

CITY OF GLADEWATER
CITY COUNCIL REGULAR SESSION
MINUTES
NOVEMBER 21, 2024
6:00 P.M.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Mayor Brandy Flanagan, Mayor Pro-tem Elijah “Sonny” Anderson, Michael Webber, Stoney Stone, Teddy Sorrells, Rocky Hawkins, Kevin Clark

STAFF PRESENT: Charlie Smith, Judy Van Houten, Brian Smith, Michael Simmons, Meghan Foster

GUESTS PRESENT: Diane Clark, Andrew Wright, Alan Kessler, Jake Kessler, Tammy Kessler, Terri Searcy, Milton Anderson, Lisa Crossman, Trecia Turner, Kerime Cardenas, Mike Alston, Tyson Oaigle, Jimmy Allen, Diane Turner, Margaret Larkins, George Taylor, Harold Simmons, Nicole Byrd, Debra Skinner, Carlis Stone, Ruth Johnston, Lisa Quick, Lois Reed, Charlie Griffin, Pam Griffin, Guy Simpy, William Blackmon, Randy Yauch, Charla Nash, Chloe Ashby, Emma Rose, Lily Rose, Sophia Byers

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Flanagan called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

- a) Invocation – Councilmember Sorrells
- b) Pledge – Councilmember Clark

II. MAYOR’S COMMENTS

Mayor Flanagan thanked everyone for attending the meeting. She then called on the council members to present their Community Spotlights for November.

Councilmember Webber said he loves living in Gladewater. Darla’s Angles has been around for many years. They vet the kids in our schools to determine where the need is to help them have a wonderful Christmas.

Councilmember Stone highlighted the young ladies who are participating in the SHINE program at the Nazarene Church. Mayor Flanagan presented certificates of achievement to Chloe Ashby, Emma Rose, Lily Rose, and Sophia Byers.

Councilmember Sorrells thanked Sheila Faggans for organizing the Caring Hearts Cancer 5K again this year.

Mayor Pro-tem Anderson acknowledged the staff at City Hall. He said they go above and beyond daily to help the citizens of Gladewater.

Councilmember Hawkins spoke about the Former Students Association and what a wonderful Veterans Day Program they put on again this year.

Councilmember Clark expressed his gratitude to Lois Reed and her tireless dedication to helping Gladewater to shine. He said that we had our own “Hallmark” moment at the tree lighting downtown earlier this month. Everyone agreed that the new tree is beautiful.

Mayor Flanagan said that we have so much to be thankful for in this “Thanksgiving Month”. The Holiday Open House was truly a “Hallmark” moment. Upcoming Events: 1) Methodist Church “Quilts on the Pews” 11/23 from 10-3; 2) The Fellowship Community Church is hosting a free Thanksgiving meal 11/28 from 11-2; 3) Shop Small Saturday 11/30 in downtown Gladewater; 4) Manna House Christmas boxes will be given away at the Methodist Church 12/11 & 12/12 from 9-11; 5) Christmas Parade 12/14 starting at 4:30.

The airport fence is up and looks great, as well as the striping and new a/c in the airport FBO were done with RAMP Grant funds. She and CM Smith met with TxDOT regarding the Airport Layout Plan and discussed grants available for future projects.

City staff is looking into recording council meetings and the goal is to have them back available starting in January 2025.

The next Mayor’s Town Hall meeting will be January 30, 2025, at 6pm. This one will concentrate on businesses and resources available to and for them. Happy Thanksgiving!

III. CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

City Manager Smith reported: 1) sales tax revenue is on the rise again; 2) the downtown restrooms are getting a much-needed facelift; 3) we are seeing more community involvement; 4) the lights at the pickleball court have been replaced; 5) the lights not working downtown have been reconnected; 6) public works employees are staying on top of pothole repairs; 7) the police department is working on grant funds to replace our bullet proof vests; 8) we have a list of people wanting to come work for the fire department with retention a focus of the department and the city council.

IV. CITIZENS COMMENTS

Debra Skinner – 710 Tennery – stated that the roads are in bad shape with lots of potholes in her neighborhood. There is also a problem with stray animals around her as well.

