

**Minutes
Special Meeting
July 28, 2009**

On this 28th day of July 2009, at 7:00 p.m., the City Council of the City of Devine convened in a Special Meeting, the same being opened to the public at their regular meeting place, thereof at City Hall, 303 S. Teel Drive, Devine, Texas. Notice of said meeting having been prescribed in Chapter 551, Government Code and Vernon's Texas Codes, Annotated, and the following members thereof, being present:

Mayor Jerry Beck
Alderman John Ramirez
Alderman Frank Cortez, III
Alderman David Espinosa
Alderman Hal Lance
Alderwoman Marina Antu

Thus, constituting a quorum.

Personnel Present: Dora V. Rodriguez, Interim City Administrator/City Secretary; Ofilia Pedroza, Assistant City Secretary; Nancy Pepper, City Treasurer; Chief of Police Rob Flores; Billy Grote, Director of Public Works; Ismael Carrillo, Superintendent of Public Works; and Barbara Moore, Library Director.

Others present: Sandy Herrera - Devine News; and James LaCombe - Medina Valley Times; Reggie H. Winters, City of Kennedy; James Caldwell, Doll-Fin Dynamics; Fran Taylor and Tammy E. Alanis, Devine Chamber of Commerce.

Mayor Jerry Beck, presiding, declared the meeting opened.

The first order of business was the Executive Session: Pursuant to Provision of the Open Meeting Law §551.071 through §551.076, §551.086, §551.087 Texas Government Code, (Consultation with Attorney, Deliberation Regarding Real Property, Deliberation Regarding Prospective Gift or Donation, Deliberation regarding Economic Development Negotiations and Personnel Matters).

- a. §551.074 – Personnel Matters – City Administrator Position

At 7:10 p.m., Mayor Beck announced to the public that the Council would go into a Closed Session. At 8:18 p.m., Closed Session was opened to the public.

No action was taken.

The third order of business was to Reconvene into Regular Session and Consider Action, if any, on items discussed in Executive Session.

No action was taken.

Special Meeting Minutes
July 28, 2009
Page 2

The second order of business was the Budget Workshop.

Library

Barbara Moore, Library Director, passed out handouts to Council that showed how a monetary value is calculated on certain uses of the library, such as the value of using the computer for one hour or checking out a book, etc. She gave several examples of Library patrons (individuals and families) using Library services which valued at hundreds of dollars. Some services differed in value based on different factors, but her study showed that overall, for the month of June only; her patrons used services valued at \$56,275.00. This was based on \$8.00/hour. She is hoping to incorporate this information in obtaining grants for the library. Library Director Barbara Moore explained how this calculation process is used in various states.

Discussion was held on fines and overdue fees. Council asked Library Director Barbara Moore that if she had to tighten her budget, where she would do it. She told Council that it would have to be in purchasing books because she can't cut her staff. According to City Accountant Nancy Pepper, her salary is higher due to added hours.

Tammy Alanis, Chamber Secretary, commented that Barbara does a very good job with the Library and stated that the Library is vital and an asset to the community. Interim City Administrator Dora V. Rodriguez stated that City Council was not picking on Barbara; it's just that they need to make sure everything is accountable for her budget. She told Council that all her department heads have already cut their budgets a lot. She then asked for direction from Council on the Library.

Alderman Cortez told Council that he had no problem with the Library staying the way it is right now, and he couldn't see cutting anything from the Library. Council agreed.

Community Center

City Accountant Nancy Pepper reported that there wasn't much to adjust on the expenses for the Community Center. She mentioned that the line item for Event Custodian was cut by \$500, and the Building Maintenance was cut by \$1,600. The rental of the Community Center has been slow this year; it varies. The other cuts were on small items.

The telephone expense is for the Chamber of Commerce; they added internet services last year.

Council held discussion with the Chamber of Commerce on the rental fees and deposit fees for the Community Center. Ms. Fran Taylor inquired how often lights and filters are changed out at the Community Center. Director of Public Works Billy Grote stated filters are changed out every three months, but lights require a work order to be changed out. Ms. Taylor was told that if they notice a light is out, they need to contact the office so that a work order is generated.

Special Meeting Minutes
July 28, 2009
Page 3

Police Department

City Accountant Nancy Pepper informed Council that whenever they receive the money from the Birch Foundation, the Equipment line will increase. Right now, the Equipment line was decreased by \$15,000. She said there were a few changes with the Gas & Oil and Electricity but other than that, nothing else has changed. Discussion was held that back in April, PD's budget was amended due to the Birch Foundation and due to the Comptroller check received for training. City Accountant Nancy Pepper explained that Chief Flores needs to spend the Birch money every year. She said if we get it, we can amend the budget and add it back on there. She explained it's a wash because the Revenue gets added or dropped. Discussion was held on telephones and cell phones, plus we still have two pagers; the telephone line item was increased to \$10,000.

Interim City Administrator inquired if we need the \$1,000 in the Chaplain line item. Chief Flores said he will check into that. He said if the Police Chaplain is able to split it with DPS, he'll cut that in half.

Uniforms and Laundry was left the same at \$4,200. Discussion was held on Special Supplies, which were left the same at \$5,000.

Council was reminded that right now we're only looking at projected expenses; we're not looking at any salaries yet.

