

Brenham City Council Minutes

A workshop meeting of the Brenham City Council was held on November 21, 2013 beginning at 11:00 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 Mary E. Barnes-Tilley
Councilmember Weldon Williams, Jr.

Members absent:

Councilmember Keith Herring

Others present:

City Manager Terry Roberts, Assistant City Manager Kyle Dannhaus, City Attorney Cary Bovey, City Secretary Jeana Bellinger, Deputy City Secretary Amanda Klehm, Chief Financial Officer Carolyn Miller, Susan Nienstedt, Fire Chief Ricky Boeker, and Police Chief Rex Phelps

Citizens present:

None

Media Present:

Arthur Hahn, Brenham Banner Press

- 1. Call Meeting to Order**
- 2. Discussion and Overview of the Comprehensive Exchange of Services Interlocal Agreement Between the City of Brenham and Washington County**

City Manager Terry Roberts presented this item. The most recent version of the Interlocal Agreement between the City of Brenham and Washington County for the Comprehensive Exchange of Services was laid around the Dias. Roberts explained this Interlocal Agreement (ILA) has a transitional period, which addresses the problems with the County taking over Communications. Roberts explained during the transition period, the funding for the

Communications department will be split 50/50 between the City of Brenham and Washington County with each party paying approximately \$500,000.00 a year. Roberts stated the City and County will function together and the Task Force comprised of representatives from both entities will oversee operations. Roberts explained the proposed transition period is 18 months, which can be shortened or lengthened based on the recommendation of the Board. Roberts stated Pam Ruemke has stepped down from her position as Communications Director and Stephen Draehn is acting as the Interim Director as of last Monday.

Councilmember Goss questioned if someone has spoken with Sheriff Otto Hanak regarding the ILA. Roberts stated they have spoken with Otto and he is on board with the current agreement. Roberts explained County Attorney Renee Mueller and Hanak take the position that the Sheriff needs to give approval and sign the agreement along with the Mayor and Judge. Police Chief Rex Phelps stated the language in the ILA came from Otto regarding him signing because he runs the jail and, for the contract to be legally binding for him, he must sign off on the agreement. City Attorney Cary Bovey stated he spoke with Renee and the wording Otto approved initially is still in agreement.

Bovey went through the changes to the ILA by section. Bovey stated the first set of changes is in Section 10 regarding the City employees transferring to the County. The section discusses vacation and sick leave accrual on page 6.

Councilmember Goss questioned if this information has been covered with the employees. Stephen Draehn stated he met with them last Thursday and went over all of the information with the employees. Draehn stated there are only 2 employees that have 600 hours of sick time that would be affected by the change. Councilmember Barnes-Tilley questioned when this would take effect with the employee accruals. Roberts stated after the transfer to the County and the employees would have to be in compliance with the numbers of hours for vacation and sick at the end of the following 12 months or they would lose that time. Roberts explained the maximum carryover time with the County for sick time is 480 hours and vacation hours is 42 hours. Councilmember Barnes-Tilley questioned how much time will the employees have accrued. HR Manager Susan Nienstedt stated the employees' time will transfer over based on the number of years they have with the City. Roberts explained that the employees will not be treated as new employees. Roberts stated new employees with the County cannot take any vacation time in the first 12 months or sick leave for the first 4 months of employment; however, the City employees will not have to adhere to these rules.

Bovey stated the next changes appear in Section 12 on page 8 relating to the scope of services provided by the County. Bovey explained this section is good as long as the standards to operate are intact so that the County is bound to provide the current levels of service. Bovey explains this section states the level of service cannot be diminished or reduced. Councilmember Goss questioned if a department makes a change, will they let the Council know. Mayor Tate stated Communications will know if there are changes because they have the book containing all Standard Operating Procedures for all first responder agencies. Councilmember Goss stated if the document reflects information and the document needs to be changed then it will need to go to the Board. Mayor Tate stated if the wording changes in the agreement then it will go to Council and Commissioner's Court for approval; however, in the interim, it will go to the Task

Force for approval. Mayor Tate stated after the transfer takes place, any changes will need to go before the Commissioner's Court. Mayor Tate stated any rules, regulations or diminishment of service, must go for approval. Mayor Tate explained departments can change their Standard Operating Procedures without approval as long as it doesn't diminish the service.

Councilmember Barnes-Tilley expressed concern about another Police Department Chief coming in and changing something that is working for the department. Mayor Tate stated Council can bring to their attention and ask questions before changes take place. Councilmember Barnes-Tilley questioned if it is problematic to take out standards the City has now or are they comfortable with the current language. Fire Chief Ricky Boeker stated his department went through the ISO ratings and added to the Fire Department Standard Operating Procedures, so that their department is covered. Police Chief Rex Phelps stated he is uncomfortable that it stated all services will be upheld to current levels and what each department is doing at this point. Boeker stated the level of service shouldn't drop below current level. Mayor Tate stated the County can upgrade the service, but they can't diminish the level. Councilmember Barnes-Tilley states that she does not want to leave anything up to interpretation. City Secretary Jeana Bellinger stated she met with Ricky to amend his Standard Operating Procedures to include the ISO language to include documents, but it won't be in Section 12. Bellinger states she will work with all departments to include in their Standard Operating Procedures to cover all departments. Roberts stated if there are additions or subtracts after the effective date, then they must go through Section 3 procedures. Roberts stated all Directors control their individual departments. Councilmember Williams stated he agrees with Ricky and the ISO rating number needs to be added to his Standard Operating Procedures so that it can't drop. Bovey stated if they add the actual number, it could drop for other reasons. Boeker stated that Communications has a separate score in ISO ratings. Bovey stated this is covered under the Section 3 language.

Bovey stated there are minor clarifying changes in Section 22 regarding elected officials and changes to Section 34 relating to the County will only pay for calls requested by the Sheriff.

Mayor Tate stated there is a special meeting with the County in Council Chambers on Monday, December 2, 2013 at 11am. Mayor Tate stated the meeting that was set for November 25, 2013 has been cancelled.

The meeting was adjourned.

Milton Y. Tate, Jr.
Mayor

Jeana Bellinger, TRMC
City Secretary

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