

Julie Masters, Mayor
Charles Suderman, Mayor Pro Tem
Sean Skipworth
Walter Wilson

MINUTES
City of Dickinson
CITY COUNCIL
SPECIAL WORKSHOP
MEETING

Wally Deats
Louis Decker
William H. King III
Chris Heard, City Administrator

August 11, 2020

The Dickinson City Council met in a duly called and announced **SPECIAL WORKSHOP MEETING** on **Tuesday, August 11, 2020, at 6:00 p.m.** In accordance with order of the Office of the Governor issued March 16, 2020, the City Council of the City of Dickinson, Texas conducted the meeting by telephone and video conference in order to advance the public health goal of limiting face-to-face meetings (also called “social distancing”) to slow the spread of the Coronavirus (COVID-19). The meeting was held for the purpose of considering the following items:

ITEM 1.) CALL TO ORDER AND CERTIFICATION OF A QUORUM

Mayor Masters called the meeting to order at 6:08 p.m. City Secretary Alun Thomas called roll and certified a quorum. Council Members present were as follows: Mayor Julie Masters, Mayor Pro-Tem Charles Suderman, and Council Members Sean Skipworth, Walter Wilson, Wally Deats, Louis Decker, and William H. King, III. Also present were City Administrator Chris Heard, Finance Director Penny Hunter, Police Chief Ron Morales, and Police Captains Melvin Mason and Jay Jaekel.

ITEM 2.) PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION CONCERNING: Development of the 2020-2021 Budget for the City of Dickinson.

City Administrator Chris Heard presented the item to Council. He said that this meeting will focus on the General Fund, addressing policy questions such as if the City wants reserve funds and unexpended fund balances, and understanding budgetary constraints. The draft of the General Fund budget in front of Council this evening includes reductions in many line items, but for all items, the proposed budgeted amount for next fiscal year is at or above the greater of the actual expenditures from this fiscal year and last fiscal year.

Council Member Suderman questioned why the Connect CTY line item was zeroed out, noting that that system is used by the City for emergency alerts. Mr. Heard explained that nothing has been billed to that item this year, conceding that there could be a coding error on the part of City staff that resulted in the appearance of no spending on the Connect CTY system. Council asked who is responsible for ensuring that expenditures are properly coded and approved.

Council then discussed some of the proposed changes to the budget, with Mr. Heard saying in response to a question that department heads had not seen his proposal until it was distributed to Council yesterday evening in advance of this meeting. Mr. Heard said that he examined what every department might need for the coming year based upon their actual spending in the past two years. Council Member Deats asked if such an approach was wise; the City has numerous necessary staff positions that have been left unfilled, resulting in correspondingly decreased expenditures from those line items. Council Member Deats said that when Council budgets for a position or adjusts a pay scale, it is a directive to staff to make the instructed changes. He then asked if the pay increases approved by Council several months ago for certain Emergency Medical Services (EMS) staff had been implemented. Mr. Heard said that that was a trick question, and that he needed more time to examine EMS pay rates.

One of the changes for the coming year, Mr. Heard said, will be a consolidation of various contracts that the City is party to. He gave the example of mowing services, which could be consolidated from right-of way-mowing, forced mowing, and facility mowing contracts, down to a single contract for all such services. Council Member Deats asked that Council be provided with executive summary sheets on items presented to it, so that it could more readily identify the key changes that it is asked to approve.

Council Member King commented that the proposed budget for street sign replacement was \$0 for the next fiscal year, noting that replacement street signs are still needed. Mr. Heard said that many of the City's street signs fail to meet reflectivity standards, and that, if directed to be Council, he could have a crew of public works employees work solely on replacing signage.

Council Member Skipworth said that he would like to see something for health coverage for employees' dependents. Mr. Heard said that that is not going to happen in the next fiscal year due to healthcare costs, saying that he is not sure that the City can provide dependent healthcare coverage that its employees could afford.

ITEM 3.) ADJOURN

Council Member Wilson made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:57 p.m., and Council Member Deats seconded the motion. There being no discussion, Mayor Masters called for the vote.

VOTE:

6 AYES (Suderman, Skipworth, Wilson, Deats, Decker, King)

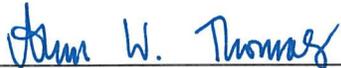
0 NAYS

MOTION PASSED

PASSED, APPROVED AND ADOPTED this the 25th day of August, 2020.


Julie Masters, Mayor

ATTEST:


Alun W. Thomas, City Secretary