Lisa Quick – 505 N. Ferry – said she has lots of potholes in her neighborhood.

Lois Reed – Executive Director of the Chamber of Commerce – showed everyone the new Passport to Gladewater and encouraged everyone to participate in Wreaths Across America on Saturday, November 14th. We still need donations to help fund the wreaths.

V. CONSIDERATION of consent agenda:

- a) Minutes – October 17, 2024
- b) Engagement Letter from Mays & Associates for financial audit for FY 2023-2024
- c) Short Form Agreement Between Owner and Engineer for Professional Services – 2024 TPWD Lake Gladewater Public Boating Area Improvements
- d) Resolution R-24-11 Authorizing the Submission of a Texas Community Development Block Grant Program Application to the Texas Department of Agriculture for the Community Development Fund
- e) Ordinance O-24-16 Amending §3.01.340 – Airport Board; Created; Organization of the Gladewater Code of Ordinances
- f) Resolution R-24-13 Approving the Gregg County Hazard Mitigation Plan
- g) Joint Election Agreement between Kilgore College and the City of Gladewater for the May 3, 2025 General, Special, and/or Bond Election

Mayor Pro-tem Anderson made a motion to approve the consent agenda as presented; seconded by Councilmember Clark. Motion carried 7-0.

VI. PUBLIC HEARING regarding a request to rezone property located at AB 179 L J RIGSBY SUR TR 10 SEC 3, more commonly known as 831 N. Main and 833 N. Main, and AB 7 T ALLEN SUR TR 2, more commonly known as 1201 N. Main, from residential to light commercial

Mayor Flanagan opened the public hearing at 6:25 p.m.

Al Harrison explained that the frontage of the properties being discussed is light commercial, but the remainder is residential. Guy Simpy, with the former CEFCO chain of convenience stores introduced himself and explained that they are interested in building a convenience store that will also offer diesel fueling stations. We don't currently have that in Gladewater and with the highway widening project this would be the perfect location.

With no further comments Mayor Flanagan closed the public hearing at 6:28 p.m.

VII. DISCUSS AND CONSIDER a request to rezone property located at AB 179 L J RIGSBY SUR TR 10 SEC 3, more commonly known as 831 N. Main and 833 N. Main, and AB 7 T ALLEN SUR TR 2, more commonly known as 1201 N. Main, from residential to light commercial

Councilmember Hawkins asked what the planned timeline is for construction. Guy Simpy said it will depend on the TxDOT widening project and their timeline.

Councilmember Clark made a motion to approve the zoning change; seconded by Councilmember Webber. Motion carried 7-0.

- VIII. PUBLIC HEARING regarding a request for a Package Store (P) at ABS, A666, ALLEN, THOMPSON, TRACT 76, .244 ACRES & BLDG., more commonly known as 2179 N. Main

Mayor Flanagan opened the public hearing at 6:30 p.m.

Al Harrison explained that our code does not specify zoning for liquor stores, so a specific used permit is required. Kerime Cardenas said she recently purchased the property and would like to use the building that is already there for a liquor store.

With no further comments Mayor Flanagan closed the public hearing at 6:32 p.m.

- IX. DISCUSS AND CONSIDER a request for a Package Store (P) at ABS, A666, ALLEN, THOMPSON, TRACT 76, .244 ACRES & BLDG., more commonly known as 2179 N. Main

Councilmember Hawkins made a motion to approve the request; seconded by Councilmember Clark. Motion carried 6-1 with Flanagan opposed.

- X. PUBLIC HEARING regarding a request for a variance to Gladewater Code of Ordinance §15.11.120(A)(9) Single Family Districts at LOTS 11-16, NCB 55, GLADEWATER, more commonly known as 118 S. Center

Mayor Flanagan opened the public hearing at 6:35 p.m.

Al Harrison explained that the property is zoned light commercial but is utilized as a residence. There was another structure on the property that had been removed. The owners would like to build a small work studio and eventually a mother-in-law house. Because of the zoning it is unclear if a second residence would be allowed. Our light commercial zone doesn't disallow residence but our residential zoning states only one residence per lot. It was suggested that the owners request a variance to clear the way for a second residence on one lot.

