

CITY OF GLADEWATER
CITY COUNCIL REGULAR SESSION
MINUTES
AUGUST 15, 2024
6:00 P.M.

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

MEMBERS ABSENT: Kevin Clark

STAFF PRESENT: Charlie Smith, Judy Van Houten, Brian Smith, Kyle Ready, Meghan Davis, Michael Simmons

GUESTS PRESENT: Vince Phillips, Roy Mullens, Sinda Mullins, Diane Turner, Leah Brooks, Margaret Larkins, Harold Wells, Mark Carpenter, Wesley Hay, Lois Reed, Mary Anne Cumbie, William Blackmon, Laura Livingston, Kiera Clay

I. CALL TO ORDER

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

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

II. MAYOR’S COMMENTS

Community Spotlight:

Councilmember Hawkins acknowledges Former Mayor Harold Wells for his many years of volunteerism in the community.

Mayor Pro-tem Anderson thanked the public works department for their dedication and hard work and said they are doing a great job.

Councilmember Sorrells thanked Vince Phillips for his new “one pothole at a time” t-shirt. He said that they go back a way and believes that our citizens need to be heard.

Councilmember Stone said people say they are too busy to serve our city, but we can all make time to get involved and volunteer.

Councilmember Webber recognized a young man we lost in our community a few years ago named Brock Gumm. There will be a baseball tournament held in his honor on August 24th and 25th at the Gladewater Ballpark. All proceeds go to “Brocks Blessing” to help other children who are fighting cancer.

Mayor Flanagan listed the upcoming events: 1) Elvis performance at Jackson’s Theater – 16th & 17th at 7:30 p.m.; 2) Feed the Hungry – August 17th from 11am-1pm; 3) IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT – The East Texas Food Bank Distribution at the rodeo grounds has been cancelled due to the roadwork on Hendricks Street; 4) Budget Workshop #2 August 20th at 6pm at city hall; 5) Happy Labor Day and city offices will be closed September 2nd; 6) Special City Council meeting September 3rd at 6pm at city hall; 7) Wades Wheels car benefit show on September 14th in downtown Gladewater.

III. CITY MANAGER’S REPORT

City Manager Smith gave the following updates: 1) the Sabine River Authority is working on the paddle trail and Gladewater will be a drop-off point. They are asking each city that is involved to contribute \$1,000 towards applying for grant funds. 2) our public works department is working on street clean-up now. 3) there is a 1” water line on Glade Street. The line narrows down to ¾” and supplies several businesses. We will replace that line with a 6” line to help with supply. 4) Hendricks Street final work on overlay will begin on the August 19th.

Councilmember Hawkins asked Mr. Smith for an update on the pickleball courts. He said he stopped and visited the contractor and his wife who are doing the work. They are concerned about the lack of adequate lighting at the park. Mr. Hawkins asked who with the city will sign off on the project to make sure it is completed to satisfaction. He asked if Officer Tyler Sorrells has that kind of authority. Mr. Hawkins said that he has not been able to get any information from the city manager regarding the pickleball project. CM Smith said that he had met with Mr. Hawkins for over an hour to discuss this issue. Mr. Smith then said that he and Public Works Director Brian Smith will be the ones to confirm project completion of resurfacing for sign-off.

Mr. Hawkins then pressed for who with the city authorized payment on the project. He said he is getting questions from others who want projects done and wondering who they need to talk to in order to make it happen. Councilmember Sorrells asked who specifically Mr. Hawkins has been approached by, but Mr. Hawkins refused to give names but indicated that the Lake Board had asked some questions.

Mayor Flanagan stated that Mr. Hawkins was 100% informed beforehand, as was the rest of the council, about moving forward with the city paying the remaining balance to complete the project. She then looked to CM Smith and told him that he has the support of the rest of the council if he would like to address any of the mistruths stated by Mr. Hawkins. CM Smith explained again to Mr. Hawkins that if there was money in the budget then it didn't have to go before the council for approval. He then said if Mr. Hawkins has further questions, they can discuss it in his office, but he would not do it here. Councilmember Sorrells said that Mayor Flanagan had approached him about the city providing the remainder of the funds for the project to go ahead and get it done. He said that as long as CM Smith didn't have a problem with it then he didn't have a problem with it.

Mayor Flanagan gaveled the meeting back to order a second time. Councilmember Sorrells said that Mr. Hawkins was made aware of that fact, along with the rest of the council, and again asked Mr. Hawkins for specific names of who had approached him about other projects. Mr. Hawkins still would not give specific names. Mayor Flanagan then apologized to CM Smith for Mr. Hawkins' verbal attack.

