

Brenham City Council Minutes

A special budget workshop meeting of the Brenham City Council was held on July 20, 2015 beginning at 8:30 a.m. in the Brenham City Hall, Conference Room 2-A, 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 Mary E. Barnes-Tilley
Councilmember Weldon Williams, Jr.

Members absent:

Others present:

City Manager Terry Roberts, Assistant City Manager Rex Phelps, Fire Chief Ricky Boeker, ACM-Chief Financial Officer Carolyn Miller, Director of Community Services Wende Ragonis, City Secretary Jeana Bellinger, Cyndi Longhofer, Stacy Hardy, Pam Ruemke, Interim Police Chief Dant Lange, ACM of Public Utilities Lowell Ogle, Deputy Fire Chief Alan Finke, Kaci Konieczny, Ginger Bishop, Amanda Carker, Public Works Director Dane Rau, Development Services Manager Erik Smith, City Engineer Grant Lischka, and Angela Hahn

Citizens present:

None

Media Present:

None

1. Call Meeting to Order

2. FY 2015-16 Proposed Budget Discussions

City Manager Terry Roberts welcomed Council and advised that staff is projecting FY16 General Fund revenues to be slightly higher than FY15 by about \$400,000 or 2.6% with additional property taxes and sale of surplus property accounting for the majority of the increase. Roberts explained that sales tax revenues are expected to be flat and utility franchise taxes lower with the slowdown of several manufacturing facilities. Roberts advised the primary revenue drivers in the General Fund in the FY16 Proposed Budget include stabilized sales tax, growth in property valuations, decline in utility franchise tax and utility inter-fund transfers.

Roberts advised Council that staff has focused on four general fund budget priorities:

1. Prepare a balanced budget with no tax rate increase for FY2015-16: staff is recommending a \$0.0181 reduction (3.68%) in the tax rate for FY16.
2. Set aside a General Fund contingency to protect City operations due to a possible drop in revenues resulting from a prolonged economic downturn: due to the current economic conditions in our community, staff recommends setting aside \$225,000 in a contingency line item for unexpected drops in sales tax.
3. Provide funding for capital expenditures to preserve the current level of services to the community and citizens: resources for funding vehicle/equipment replacements can come from FY15 Above Budget Net Revenues (ABNR).
4. Maintain the 90 day reserve policy and 5 days of reserve of Renovations and Replacements: the proposed FY16 budget has a projected General Fund reserve amount of \$3,818,831 or 107.77 days.

Roberts also advised Council that staff has focused on the following personnel budget priorities:

1. Perform a careful review of Full Time Equivalent (FTE) and staffing requirements in all areas: the FY16 budget was prepared with several reduction in force action, modifications of full time positions to part time status, and several positions were frozen.
2. Identify changes to fully funded group medical plan to mitigate anticipated double-digit premium increases for the City: due to preliminary estimates from TML indicating a 13% premium increase, staff will propose several changes to our medical plan.
3. Continue retiree group medical plan subsidy: the retiree group subsidy of \$200 a month will continue to be provided to qualifying retirees.
4. Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) for all City employees: due to flat revenues and declining utility revenues, a COLA is not included in the FY16 proposed budget.
5. Maintain Compensation Plan for General Government and Public Safety Employees: the FY16 budget maintains the current compensation plan for eligible General Government and Public Safety employees.
6. Defer adding new personnel to the FY16 proposed budget: several new positions were requested in the FY16 budget, none have been considered for funding.

Roberts further explained that staff has been working on plans to complete the capital building projects (new animal adoption center and renovated/expanded library facility) and the living quarters remodel at the fire station.

Assistant City Manager and Chief Financial Officer Carolyn Miller presented a brief overview of the General Fund budget for FY16. Miller explained in detail the 90-day reserve calculation, capital and personnel additions, capital requests not funded, departmental fund transfers, and franchise payments to the General Fund.

The following departmental budgets were presented to the Council by staff:

- Public Safety
 - Dept 151 – Police
 - Fund 222 – Police Department Grants
 - Fund 225 – Motorcycle/Police Equipment Fund
 - Fund 229 – Criminal Law Enforcement
 - Dept 154 – Animal Control/Shelter
 - Dept 152 – Fire/EOC
 - Fund 221 – Emergency Management Grants
 - Fund 235 – Fire Department Grants
 - Dept 050 – City Communications
- Engineering/Airport
 - Dept 128 – Engineering Services
 - Dept 148 – Airport
 - Fund 203 – Airport Capital Improvements
- Public Works
 - Dept 131 – Maintenance
 - Fund 220 – Central Fleet
 - Dept 141 – Streets
 - Dept 144 – Parks
 - Fund 234 – Parks Capital Improvements
 - Dept 167 – General Government Services
 - Sanitation Fund
 - Dept 042 – Transfer Station
 - Dept 043 – Collection Station
 - Dept 140 – Recycling Center
 - Dept 142 – Residential Collection
- Community Services
 - Dept 125 – Main Street
 - Dept 146 – Library
 - Dept 049 – Community Programs & Marketing
 - Dept 149 – Aquatics

- Development Services
 - Dept 122 – Development Services & Code Enforcement
- Information Technology
 - Dept 172 – Information Technology
- Finance
 - Dept 121 – Administration
 - Dept 123 – Human Resources
 - Dept 133 – Finance/Risk Management
 - Dept 135 – Purchasing/Warehouse
 - Dept 155 – Municipal Court
 - Fund 233 – Court Security/Technology

The meeting was adjourned.

Milton Y. Tate, Jr.
Mayor

Jeana Bellinger, TRMC
City Secretary