With no further comments Mayor Flanagan closed the public hearing at 6:37 p.m.

- XI. DISCUSS AND CONSIDER a request for a variance to Gladewater Code of Ordinance §15.11.120(A)(9) Single Family Districts at LOTS 11-16, NCB 55, GLADEWATER, more commonly known as 118 S. Center

Councilmember Clark pointed out that some work had already been started on the property. Fire Chief Simmons said that one idea that was presented to him was a possible Air B&B. Clark asked if it would have to come back to the council for approval if that happened. Mr. Harrison said that it is in commercial zoning so it would not require council approval.

Councilmember Hawkins made a motion to approve the variance request; seconded by Councilmember Stone. Motion carried 7-0.

- XII. PUBLIC HEARING regarding a variance to Gladewater Code of Ordinance §15.11.120(C) Single Family Districts (sq. ft.) at ABS A8 AUGUSTINE, HENRY W. TRACT 176, 1.57 ACRES & HOUSE, more commonly known as 2709 W. Gay

Mayor Flanagan opened the public hearing at 6:42 p.m.

Al Harrison explained that for the current zone, SF3, the lot size requirement is 12,000 sq. ft. East Texas Homes would like to divide the property into 6 separate lots. This will leave them just under the required sq. ft. They are asking for a lot size variance for the subdivision. He stated that P&Z approved the request 4-1.

Charles Griffin – 2700 W. Gay Avenue – asked how many lots will be accessed from Gay Avenue. Mike Alston with East Texas Homes replied with three.

Trecia Turner – 1212 N. Culver – thanked East Texas Homes for their letter stating they will not put a window on the 2nd story facing her house.

Melissa Fleming – 1209 N. Culver – said she has concerns about drainage and wants to make sure whatever is done is done correctly. She also asked if the street would become a through-street. Al Harrison stated that it would not be a through-street.

With no further comments Mayor Flanagan closed the public hearing at 6:47 p.m.

- XIII. DISCUSS AND CONSIDER a variance to Gladewater Code of Ordinance §15.11.120(C) Single Family Districts (sq. ft.) and a replat of Meadow Vista Subdivision to include proposed portion of Lincoln Street R.O.W. conveyed to East Texas Homes at ABS A8 AUGUSTINE, HENRY W. TRACT 176, 1.57 ACRES & HOUSE, more commonly known as 2709 W. Gay

Mayor Flanagan thanked East Texas Homes for working with the city and citizens to address questions and concerns.

Councilmember Clark asked if we have the infrastructure to handle six new homes in that area. PW Director Brian Smith said that we are working on that now. City Manager Smith said we are working on some fixes that involve cleaning out storm drains. Clark then asked for a timeframe to begin construction. Mr. Alston with East Texas Homes said they hope to begin mid-January. Al Harrison said that the road crews should be able to begin cleaning the storm drains the first of January.

Councilmember Sorrells thanked East Texas Homes again for working with the city and citizens on questions and concerns and stated that he wants the city to follow-through on fixing the drainage issues. City Manager Smith said he met with the surveyor and they have a good plan in place to address the drainage issues.

Councilmember Webber asked what it would take to fix the curbs on that street, and other areas around town. City Manager Smith said discussions can be had about curb repair and offered to let Webber select where to start.

Councilmember Clark made a motion to approve contingent upon clean-out of storm drains prior to construction; seconded by Councilmember Webber. Motion carried 7-0.

- XIV. DISCUSS AND CONSIDER Resolution R-24-12 Directing Publication of Notice of Intention to Issue Combination Tax and Surplus Revenue Certificates of Obligation to the Texas Water Development Board to Provide Funds for Sewer System Improvement Projects; and resolving other matters relating to the subject

City Manager Smith stated that this is for a 4.1 million grant with 1 million forgiveness, for sewer system improvements.

Councilmember Sorrells made a motion to approve; seconded by Mayor Pro-tem Anderson. Motion carried 7-0.

