

The City Council of the City of Willis, Texas convened in regular session at city hall on the date and time aforesaid with the following members present:

Leonard Reed, Mayor
Thomas Belinoski, Mayor Pro-Tem
Teresa Herod, Council Member
Tom Luster, Council Member
Barney Stone, Council Member
William Brown, Council Member
Robert Evans, City Manager
Larry Foerster, City Attorney
Marissa Quintanilla, City Secretary
James Nowak, Chief of Police
Taylor Whichard, Director of Public Works
Beth Rodriguez, Director of Finance

And the following members absent: none, constituting a quorum at which time the following business was transacted to-wit:

1. Call to order the regular meeting.
Mayor called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.
2. Roll Call, Pledge of Allegiance, and Invocation
I Pledge Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all. Honor the Texas Flag. I pledge allegiance to thee Texas; one state under God, one and indivisible.
City Secretary called roll. Pledges were recited. Councilman Brown gave the invocation.
3. PUBLIC HEARING
 - a. Public hearing on the annexation of 25.71-acre tract of land situated in the G.W. Lonis Survey.
Larry Foerster stated this was the Willis RV Hillside Resort. Mr. Foerster stated this was property is located on FM 1097 East. Mr. Foerster stated that Council would be making a decision at the next meeting on whether or not to annex. Mr. Foerster stated the Bleyl had done an annexation study on it, and it is sort of a toss up on if property is annexed the City would receive the property tax value from it, but they would be paying inside City rates, if you don't annex it the City will not collect the tax but will be collecting outside City rates. Mr. Foerster stated as a formality, the annexation procedures did require one public hearing for the requested annexation. Mayor asked for questions or comments from the public. None were received.
 - b. Public hearing on the annexation of 38.31 acres of land in the F.K Henderson Survey.
Mr. Foerster stated this is the second annexation of the Moran Ranch that MRSS Partners is developing. Mr. Foerster stated this is roughly 28 acres running from Kennedy Street going south, and will be residential tracts and lots. Mr. Foerster stated they haven't presented a plat as of yet. Mr. Foerster stated the last we heard was the goal was to have at least model homes by the end of this year for this tract. Mr. Foerster stated that the ordinance for the Council's consideration would be submitted at the next meeting. Mayor asked for questions or comments from the public. None were received. Mayor closed the public hearing at 5:34 p.m.
4. CITIZENS INQUIRY
 - a. Public Comments
No public comments.
5. CONSENT AGENDA
 - a. Consider the minutes of the previous meetings: February 23, 2021
 - b. Approval of Accounts Payable

- c. Approval of financial statements and tax collection reports
Mayor asked for comments or questions on the consent agenda. None were received. Mayor and Council approved the consent agenda by unanimous consent.

6. NEW BUSINESS

- a. Discuss and take action on approval of a preliminary plat of 38.02 acres in the G.W. Lonis Survey, for Market at Willis Associates, LLC.
Taylor Whichard stated that this is the commercial development along I-45 frontage. Mr. Whichard stated to get the development started on any commercial development they are asking the City to approve the preliminary plat. Mr. Whichard stated there are a few comments they still have to address, and are planning on address all comments on the final plat. Mayor asked for any questions. Motion was made by Barney Stone to approve the preliminary plat of 38.02 acres in the G.W. Lonis Survey, for Market at Willis Associates, LLC. Tom Luster seconded the motion. Mayor asked for any other discussion. There was none. Motion passed unanimously.
- b. Discuss and take action on approval of a preliminary plat of 74.321 acres in the G. W. Lonis Survey, for Willis ISD.
Mr. Whichard stated this plat is just to clean up their property boundary, to remove all lot lines and make to make it clean so they do not have any lot line restrictions. Mayor asked for questions. None were received. Motion was made by Thomas Belinoski to approve a preliminary plat of 74.321 acres in the G.W. Lonis Survey, for Willis ISD. William Brown seconded the motion. Mayor asked for any discussion. None was received. Motion passed unanimously.
- c. Discuss and take action to address adjustments to utility bills due to cold weather events.
Mr. Whichard stated that staff has had quite a few customer/residents regarding busted pipes at their homes, due to the freeze last month. Mr. Whichard stated that their bills are two, three, four time higher than their average bill. Mr. Whichard stated these were unforeseen circumstances, and staff is asking for guidance on helping residents with a little bit on relief on their bills. Mr. Whichard stated that if we can move away from our current policy which is reducing the bill by averaging out the sewer portion, if we can average out both water and sewer portions of these high bills, a lot of our residents would be really appreciative. Mr. Belinoski asked what are kind of numbers were we looking at. Mr. Whichard stated he's probably fielded anywhere from 50 to 100 phone calls regarding high water bills, and each one of them is at minimum of two to three hundred dollars above their average water bill. Mr. Whichard stated residents are stating they are having a hard time finding plumbers. Mr. Evans stated it would be about 20 to 30 thousand dollars of total relief is probably what we would be asking for. Mr. Evans stated they still have to come in can show receipts or documentation of the fix. Mr. Williams asked if we were looking to do everyone who has a high-water bill, or just ones that are extremely high. Mr. Whichard stated the ones that come in that can prove to us they had damage by the winter storm. Mayor asked if a customer has a \$1,400 bill and were talking about charging them \$60 for their bill. Mr. Whichard stated no, we would do a six-month average. Mayor stated what we're saying is their water bill has been \$60 over the six-month period were just going to charge them \$60. Mr. Whichard stated this was correct. The Council continued to discuss different options to addressing this issue. Council suggested continuing with the sewer adjustment as is policy, and looking at what the cost to the City would be to charge the water rate at a different tier and looking into help from the state. Motion was made by Thomas Belinoski to table item 6c. Tom Luster seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.
- d. Discuss and take action on the proposal by City of Conroe to adjust the historical charges for wastewater.
Mr. Evans stated months ago the City of Conroe informed the City that they had made an error in billing for the wastewater that was being sent to Conroe. Mr. Evans stated we took their list and found out how much we were responsible for, and the most they can collect is four years. Mr. Evans stated we brought it to the Council, asked that staff get with Conroe and get an amount. Conroe came back with a proposal to pay them the four years owed which is \$75,000 which can be paid back in over five years, but want to renegotiate a new contract. Mr. Evans stated his recommendation is to take their offer of paying the \$75,000 over a five-year period. Mayor asked for any questions. None were received. Motion was by Tom Luster to pay back the \$75,000 over a five-year period at \$1,250 a month. Barney Stone seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

