

Brenham City Council Minutes

A regular meeting of the Brenham City Council was held on September 1, 2011 beginning at 1:00 p.m. in the Brenham City Hall, City Council Chambers, at 200 W. Vulcan Street, Brenham, Texas.

Members present:

Mayor Milton Y. Tate, Jr.
Mayor Pro Tem Gloria Nix
Councilmember Andrew Ebel
Councilmember Danny Goss
Councilmember Keith Herring
Councilmember Charlie Pyle
Councilmember Weldon Williams, Jr.

Others present:

City Manager Terry Roberts, City Attorney Cary Bovey, City Secretary Jeana Bellinger, Administrative Assistant Tammy Cook, Chief Financial Officer Carolyn Miller, Stacy Hardy, Debbie Gaffey, Fire Chief Ricky Boeker, Police Chief Rex Phelps, Public Works Director Doug Baker, Kim Hodde, Public Utilities Director Lowell Ogle, Community Services Director Wesley Brinkmeyer, Angela Hahn, Pam Ruemke, Becky Squyres, Kevin Boggus

Citizens present:

James Proske, C.H. Harvey, Page Michel, Clint Kolby

Media Present:

Arthur Hahn, Brenham Banner Press; Frank Wagner, KWHI

- 1. Mayor Tate called the meeting to order**
- 2. Invocation and Pledges to the US and Texas Flags – Councilmember Andrew Ebel**
- 3. Service Recognitions**

A Service Recognition was presented to the following employee:

Julie Neville Communications 10 Years

4. Citizens Comments

There were no citizen comments.

CONSENT AGENDA

5. Statutory Consent Agenda

5-a. Minutes from the July 21, 2011, July 25, 2011, August 4, 2011 and August 18, 2011 Council Meetings

A motion was made by Councilmember Pyle and Seconded by Councilmember Herring to approve the minutes from the July 21, 2011, July 25, 2011, August 4, 2011 and August 18, 2011 Council Meetings.

Mayor Tate called for a vote. The motion passed with Council voting as follows:

Mayor Milton Y. Tate, Jr.	Yes
Mayor Pro Tem Gloria Nix	Yes
Councilmember Andrew Ebel	Yes
Councilmember Danny Goss	Yes
Councilmember Keith Herring	Yes
Councilmember Charlie Pyle	Yes
Councilmember Weldon Williams	Yes

PUBLIC HEARING

6. Proposed Tax Rate of \$0.5432 per \$100 Valuation for Fiscal Year Beginning October 1, 2011 and Ending September 30, 2012

Chief Financial Officer Carolyn Miller presented this item. A governing body must hold two public hearings to receive citizen comments on a proposed tax rate. The first public hearing was held during the regular Council meeting on August 18, 2011.

A property tax rate of \$0.5432 per \$100 valuation is proposed to fund the FY2011-12 Budget. Of this rate, \$0.3420 will be for maintenance and operations (M&O), which is the same M&O rate that the City has maintained for four (4) consecutive years. The I&S rate is being increased by \$0.0390 from \$0.1622 to \$0.2012 to cover transportation projects. Ms. Miller opened the floor to comments.

Mr. James Proske commented on the untimely request for a tax increase due to the down economy and commented on his displeasure with the Highway 290 project.

Mr. C.H. Harvey commented on his displeasure and disapproval with the proposed tax rate increase. He commented on the expense of projects within the city; the recently constructed Amphitheater and the All Sports Building and the recurring expenses these projects will have on tax payers. Mr. Harvey also expressed his disapproval of street repair without prior approval from taxpayers.

Mayor Tate announced the first reading of the Ordinance to adopt the tax rate will be during a Regular Council meeting on Thursday, September 15, 2011 at 10:00 a.m. The Second reading of the Ordinance and adoption of the tax rate is scheduled for a Special Council meeting on Thursday, September 22, 2011 at 1:00 p.m.

Mayor Tate closed the public hearing.

