

Special Called Meeting – Budget Workshop of July 21, 2020

The members of City Council convened for a Special Called Meeting - Budget Workshop on Tuesday, July 21, 2020, at 6:30 p.m., via Zoom Meeting. A quorum of the City Council was present and included the following:

1. Call Meeting to Order:

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Wortham at 6:30 pm.

2. Roll Call:

The Roll call was taken audibly and is as follows:

Mayor:	Lou Wortham	Present
Position 1:	Jeff Campbell	Present
Position 2:	Shelby Dill	Present
Position 3:	Paul Hershey	Present
Position 4:	Joshua Christie	Present
Position 5: (Mayor Pro-Tem)	James L. Cook, III	Present

Legal Counsel was not present with prior notice.

3. First Order of Business:

A. Announcement by the Mayor of the presence of a quorum that the meeting had been duly called, and the notice of the meeting had been posted in the manner prescribed by law.

4. Pledge of Allegiance

The pledge was led by Mayor Wortham.

5. CITIZEN'S COMMENTS ON AGENDA ITEMS ONLY:

Several citizens addressed the Council with concerns over the projected salary increase on the Fiscal Year Budget 20-21 for the Chief of Police and they did not feel the size or wealth of this community justified an increase of 13.8%.

Other citizens discussed the justifications for this increase noting the years of experience and that the Police Chief also acts in the capacity of the Emergency Management Coordinator (EMC.).

Several citizens were very thankful for the Chief and the Police Department's presence in keeping Bayou Vista and the community safe and secure.

Citizen stated that when the citizens make comments to the City Council, it is the citizen's time to speak and share their concerns to the City Council. The Council members do not have the right to speak against the citizen for their comments and would ask that the Mayor not allow this to occur.

6. SPECIAL REPORTS AND PRESENTATIONS

A. Special Reports by Aldermen.

There were no reports given by the Aldermen at this time.

B. Special Reports by Mayor.

There were no reports given by the Mayor at this time.

7. ACTION ITEMS

A. Discuss and take possible action to schedule the following meetings:

1. **August 6th** – An official Budget hearing to consider and possibly Adopt a budget and propose a tax rate;
2. **August 18th** – A Public Hearing to adopt a tax rate if that tax rate exceeds the VAR (Voter Approval Rate);
3. **August 25th** – Budget Hearing/Public Hearing – Special Called (Regular Meeting – to adopt a budget if not previously adopted; and
4. **Other dates and meetings** – may be necessary to comply with the Budget and tax rate adoption process.

Discussion ensued with the Aldermen taking the following action:

A motion was made by Mayor Pro-Tem James Cook, to schedule all meetings as listed and if necessary, cancel those we do not need.

The motion was seconded by Alderman Jeff Campbell.

Members in favor:

Mayor Pro-Tem James Cook
Alderman Shelby Dill
Alderman Jeff Campbell
Alderman Josh Christie
Alderman Paul Hershey

Motion carried with all in favor.

8. DISCUSSION:

A. Discuss as determined by City Council the Budget amounts for anticipated revenues and anticipated expenditures for the 2020-2021 Budget.

The Alderman began the review of the proposed Budget – Revenue 400.

400 – Ad Valorem

It was explained the projected Ad Valorem from property taxes was an estimate at this particular time due to the fact we are waiting for our tax-rate information to be received from the Galveston County Tax Office and are anticipating receipt by August 4th or earlier.

401 – Franchise Fees

It was explained that this revenue is generated by Center-Point, Reliant, AT&T, ComCast for use of our roads to provide service to their customers.

440-442-443 – Pool Passes

Discussion that the cost of the Pool Passes may need to be increased prior to the opening of the pool for next season.

The Alderman then discussed the line-items Expenditures beginning with the following:

501 – Court Clerk

This position needs to reflect the cost of retirement, taxes, health insurance just like the position of City Secretary. Discussion occurred for a 2.8% COLA (cost of living allowance) for the position of City Secretary and Court Clerk.

508 - Rent

Mayor reported he will be negotiating with MUD #12.

526 – Flower Fund

The amount will remain.

511 – Telephone

Will be evaluated in the future.

601 – City Attorney - 602 City Prosecutor

This position is a dual position – serves as City Attorney and City Prosecutor.

602 – City Maintenance

The hours in this position have increased, as needed. Providing great services to the City and Community. Usually four hours a day – but is always ready to assist.

603 – Building Inspector.

Clarified as hourly position.

610 - Fire Marshal

Clarification given that this position must be certified as a Fire Marshal. Chief Gillane will research and find an individual who can provide this service. The original cost of \$1,000 per year for this service was added back into the projected Budget.

605 – Landscaping Contract

Aldermen felt it may be time to go out for bids. The City may do better as the lawn maintenance industry is a very competitive service. This will be researched and three (3) bids will be submitted.

611- Grant Writer

Discussion occurred that there didn't seem to be as much action on the part of the Grant Writer and the City is not getting the results as originally anticipated.

700 – Chief's Salary

Concern was expressed with comparing our Chief's salary to surrounding entities. Those entities have higher taxes and retail incomes, allowing the salary of the Chief of Police in those entities to be substantially higher than what BV can afford and that a projected 13.5% rate increase was excessive.

Discussion occurred concerning the dual role of the Chief of Police acting as not only the Chief but also as the Emergency Management Coordinator.

725 – Bullet Proof Vests

The Chief stated that the vests expire in five (5) years and that the PD has another year before replacement will be required. This line item has not been expended from the 2019-2019 Budget.

703 – Patrol Officer's Salaries

The Chief stated that 2(two) senior officers are no longer with the BVPD so that is why the line-item was reduced as new officers are at a lower hourly rate.

719 – New Police Car

It was determined that it would be beneficial to maintain this line item at \$10,000.

800 – 807 – Court Expenditures

Aldermen reviewed with all line items to remain as is.

910- Out-Building Repair

Concern was expressed that major repairs needed to horizontal beams as they are showing signs of rot. The projected amount of the reflected expenditure may not be ample.

1000 – Animal Control

Clarification was given that the City contracts with Galveston County Animal Control for this service and that when necessary the City contacts Animal Control to remove the animal.

1006- Bulkhead – Outfalls

The Aldermen determined to maintain that line-item at the current \$2,000.

1012- 1012.2 – Mosquito Control

Clarification was given that the County provides Mosquito Control so these line items for chemicals, salary, and taxes are no longer necessary.

9. COMMENTS

Citizen's Comments

Citizen expressed that if employees' hours are outside of the normal hours of business, those hours should be watched closely. Ethical conduct needs to occur between the City Council members during the meetings and the Mayor acting as the Chair of the meetings, should guide the meeting accordingly.

Citizen expressed using comparisons for what the Chief of Police of BV does is not an efficient way to analyze his salary and continued by stating the Chief is under-valued and under-paid.

Aldermen's Comments

Alderman expressed concern that masks need to be worn in the Police Department. The Ordinances are in place, but not enforced as they should be.

Alderman stated that Google was not used as a source for comparing salaries in preparation of the Budget for fiscal year 2020-2021.

It was requested the Chief follow the Enforcement Policy.

Mayor's Comments

No comments.

10. ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Alderman Paul Hershey to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Alderman Shelby Dill. (Roll Call Vote was taken)

Members in favor: Mayor Pro-Tem James Cook
Alderman Shelby Dill
Alderman Paul Hershey
Alderman Jeff Campbell
Alderman Josh Christie

Motion carried with all in favor.

Duly put and unanimously carried, the City Council adjourned at 8:47 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Paula J. Eshelman

Lou Wortham, Mayor

Paula J. Eshelman, Interim City Secretary