited to 3 minutes in length. If you would like to request to speak, please do so in advance of the meeting by filling out a Request to Address Commission form. All in attendance are required to remove hats and/or sunglasses (dark glasses) during meetings and to also silence all cell phones and electronic devices.

Speakers must address their comments to the presiding officer rather than to individual commissioners or staff. Speakers will be allowed a maximum of 3 minutes to speak. Speakers making personal, impertinent, profane, or slanderous remarks will be given a warning before losing the privilege to speak or may be removed from the room. Unauthorized remarks from the audience, stamping of feet, whistles, yells, and similar demonstrations/distractions will not be permitted. No placards, banners or signs will be permitted in the Chambers or in any room in which the Commission is meeting. In accordance with the Texas State Open Meetings Act, the City Commission is restricted from discussing or taking action on items not listed on the agenda.

As authorized by Section 551.042 of the Texas Government Code, the Presiding Officer may direct a City Official to make a statement of specific factual information in response to an inquiry made by a member of the public or the City Commission or a recitation of existing policy in response.

There were no comments made.

Items for Individual Consideration:

- (A) Municipal Court Security Plan Briefing. (Ruth Ann Sorrell, Court Clerk)

Court Clerk, Ruth Ann Sorrell presented an outline policy and procedure Court Security Plan. (A printed copy was given to each Commissioner). Ms. Sorrell explained that a Security Committee has been formed, and request a Commissioner serve on the Committee. Commissioner Cook volunteered to serve.

- (B) Discussion and appropriate action approving an Ordinance altering the prima facie speed limits established for vehicles under the provisions of §545.356, Texas Transp. Code, upon the basis of an engineering and traffic investigation, upon certain streets and highways, of parts thereof, within the corporate limits of the City of Hitchcock, as set out in this ordinance; and providing a penalty of a fine not to exceed \$200 for the violation of this Ordinance. (Wilmon Smith, Police Chief)

Police Chief Smith explained that the speed limit reductions along F.M. 2004 were recommended by TxDOT based on surveys due to the amount of accidents along 2004. Commissioner Abdullah asked who will put up the new signs. Chief Smith stated TxDOT will handle putting up the signs. Mayor Strickland recommended approving the Ordinance. Commissioner Cook made a motion to approve the Ordinance as presented. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Newton and passed with a 5-0 vote.

- (C) Discussion and appropriate action approving an Ordinance by adding to Title XI entitled “Business Regulations”, Chapter 117 entitled “Pipeline Transportation” by amending, Section 117.07 entitled “Permit Required for New Pipelines: Application; Fee”, adding Section 117.08 – 117.14 and amending Section 117.41 entitled “Fee; right-of-way rental charge” and providing for publication and an effective date. (Kyle Dickson, City Attorney)

Attorney Dickson explained that the Ordinance was last updated in 1981 and needed to be amended for 2 reasons. The first reason was to raise the fees, making them comparable to what neighboring cities are charging. And the second reason is to change the permit requirements so the city can have control over some aspects of pipeline construction, relocation, maintenance, and operation. The City needs to know who is working on the pipelines and to keep up with any damages they cause. Mayor Strickland asked for approval. Commissioner Armacost made a motion to approve the Ordinance as presented. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Newton and passed with a 5-0 vote.

- (D) Discussion and appropriate action on proposed tax rate for Fiscal Year 2019/2020 and take a record vote; and schedule Public Hearings, if required on the proposed tax rate and proposed budget for Fiscal Year 2019/2020.

Ms. Gelles stated the City’s current tax rate is .50 cents per \$100 assessed valuation. The proposed budget for FY 2020 currently maintains the current tax rate of .50 cents. The 2019 effective tax rate is .443033 cents and the rollback rate is .674363 cents. Ms. Gelles gave figures on the revenues the different rates would generate, and the amount of taxes imposed on the average home value at the different rates. If the City Commission anticipates adopting a tax rate at or below the effective tax rate no public hearing is required. However, if the City Commission anticipates adopting a tax rate in excess of the effective tax rate, the City is required to hold 2 public hearings and publish newspaper ads before adopting a tax rate that exceeds the rollback rate or the effective tax rate, whichever rate is lower. Ms. Gelles also informed the Commission that Senate Bill (S.B.) 2 passed during the legislative session renames the rollback rate to “Voter –Approval” tax rate and requires elections for taxing units and cities that exceed the “voter approval” rate to take place on November uniform elections dates. S.B. 2 is not effective until January 1, 2020. Ms. Gelles recommended using the roll back rate. Commissioner Newton made a motion to accept the rollback rate of \$0.674363 and to set the Public Hearings on the Proposed Tax Rate for August 26, 2019 and September 9, 2019; and to set the Public Hearing on the Proposed Fiscal Year 2020 Budget on September 9, 2019 at 6:00 P.M. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Abdullah and passed with a 5 to 0 vote. Mayor Strickland, Commissioner Abdullah, Commissioner Armacost, Commissioner Newton and Commissioner Cook voted for.

(E) Fiscal Year 2019/2020 Budget presentation. (Marie Gelles, City Administrator)

Ms. Gelles gave a presentation outlining the Fiscal Year 2019/2020 Proposed Budget. Ms. Gelles thanked Ruth Ann Sorrell and Captain Underwood for assisting with getting the Proposed Budget put together. Ms. Gelles stated a copy is available for public review on the counter at City Hall, and at the Hitchcock Public Library. Mayor Stricklind stated that this is the best budget and budget presentation he has seen the City given. Mayor Stricklind and the Commissioners thanked Ms. Gelles for a job well done, and done so professionally.

4. Announcement:

The City of Hitchcock posted a 30-day Public Notice at the Hitchcock City Hall on July 18, 2019 that the City of Hitchcock will submit a Texas Community Development Block Grant application for \$1,463,149.00 for Citywide Wastewater Sewer System Improvements, Flood and Drainage Improvements and Road Improvements related to Hurricane Harvey declared disaster events to the General Land Office (GLO) Hurricane Harvey Disaster Recovery Program (CDBG-DR). The application will be available for review on and after July 18, 2019, at the City Hall at 7423 Highway 6, Hitchcock, Texas, 77563 during regular business hours for at least thirty days. The notice will remain posted at the Hitchcock City Hall for 30 days.

Mayor Stricklind read the above announcement.

Adjourn

Commissioner Abdullah moved to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Cook and passed with a 5 to 0 vote. The meeting adjourned at 6:30 P.M.

Randy Stricklind, Mayor

Lucy Dieringer, City Secretary