REGULAR AGENDA

7. Discuss and Possibly Act Upon the Selection of a Candidate to be Voted for on the Texas Municipal League Intergovernmental Employee Benefits Pool Board of Trustees Region 10 Ballot

City Manager Terry Roberts presented this item. As a member of the Texas Municipal League Intergovernmental Employees Benefit Pool, the City of Brenham may participate in the election of members of the Board of Trustees. Mr. Roberts noted the two candidates on the ballot; Vic Barnett of Caldwell and Kevin Russell of Georgetown. Staff's recommendation is the selection of Mr. Vic Barnett as the candidate to serve on the TMLIEP Board of Trustees Region 10.

A motion was made by Councilmember Pyle and seconded by Councilmember Williams to select Vic Barnett of the City Caldwell to be a candidate to be voted on for the Texas Municipal League Intergovernmental Employee Benefits Pool Board of Trustees Region 10 Ballot

Mayor Tate called for a vote. The motion passed with Council voting as follows:

Mayor Milton Y. Tate, Jr.	Yes
Mayor Pro Tem Gloria Nix	Yes
Councilmember Andrew Ebel	Yes
Councilmember Danny Goss	Yes
Councilmember Keith Herring	Yes
Councilmember Charlie Pyle	Yes
Councilmember Weldon Williams	Yes

8. Discuss and Possibly Act Upon a Request for a Noise Variance from Cry Out America to Hold a Prayer Service at the Washington County Courthouse Gazebo and Lawn on September 10, 2011 from 6:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

Kim Hodde presented this item. Lori Dehmer of Cry Out America requested this noise variance for a prayer service to be held at the Washington County Courthouse Gazebo.

A motion was made by Councilmember Herring and seconded by Councilmember Pyle to approve a noise variance from Cry Out America to hold a prayer service at the Washington County Courthouse gazebo and lawn on September 10, 2011 from 6:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

Mayor Tate called for a vote. The motion passed with Council voting as follows:

Mayor Milton Y. Tate, Jr.	Yes
Mayor Pro Tem Gloria Nix	Yes
Councilmember Andrew Ebel	Yes
Councilmember Danny Goss	Yes
Councilmember Keith Herring	Yes
Councilmember Charlie Pyle	Yes
Councilmember Weldon Williams	Yes

9. Discuss and Possibly Act Upon Bid No. 11-013 For a Surface Lease of Approximately 49.98 Acres of Land Located Off Old Independence Road and the North End of The Brenham Municipal Airport and Authorize the Mayor to Execute any Necessary Documentation

Public Works Director Doug Baker presented this item. Mr. Baker informed council that the land located at the north end of the Brenham Municipal Airport can be leased for grazing or hay production. Two bids were received for the lease of this land. Staff recommends awarding the bid to the highest bidder, Martin L. Spivey, in the amount of \$1,506.90.

A motion was made by Councilmember Pyle and seconded by Councilmember Ebel to approve Bid No. 11-013 for a surface lease of approximately 49.98 acres of land located off Old Independence Road and the north end of the Brenham Municipal Airport to Martin L. Spivey in the amount of \$1,506.90 and authorize the Mayor to execute any necessary documentation.

Mayor Tate called for a vote. The motion passed with Council voting as follows:

Mayor Milton Y. Tate, Jr.	Yes
Mayor Pro Tem Gloria Nix	Yes
Councilmember Andrew Ebel	Yes
Councilmember Danny Goss	Yes
Councilmember Keith Herring	Yes
Councilmember Charlie Pyle	Yes
Councilmember Weldon Williams	Yes

WORK SESSION

(Note: The City Council convened in Room 2A, 2nd Floor of City Hall, for Work Session and Administrative/Elected Officials Report)

10. Presentation of the City of Brenham's Strategic Plan

Terry Roberts introduced this item and reminded council of the strategic objectives that were created during the day long council retreat in February. During the last council meeting, councilmembers were given a sheet of the sixteen objectives and were asked to rank these items in order of priority. Mr. Roberts then turned the presentation over to Retreat Facilitator, Ron Cox.