- XV. DISCUSS AND CONSIDER Ordinance O-24-15 amending §15.03.170 Purpose; §15.03.180 Definitions; §15.03.190 Vacant Building Registration; §15.03.200 Fees; §15.03.210 Exemptions; §15.03.220 Appeal Process; §15.03.230 Standard of Care for Vacant Buildings; and §15.03.240 Inspections, of the Code of Ordinances of the City of Gladewater, Texas

Mayor Flanagan thanked everyone involved in the review process in preparing the amended vacant building ordinance. Councilmember Sorrells echoed the mayor and said it was a lot of work and is a good ordinance. Mayor Flanagan further explained that this will be handled in conjunction with our municipal court for the fines & fees portion of the ordinance. The policies and procedures will be handled through city staff as normal.

Fire Chief Michael Simmons said he was asked to participate on the review committee and knows firsthand that they looked at all aspects of the ordinance.

Councilmember Webber made a motion to approve the ordinance; seconded by Councilmember Sorrells. Motion carried 7-0.

XVI. DISCUSS AND CONSIDER appointment to fill one vacancy on the Gladewater Municipal Airport Advisory Board

City Secretary Van Houten explained that this was brought back to the council per their instructions from the October meeting. Previously in tonight's meeting council addressed the question of whether or not a board member could be the owner of a business located at the airport when they amended §3.01.340 – Airport Board; Created; Organization of the Gladewater Code of Ordinances. She then reminded the council that there is one application, that being for Cori Todd, to fill the vacancy on the board. Mrs. Todd currently serves as an ex-officio member as the board secretary. She is still interested in being appointed if so selected.

Councilmember Stone made a motion to appoint Cori Todd to fill the vacancy on the airport board; seconded by Mayor Pro-tem Anderson. Motion carried 7-0.

XVII. DISCUSS AND CONSIDER Resolution R-24-14 Gregg Appraisal District Board of Directors for 2025-2026 Official Ballot 2024

City Secretary Van Houten reminded the council that they nominated Sherry Watson per Mayor Flanagan's recommendation.

Councilmember Sorrells made a motion to give all 38 votes to Sherry Watson; seconded by Councilmember Webber. Motion carried 7-0.

XVIII. EXECUTIVE SESSION

- 1) §551.076 – implementation of security personnel or devices
- 2) §551.071 – receive attorney briefing on Wallace v. City of Gladewater v. CenterPoint Energy Resources, Inc.; Docket number 562-21; in the 115th District Court, Upshur County
- 3) §551.087 – deliberation regarding economic development negotiation – Project 1024A
- 4) §551.072 deliberation regarding purchase, exchange, lease or value of real property – ballpark
- 5) §551.074 – personnel matters regarding the appointment, employment, evaluation, reassignment, duties, discipline, or dismissal of a public officer or employee – Water Plant Supervisor

Mayor Flanagan recessed the meeting into executive session at 7:10 p.m.

XIX. RECONVENE INTO OPEN SESSION and take any action necessary retarding

- 1) §551.076 – implementation of security personnel or devices
- 2) §551.071 – receive attorney briefing on Wallace v. City of Gladewater v. CenterPoint Energy Resources, Inc.; Docket number 562-21; in the 115th District Court, Upshur County
- 3) §551.087 – deliberation regarding economic development negotiation – Project 1024A
- 4) §551.072 deliberation regarding purchase, exchange, lease or value of real property – ballpark

Mayor Flanagan reconvened the meeting into open session at 7:54 p.m.

Item 1) No action was taken.

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Item 2) Councilmember Webber made a motion to allow our city attorney to approve the settlement; seconded by Mayor Pro-tem Anderson. Motion carried 5-2 with Sorrells and Hawkins opposed.

Item 3) No action was taken.

Item 4) No action was taken.

XX. ADJOURN

Councilmember Sorrells made a motion to adjourn at 7:57 p.m.; seconded by Councilmember Clark. Meeting adjourned by consensus.

BRANDY J. FLANAGAN
MAYOR

ATTEST:

JUDY VAN HOUTEN, TRMC
CITY SECRETARY