Council commended Chief Flores for doing well. He was asked about vehicles. He said theirs is good but they have an issue with Animal Control's truck. In regards to a vehicle, Interim City Administrator reminded that they need to stick to the program; last year (this fiscal year) the Police and Public Works Departments both got new vehicles through the program.

School Resource Officer (SRO)

City Accountant Nancy Pepper told Council that this is strictly payroll; the school pays half of it. The total budget for the SRO is \$46,735.

Health & Sanitation (Animal Control)

City Accountant Nancy Pepper pointed out to Council that Austin Bayne, Animal Control Officer, does not have any control over the Garbage and Waste Management line item; she said this is exactly our ACI bill, which will be right about \$500,000.

Under the Euthanasia line item, Chief Flores talked about the euthanasia expenses that had been going to Hondo, but he said that now we have a euthanasia chamber here at our animal shelter, so we should be seeing a lot of savings on that. He said it had been \$1200 per year (going to Hondo) in addition to manpower and fuel costs. Due to the savings, \$950 will be budgeted for this item. City Accountant Nancy Pepper and Chief Flores talked of renaming this line item to Euthanasia-

Special Meeting Minutes
July 28, 2009
Page 4

Maintenance & Supplies. Director of Public Works Billy Grote told Chief Flores he had looked into the cost of euthanasia supplies and it would be \$85/bottle plus \$6/month rental fee. Chief Flores said it will be hard to tell at the beginning for how long this supply will last, but it will be strictly for Devine.

The Animal Control vehicle, per Chief Flores, is on its last leg. It is being repaired weekly and it needs to be replaced. He said the blue truck which has 67,000 miles on it can be used; it can be replaced with another car; or we can buy another animal control truck, but he told Council that we have to go with a different cage because the cages we have are way too heavy. He said it's putting a lot of wear and tear on the tires. Chief Flores told Council that a one ton truck or a dually would be okay, but a ½ ton truck is not cutting it. Discussion was held on the cost of new cages and on the possibility of building one in-house. Chief Flores told Council that for an aluminum cage like the sheriff's office has, a new one would cost around \$8,000, which is a long wheeled base cage; but a short wheel base would cost around \$6,000. He also added that with not having to travel as much (not going to Hondo anymore), he could put two cages in back of the truck and just travel back and forth from the facility and around town only; the only time they would need to travel is when they have to go to San Antonio for rabies testing. Chief Flores clarified that when we get a new vehicle, we'll be done with these cages; they will be removed. He stated that the two that we have are designed for remote usage only; they are K-9 cages, and we won't need them once our second shelter is operational. However, we still need a vehicle for Animal Control. Direction given on the vehicle was that we either buy one or replace the one we currently have with the Blue Truck or buy a used one. If our current truck breaks down, no more money will be put into it unless it is for something minor. Chief Flores will do some research on prices and will bring it back before Council.

Interim City Administrator Dora V. Rodriguez informed Council that the next step will be compiling everything together with the Revenues and see where we stand on the budget. City Accountant Nancy Pepper told Council that the Revenue is down quite a bit in the General Fund since the sales taxes and the franchise taxes are down.

Interim City Administrator Dora V. Rodriguez told Council that the next meeting is scheduled for August 4th. She reminded Council that Mayor Beck will be out of town for that meeting, and City Accountant Nancy Pepper also will not be here. It was decided that we would not have a budget workshop that evening; only the two interviews for city administrator will be on the agenda, plus James Garcia will be here too to answer questions on the Medina County Appraisal Budget.

Fran Taylor, Chamber President asked Council if they had any idea about the Fall Festival.

Mayor Beck stated that the revenue that the City gives to the Chamber every year comes out of the Hotel/Motel tax, and he said that we don't know what that is yet. City Accountant Nancy Pepper stated that we know what we're estimating but that is down also; just like every else.

Mayor Beck inquired what the Chamber has done as far as fundraisers. Ms. Taylor said every time they try to put something together, it rains. She told Council it looks like they won't be getting the sponsorship they've gotten in the past largely because of the economy. Ms. Taylor told Council that

Special Meeting Minutes
July 28, 2009
Page 5

to keep entertainment going all day long takes money. She said it looks like they will need \$5,000 to \$6000. She said that in order to keep the Chamber open, they have to get some help. She talked about never being in this financial position. Discussion was held on having to cut hours for Tammy; she's only there approximately two hours daily now.

Mayor Beck stated that in his opinion, it is the City's responsibility to support the Chamber, but as to what extent will depend on the revenue available which we do not know at this time.

Discussion was held on looking into grant writing. Mayor Beck offered to provide Ms. Taylor with a business card, and Alderman Lance offered to provide her the name of a grant writer.

Tammy told Council that she plans on holding a Fall Festival/Entertainment get-together to discuss the entertainment but expressed concern over the possibility that there may not be a Fall Festival this year. She is unsure of what to do with some checks that she has already received.

Mayor Beck stated that we need to continue with the plans on having the festival; if we don't, we'll refund the money at that time.

City Accountant Nancy Pepper pointed out that if the Council gives any money to the Chamber for the Fall Festival, that money cannot be used for anything else.

There being no further action to come before the governing body, Alderman Cortez motioned to adjourn the meeting.

Mayor

City Secretary