

Council Minutes September 3, 2019

STATE OF TEXAS §

COUNTY OF TARRANT §

CITY OF BEDFORD §

The City Council of the City of Bedford, Texas, met in Special Session at 6:30 p.m. in the Council Chambers of City Hall, 2000 Forest Ridge Drive, on the 3rd day of September, 2019 with the following members present:

Jim Griffin	Mayor
Rusty Sartor	Council Members
Dan Cogan	
Amy Sabol	
Michael Boyter	
Ruth Culver	
Roger Fisher	

constituting a quorum.

Staff present included:

Brian Bosshardt	City Manager
Cliff Blackwell	Assistant City Manager
Michael Wells	City Secretary
Stephanie Ayers	Human Resources Director
Sean Fay	Fire Chief
Natalie Foster	Public Information Officer
Jeff Gibson	Police Chief
Meg Jakubik	Strategic Services Manager
Maria Joyner	Finance Director
Kenny Overstreet	Public Works Director
Bill Syblon	Development Director

CALL TO ORDER/GENERAL COMMENTS

Mayor Griffin called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

COUNCIL CHAMBER SPECIAL SESSION

NEW BUSINESS

1. Public hearing to consider the proposed 2019 tax rate.

Meg Jakubik Strategic Services Manager stated that the current tax rate is \$0.561862 per \$100 evaluation. The rollback rate, which the revenue is calculated on in the budget, is \$0.543844 per \$100 evaluation and that the Council set a maximum tax rate to be considered at \$0.569 per \$100 evaluation.

Mayor Griffin called the public hearing to order at 6:32 p.m.

Dave Gebhart, 625 Merrill Drive, Bedford - Mr. Gebhart stated the Tarrant Appraisal District (TAD) impacts the budget and tax rates and there is a need for change in its current operations.

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He requested the Council adopt a resolution supporting a change to the procedure for voting for candidates to serve the board of directors of TAD. He stated during the election process, votes are withheld by certain entities until information for votes already cast are assessed. Then those entities decide how many votes are needed to get their candidate elected. He discussed the steps the Council can take to request the change.

Gary Smith, 3229 Ashland, Bedford – Mr. Smith stated as he understands it, over the last six years, the tax rate in Bedford has increased 70 percent and that it will be increased by a further nine percent this year. He discussed what he gets for his money, the quality of the City over the past 30 years, the condition of Harwood Road and the medians, what the City of Bedford spends the money on, and limits imposed by the Legislature.

City Manager Brian Bosshardt stated the tax rate in 2014 was \$0.49 per \$100 valuation, and in 2019 the Council is considering a tax rate of \$0.569000. He stated the tax rate, not taking into consideration valuations, increased by 13 percent.

There was discussion on the budget funding personnel, the public safety step plan, Social Security not increasing, the senior tax freeze, increased costs, and that the City is perpetually playing catch up.

Sal Caruso, 148 Ravenswood, Bedford – Mr. Caruso stated he has seen a good direction in the last few budgets. He is a supporter of the Fire and Police Departments and is in favor of the budget increase to fund these Departments.

Charles Baetz, 2609 Willowbend, Bedford – Mr. Baetz stated he supports the budget and what is in the best interest of the City. He recognizes the work that goes into putting a budget together.

Tom Burnett, 2253 Bedford Circle, Bedford – Mr. Burnett stated the actual increase is a .00003 percent increase over the current rate and when compared with the effective rate, it is only a 7.9 percent increase. He stated there may be confusion between the tax rate versus the valuation rate and the overall tax dollars.

David Watson, 2701 Brown Trail, Bedford – Mr. Watson stated the effective rate is the most important to the tax payer and what the change is from year-to-year. He discussed maintaining the effective tax rate, increased sales tax revenue and new sales tax sources.

Charles Baetz, 2609 Willowbend, Bedford – Mr. Baetz stated he served as the chief appraiser of the Atascosa Appraisal District. He discussed audits, appraisal numbers, home valuations, and the legislature. He stated staff did an outstanding job on the budget.

Tom Burnett, 2253 Bedford Circle, Bedford – Mr. Burnett stated if the City stayed at the effective rate, services and personnel will have to be cut, the money generated will not meet the budget and the Council has been conservative for many years. He stated the City operates a Maintenance and Operation budget, not off the Consumer Price Index. He discussed the increase in construction prices and the work the Council put in to the budget.

Mayor Griffin closed the public hearing at 7:12 p.m.

Mayor Griffin stated that the Council will take action on the budget and the tax rate at the September 10 Council meeting.

Mayor Griffin stated that he has been honored and blessed to serve the City, the Hurst-Eules-

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Bedford (HEB) community and Tarrant County over the past 16 years. He discussed his service on the Bedford City Council and as Mayor, as Chair of the Tarrant County Mayor's Council, Chair of the HEB Independent School District Education Foundation, Chair of the Northeast Leadership Forum, Chair of the HEB Chamber of Commerce, Chair-elect of the Tarrant Regional Transportation Coalition, Chair of the Bedford Library Foundation, Chair of the Tarrant County Mental Health Initiative. Mayor Griffin resigned as Mayor to run for State Representative in House District 92, and discussed leadership, accomplishments made by the City, and what he wants to accomplish if elected State Representative.

Mayor Griffin adjourned the meeting at 7:15 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Griffin adjourned the meeting at 9:01 pm

Jim Griffin, Mayor

ATTEST:

Michael Wells, City Secretary