Mr. Cox outlined the City's vision statement and Council's strategic objectives. He then explained the ranking of the objectives as determined by City Council. Mr. Cox discussed in detail the top eight (8) priorities:

1. Create a comprehensive master planning program addressing transportation, development, and economic development
2. Develop a comprehensive approach to improving intergovernmental cooperation and sharing costs of service between the city, county, and school systems
3. Prepare a comprehensive transportation plan including rehabilitation and maintenance of city streets, planning for thoroughfares and downtown parking
4. Develop a holistic approach to economic development planning in all aspects of the community including development of white collar jobs and a diversified retail market
5. Develop a plan for enhancing revenues for the City of Brenham
6. Encourage development within the City's utilities service area
7. Develop and implement a proactive code enforcement program
8. Find equitable funding for new fire substation

Mr. Cox opened the floor to questions and comments pertaining to the rankings of these strategic objectives.

Councilmember Pyle commented on the development within the City's utility service area. He does not want to take too much staff time and resources to accomplish this goal unless there is a possible positive result. Councilmember Pyle also commented on the development and implementation of a proactive code enforcement program.

Councilmember Williams expressed his thoughts on the importance of intergovernmental cooperation and feels this objective deserves a lot of attention.

Councilmember Goss commented on the priority ranking and how they center on finance. The only way these objectives can be developed is by increasing revenue, and this is accomplished through economic development.

Mr. Roberts closed this presentation by informing council of the staff's intent to present an update semi-annually on the progress of these objectives.

11. Presentation and Discussion on Senate Bill 100

City Secretary Jeana Bellinger presented this item. Ms. Bellinger gave a background of Senate Bill (SB) 100 also known as the Military & Overseas Voter Empowerment (MOVE) Act and the affect this will have on the City's election. The goal of this Act is to make the voting process easier and faster for military and overseas voters. The amount of time allowed for absentee ballots to be received for primary run-off elections was lengthened to forty-five (45) days - from the 2nd Tuesday in April to the 4th Tuesday in May.

Due to the extended time for absentee ballots, Washington County will not be able to provide the City with the required electronic voting equipment. Therefore, the City needs to consider the following options:

1. Maintain current election schedule; acquire electronic voting equipment to use in even-numbered year elections
2. Move elections to November
3. Un-stagger and change terms of office to 2 or 4 years; this will require all positions to be elected, at the same time, in odd-numbered years
4. Change terms of office to 4 years so that elections are held, on a staggered schedule, every 2 years in odd-numbered years

Ms. Bellinger also advised Council that the City's charter does contain certain election requirements that could possibly create the need for the City to hold a Charter Amendment Election. City Attorney, Cary Bovey, explained that while there were several different opinions on whether a Charter Amendment Election would be required. He advised Council that in his opinion with the passage of SB 100, that state law would supersede the Charter and allow the City to change our terms of office and election schedules.

Councilmember Williams questioned the steps involved in a charter election. Mr. Bovey explained the proposed ballot language would be created, notice of the election would be published, and a normal election would be held.

Councilmembers reached a general consensus to select Option 4 and change the terms of office to four (4) years so that elections are held on a staggered schedule every two (2) years, in odd-numbered years. Ms. Bellinger then explained that this Option will require a Special Election in order to transition to a new election cycle and get all positions on the proper staggering.

Ms. Bellinger explained that due to the requirements of SB 100; the Mayor (At-Large) and Ward 4 positions cannot be reduced; therefore a 1 year holdover will be required. After this holdover, these positions will be up for re-election in 2015 for a 4 year term

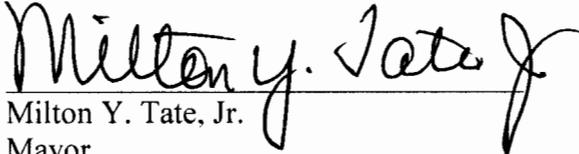
In order to maintain proper staggering; one or two of the remaining positions will need to be elected, at a Special Election in 2013, to a short two (2) year term to get on same election cycle as the Mayor (At-Large) and Ward 4.

After a brief discussion Council decided that Ward 2 would be the position to run in the Special Election in 2013 for a short two (2) year term.

12. Administrative/Elected Officials Report

- City Manager reported on a few items:
 - Navasota City Hall Grand Opening
 - Blinn College – Presidential Forum on September 6, 2011 at 1:00 p.m. and September 8, 2011 at 8:00 a.m.
 - Drought Condition Update
 - BISD Luncheon – September 9, 2011

The meeting was adjourned.


Milton Y. Tate, Jr.
Mayor


Jeana Bellinger, TRMC
City Secretary



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