

MINUTES OF COUNCIL MEETING

The City Council of the City of Brazos Country, Austin County, Texas, convened in regular session Thursday, September 21st, 2023, 7:00 PM, at Kathy's Korner, 9027 S E I-10 Frontage Rd. Sealy, TX.

1-2. Call to Order - Pledge of Allegiance and Invocation - Mayor Bob Ray called the meeting to order at 7:03 PM. He led us in the Pledge of Allegiance to the United States flag and offered the invocation.

3. Roll Call and Certification of a Quorum - Council members present were:

Bob Ray, Mayor
Dave Carrasquillo, Alderman
Joe McSloy, Alderman
Neil Howard, Alderman
Richard Cheek, Alderman

Albert Sykes was absent. Mayor Ray certified there was a quorum. Also present were City Secretary Mary Lou Craig, Assistant Secretary Robyn Wolfenbarger, Constable James Clark, Cullen Brotherton and about 6 city residents.

4. Public Comments – Mayor Ray introduced Cullen Brotherton, the new operator for the city water plant.

5. New Business

a. Report from 2021-22 audit – consideration and action as appropriate The draft of the final report had not been received by the time of the meeting so this item will be addressed at a later date.

b. Consider new contract from James Clark – consideration and action as appropriate Constable Clark read his proposed new contract to council and others attending and answered several questions and concerns. After a brief discussion Dave Carrasquillo made a motion to accept the contract as presented. Motion was seconded by Richard Cheek and it carried. This new contract takes effect October 1st, 2023.

c. Public Hearing – Property tax rate for 2023-24 fiscal year – Mayor Bob Ray recessed council meeting and opened the Public Hearing. Mayor Ray then explained that the proposed rate of 0.078532 per \$100 valuation, approved at the August 2023 council meeting, was based on a worksheet sent by the appraisal district which had an erroneous entry. A corrected worksheet was sent to the city after the August meeting which reported the no new revenue rate was actually 0.07852 per \$100 valuation. Hearing no other comments, Mayor Ray closed the public hearing and ended the council recess.

d. Approve Ordinance 2023-05 - Adopt property tax rate for 2023-24 fiscal year – Mayor Ray asked for questions and hearing none, requested a motion. Joe McSloy made a motion to adopt the no new revenue rate of 0.07852 per \$100 valuation in the form of Ordinance 2023-05, for the 2023-24 fiscal year. Dave Carrasquillo seconded and motion carried with votes as follows:
Neil Howard – aye; Joe McSloy – aye; Richard Cheek – aye; Dave Carrasquillo – aye.

e. Approve annual donations – Mayor Ray reminded council that there was \$1700.00 budgeted for end-of-year donations, and there was question as to continuing the donation to the Sealy public library. Dave Carrasquillo made a motion to disburse the \$1700 donations as \$500 to the San Felipe/Frydek Fire Department, \$500 to the Austin County EMS, \$500 to Austin County Peace Officers Association, and \$200 to the Sealy Library. Richard Cheek seconded and motion passed.

f. Public Hearing – 2023-024 General and Water Fund Budgets - Mayor Bob Ray recessed council meeting and opened the Public Hearing. Mayor Ray pointed out that the budgeted amount for Public Safety would need to be increased to accommodate the new contract with Constable Clark. He suggested moving \$25,000 from Contingency to Public Safety, increasing that amount to \$50,000.

Several attendees asked questions and the mayor and council listened and offered explanations. At the end of the discussion Mayor Ray closed the public hearing and ended the council recess.

g. Approve 2023-2024 General and Water Fund Budgets – Mayor Ray asked council if they had any further questions and hearing none, he entertained a motion. Richard Cheek made a motion to approve the 2023-2024 General and Water Fund Budgets as amended. Dave Carrasquillo seconded and motion carried unanimously.

h. Approve water rates sheet – Mayor Ray explained that because of changes to the charges for certain water supply tasks, the most recent ordinance addressing these charges needed to be changed. He reported that the city currently had four (4) ordinances dating back to 2006 addressing the charges for various water supply issues. He is suggesting that these four ordinances be repealed and replaced with a new ordinance which does not include dollar amount charges. Instead, council would create and review annually a Water Rate Sheet where all the charges would be listed and the ordinance would reference the current water rate sheet. Council reviewed the water rate sheet created by the city secretary and agreed that a “workshop meeting” should be held at 6:00 pm before the October regular council meeting to review and revise the new ordinance. Joe McSloy made a motion that the Water Rate Sheet be approved as presented. Richard Cheek seconded and motion passed.

6. Old Business

a. Roads – Update; consideration and action as appropriate – Neil Howard reported that he had noticed several cracks in the new asphalt installed in 2022 and supposed these could be attributed to the extreme drought experienced in most of Texas this summer. He had spoken to Arthur Saucedo about checking on these and he was planning to meet with him next week.

b. Culverts & drainage – Update; consideration and action as appropriate – No report.

c. Water department – Update; consideration and action as appropriate – Mayor Ray reported that many in the city had responded by cooperating with the voluntary water conservation and the water plant was operating well under the extreme drought circumstances.

d. Review RFQ’s (Request for Qualifications) from Kaluza Engineering and Bleyl Engineering for expansion of water plant – Mayor Ray reported that after further study he recommended negotiations begin with Kaluza Engineering for recommendations to upgrade the water plant facility. Richard Cheek made a motion that council give Mayor Ray approval to sign an agreement with Kaluza for an amount not to exceed \$10,000. Neil Howard seconded and motion carried.

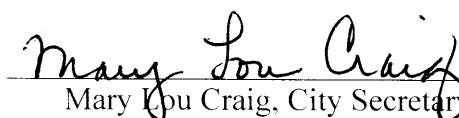
e. Lake Committee – update – In the absence of Jeff Van Pelt there was no report.

f. River Ridge Estates – update – Mayor Ray reported that he had spoken on the phone to someone who is applying to provide the new plats for the development and answered questions about the approval process.

7. Consent Agenda – consideration and action as appropriate - Dave Carrasquillo made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda including the August minutes and financial reports. Joe McSloy seconded and motion carried.

8. Comments – Mayor/Council/City Secretary – Mayor Ray reminded council that the October meeting would be October 19th, and the workshop meeting to discuss the water ordinance would begin at 6:00 pm. This meeting is scheduled to be held at Kathy’s Korner.

9. Adjourn – Neil Howard made a motion to adjourn. Dave Carrasquillo seconded and motion passed. Meeting was adjourned at 8:14 pm.


Mary Lou Craig, City Secretary

Date 10-19-23