- e. Discuss and take action on beginning negotiations on a new agreement with City of Conroe for future wastewater charges.
Mr. Evans stated he just wants permission to begin negotiations on a new agreement with City of Conroe for future wastewater charges. Mayor asked if we reserve capacity at their plant and then pay per gallon what we send. Mr. Evans stated this was correct. Mayor asked for any questions. None were received. Motion was made by Barney Stone to begin negotiations with the City of Conroe on a new agreement for future wastewater charges. Teresa Herod seconded the motion. Mayor asked for any discussion. None was received. Motion passed unanimously.

- f. Discuss and take action on a resolution opposing any state legislation which limits a Texas City's rights to use public funds to communicate with legislators and state agencies.
Mr. Foerster stated that at the last legislative session there were some senate bills that would stop TML from providing any lobby assistance to our state representatives, that did not pass. Mr. Foerster stated that this would have affected not just cities, but counties, school districts, municipal utility districts, and emergency fire service districts. Mr. Foerster stated it was back up again. Mr. Foerster stated this time the lobbyist is actually advertising on the radio urging people to support the legislation that would stop cities from using tax funds to pay for TML support. Mr. Foerster stated that it's the TML position that this is something that negatively affects cities because otherwise we don't have the opportunity to have our representatives there. Mr. Foerster stated for example in the past few years there's been legislation that has affected our city's ability for getting paid for fiber optic lines installed in our right of ways. Mr. Foerster stated there has been legislation to stop city's from amending their building codes to allow for more strict standards for plumbing, electrical and so forth. Mr. Foerster stated TML has done a good job for the cities. Mayor stated that when we were talking about the money is the dues the City pays, which could easily get the value of what the dues cost from one or two phone calls to TML. Mayor stated that in interest for the citizens, he recommended approval of the resolution. Motion was made by Teresa Herod to approve a resolution opposing any state legislation which limits a Texas City's rights to use public funds to communicate with legislators and state agencies. William Brown seconded the motion. Mayor asked for any discussion. None was received. Motion passed unanimously.

7. REPORTS

Input from Council related to issues for possible inclusion on future agendas; related to issues such as (but not limited to) municipal projects, personnel, public property, development, and other city/public business.

- a. Engineer's Report
 - 1. Maple Ridge Paving Project
Derek Wind stated that with the cold weather, and the contractor had supplier issues but is trying to get started at the beginning of April. Mr. Wind reminded Council that no payment had been made to the contractor.
 - 2. CDBG Storm Sewer Replacement Project
Mr. Wind stated the contract is ready to go, the contractor has been holding the bid price beyond what the contract said he needed to. Mr. Wind stated the GLO has been delaying approving the extension. Mr. Wind stated his understanding from the GLO, was the person that was handling the application is no longer handling it and was passed on to someone else. The new reviewer has reviewed the application and is in the final stages of being approved.

- b. City Manager's Report
 - 1. Ongoing COVID-19 guidance
Mr. Evans stated this was in relation to the Governor's recent announcement and lifting of all the restrictions. Mr. Evans stated he did point out individual establishments can still restrict, but there is no enforcement of this. Mayor asked what the City's policy is now for wearing mask for employees. Mr. Evans stated that he has told staff that we can keep the signs out stating it's advised. Mr. Evans stated for city workers it's voluntary.

8. EXECUTIVE SESSION

- a. Convene into closed executive session as provided by the Texas Open Meetings Act under Section 551.071 (consultation with city attorney on confidential matters); Section 551.087 (deliberation on economic development proposals); Section 551.074 (Personnel Matters) and under the Texas Government Code.
 - 1. Discuss an economic development agreement with Market at Willis Associates, LLC

2. City Manager evaluation

Mayor closed open session at 6:26 p.m. and reconvened into closed executive session at 6:30 p.m.

- b. Reconvene into opens session and take action if necessary, on matters deliberated in closed executive session:

Mayor and Council reconvened into open session at 7:10 p.m.

1. Consider approving an economic development agreement with Market at Willis Associates, LLC
Motion was made by William Brown to approve an economic development agreement with Market at Willis Associates, LLC. Thomas Belinoski seconded the motion. Mayor asked for any discussion. None was received. Motion passed unanimously.

9. ADJOURN

Motion was made by William Brown to adjourn. Tom Luster seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 7:12 p.m.

Leonard Reed, Mayor

Marissa Quintanilla, City Secretary