IV. CITIZENS COMMENTS

Lois Reed, Chamber Executive Director, shared the exciting news that Gladewater has been selected to participate in a Smithsonian Institute mobile display. She will deliver items loaned from various businesses and citizens on Tuesday.

Mayor Flanagan thanked Ms. Reed for being a constant voice of encouragement for Gladewater and everything she does.

V. CONSIDERATION of consent agenda

- a) Minutes – July 18, 2024 and August 8, 2024
- b) Blanket Permit request for a benefit car show on Saturday, September 14, 2024 in downtown Gladewater

Councilmember Webber made a motion to approve the consent agenda; seconded by Councilmember Stone. Motion carried 6-0.

VI. PUBLIC HEARING regarding the proposed budget for fiscal year 2024-2025

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

Mark Carpenter said he looked at the budget before the meeting. He asked City Treasurer Davis what the total budget is for 2024-2025. Councilmember Webber said by his calculation it is 9.7 million.

Laura Livingston asked where she could find a copy of the proposed budget. Ms. Davis told her that it is on our website and there is a copy in the front office at city hall.

Mary Anne Cumbie said she has looked but could not find the proposed tax rate publication. Ms. Davis said it is on our website and was published in the Mirror on August 1st and August 8th. Ms. Davis said the proposed tax rate is 0.602087 and then gave the past 3 years tax rate and said this year is lower.

With no further comments Mayor Flanagan closed the public hearing at 6:31 p.m.

VII. PUBLIC HEARING regarding the proposed tax rate for fiscal year 2024-2025

Mayor Flanagan opened the public hearing at 6:31 p.m.

Councilmember Sorrells thanked Ms. Davis for all the work she has put into preparing the budget again this year. He said she has worked hard to streamline the process over the past two years and this one is the easiest so far.

With no further comments Mayor Flanagan closed the public hearing at 6:33 p.m.

VIII. DISCUSS AND CONSIDER Resolution R-24-08 Selecting a Grant Writer/Administrator in Conjunction with the Submittal of an Application for Funding for the 2025-2026 Texas Community Development Fund of the Texas Community Development Block Grant Program of the Texas Department of Agriculture (TDA)

City Manager Smith said that we are applying for the grant with funds earmarked for street repairs on a portion of Anderson Lane and improvements at the water plant. Both projects would benefit the entire city. The selection committee consisted of Councilmember Hawkins, City Clerk Van Houten, Public Works Director Smith, and Mayor Flanagan. They evaluated and graded the four proposals received from Traylor & Associates, Public Management, Langford Community Management Services, and GrantWorks. Those scores were combined, and Traylor & Associates is the recommended firm.

Councilmember Hawkins said that Traylor & Associates does have the lowest bid and we have worked with them in the past. He said he called several of the references and got good reports on Public Management as well. Also, we do not pay for the service unless we are awarded the grant.

Councilmember Webber made a motion to select Traylor & Associates as our grant writer/administrator for the 2025-2026 CDBG grant; seconded by Mayor Pro-tem Anderson. Motion carried 6-0.

IX. DISCUSS AND CONSIDER Beautification Board recommendation regarding board appointments to fill vacancies

City Clerk Van Houten stated that the Beautification Board has three vacancies currently and we have received three applications. The board has recommended that all three be appointed.

Councilmember Sorrells made a motion to appoint all three per the Beautification Board's recommendation; seconded by Councilmember Stone. Motion carried.

{The names of those appointed were not stated in the meeting but are as follows: Steven Young, Terri Searcy, and Taylor Attaway}.

X. COMMITTEE UPDATE regarding current and proposed changes to the vacant building ordinance

Mayor Flanagan said the committee narrowed the focus down to five areas. Those being: 1) What defines a vacant commercial building? 2) Once deemed vacant, what is the process to register it with the City [of Gladewater]? 3) What will be required during the registration and duration of vacancy? (maintenance, insurance, abide by city ordinances, contact person, proof of actively trying to lease/sale property) 4) What fees/fines will be established? and 5) Enforcement of Code Enforcement.

Councilmember Sorrells asked if the plan is for the committee to bring their recommendations before the council for discussion and approval. Mayor Flanagan said that will happen, but first it will be reviewed by our attorney.

Councilmember Hawkins said that he agrees that enforcement will be the key.

Councilmember Stone asked if this is for commercial properties only, or residential as well. Mayor Flanagan said that it will be commercial property only, and will be applied to the whole city, not just the downtown area.

XI. ADJOURN

Mayor Pro-tem Anderson made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:49 p.m.; seconded by Councilmember Sorrells. Adjourned by consensus.

BRANDY J. FLANAGAN
MAYOR

ATTEST:

JUDY VAN HOUTEN, TRMC
CITY CLERK