

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF LUFKIN, TEXAS HELD ON THE 5TH DAY OF DECEMBER, 2023.

On the 5th day of December, 2023, the City Council of the City of Lufkin, Texas convened in a Regular Meeting in the Council Chambers of City Hall with the following members, thereof to wit:

Mark Hicks	Mayor
Robert Shankle	Mayor Pro Tem
Guessippina Bonner	Councilmember, Ward No. 1
Wes Suiter	Councilmember, Ward No. 4
Rocky Thigpen	Councilmember, Ward No. 5
Kevin Gee	City Manager
Kristi Skillern	City Attorney
Gerald Williamson	Assistant City Manager
Brian W. Bray	Assistant City Manager
Kara Andrepont	City Secretary
Adriana Thomasee	Human Resources
David Thomas	Police Chief
Buddy Cross	Assistant Police Chief
Jesse Moody	Fire Chief
Jessica Pebsworth	Communications Director
Scott Rayburn	City Planner
Calvin Toups	Building Official
Buddy Timme	Parks and Recreation Director
Brant Lee	Convention Services Director
Albert Duffield	Utilities Director
John Smith	Fleet Maintenance Director
Scott Feaster	Information Technology Director
Morgan Williams	Animal Services Manager

being present; and

Adam Lowther	Councilmember, Ward No. 6
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being absent when the following business was transacted.

INVOCATION – The meeting was opened with prayer by Assistant City Manager Gerald Williamson.

PUBLIC COMMENT – Mayor Mark Hicks opened the meeting for public comment on any posted agenda item at 5:01 p.m. Patricia McKenzie spoke regarding item number six (6) on the agenda regarding the presentation and discussion of proposed amendments to the City of Lufkin Charter. Ms. McKenzie expressed concern that some citizens were unable to attend a 5:00 p.m. meeting due to other responsibilities and that a Charter Commission was referenced but had not been introduced. Mr. Oscar Kennedy also spoke regarding item number six (6) and asked why it had taken so long to address the changes needed to the Charter. Mr. Kennedy also asked if a time table could be established to periodically review the Charter. There being no one else who wished to speak; Mayor Hicks closed the public comment period.

CONSENT AGENDA

- 1. MINUTES OF THE REGULAR CITY COUNCIL MEETING OF NOVEMBER 21ST, 2023 - APPROVED.**
- 2. SECOND READING OF AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING AN AMENDMENT TO THE 2023-2024 OPERATING BUDGET (BUDGET AMENDMENT NO. 4) APPROPRIATING FUNDING FOR THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE, OFFICE OF JUSTICE PROGRAMS, FISCAL YEAR BULLETPROFF VEST PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM - APPROVED.**
- 3. SECOND READING OF AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING AN AMENDMENT TO THE 2023-2024 OPERATING BUDGET (BUDGET AMENDMENT NO. 5) APPROPRIATING FUNDING IN THE GENERAL FUND, CONVENTION SERVICES FUND, SPECIAL RECREATION FUND, ELLEN TROUT ZOO BUILDING FUND, TOURISM AND**

MARKETING FUND, WATER AND WASTEWATER FUND, AND THE EQUIPMENT ACQUISITION AND REPLACEMENT FUND– APPROVED.

4. **APPROVAL OF THE PURCHASE OF TWO (2) RETURN ACTIVATED SLUDGE (RAS) PUMPS FOR THE WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANT – APPROVED.**
5. **APPROVAL OF THE PURCHASE OF A REGENERATIVE AIR STREET SWEEPER FOR THE STREET DEPARTMENT- APPROVED.**

Councilmember Robert Shankle moved to approve all items on the Consent Agenda as presented. Councilmember Wes Suiter seconded the motion and a unanimous vote to approve was recorded.

BUSINESS AGENDA

6. **PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE CITY OF LUFKIN CHARTER.**

City Manager Kevin Gee stated the City of Lufkin Charter was last amended in 1995. City Manager Gee furthered Staff had conducted a review of the Charter and determined that a number of amendments needed to be placed on the ballot for voter approval in order to bring the City Charter in line with State law and current City protocol and practices. City Manager Gee noted this item had been brought for discussion during the 2023/2024 Annual Budget Retreat. City Manager Gee stated the amendments would not change any significant provisions of the Charter, they would simply update the City Charter and eliminate and/or amend provisions that no longer could be followed due to changes in State law. City Manager Gee furthered an Ordinance would need to be approved with two (2) readings at a future Council Meeting calling for the amendments to be placed on the ballot for consideration by the voters. City Manager Gee stated City Secretary Kara Andrepont had developed a guide to the proposed Charter Amendments which listed the language as well as reasoning for the proposed changes. City Manager Gee furthered the City planned to have public meetings in order to ensure voters were fully informed. City Manager Gee stated the item was being brought to Council for discussion and review in order to move forward with an Ordinance containing the proposed amendments for the May Election. City Manager Gee gave an overview of the proposed Charter Amendments. Councilmember Guessippina Bonner asked if someone from the community wanted to amend proposed wording would it be allowed and would it be something to discuss during the public meetings. Councilmember Guessippina Bonner also asked if someone could propose a change to the Charter. Councilmember Robert Shankle asked that a requirement for reviewing the Charter at least every five (5) years be added.

7. **PUBLIC HEARING AND FIRST READING OF AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE ZONING ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF LUFKIN, TEXAS, BY CHANGING THE ZONING TO “RESIDENTIAL LARGE” ON PROPERTY ADDRESSED AS 600 SOUTH BYNUM– APPROVED.**

City Manager Kevin Gee stated the applicant, James Alan Pittman, had requested a zone change from “Neighborhood Retail” to “Residential Large” for 600 South Bynum Street. City Manager Gee furthered the home faced Johnson Avenue and the purpose of the zone change would be to help retain the residential nature of the existing single-family home by allowing for changes in building setbacks along South Bynum Street. City Manager Gee stated the change in building setbacks would allow for a six-foot (6’) fence to be placed along South Bynum Street affectively making this the side yard of the home. City Manager Gee highlighted the location of the property and surrounding uses. City Manager Gee stated Staff found the proposed zone change consistent with the current area zoning and the existing future land use designation. City Manager Gee furthered the Planning and Zoning Commission unanimously recommended the request for approval.

City Manager Gee concluded Staff recommended City Council conduct a Public Hearing and consider approval of the First Reading of an Ordinance changing the zoning to “Residential Large” on property addressed as 600 South Bynum.

Mayor Mark Hicks opened the Public Hearing at 5:15 p.m. There being no one who wished to speak; Mayor Hicks closed the Public Hearing and requested comments from City Council.

Councilmember Robert Shankle moved to approve the Ordinance as presented. Councilmember Wes Suiter seconded the motion and a unanimous vote to approve was recorded.

8. FIRST READING OF AN ORDINANCE ESTABLISHING A CITY OF LUFKIN FEE SCHEDULE – POSTPONED.

City Manager Kevin Gee stated in order to ensure that the City of Lufkin Fee structure was current and updated in a timely and efficient manner, Staff had compiled a comprehensive Fee Schedule. City Manager Gee furthered the schedule included the majority of fees that generated revenue for the General Fund as well as water and sewer tap fees. City Manager Gee stated that the schedule would be reviewed and updated each year as part of the annual budget process. City Manager Gee furthered the detailed fee schedule had been included in the Council packet for review. City Manager Gee stated the schedule also included the changes being made. City Manager Gee noted the schedule did not include water, sewer or solid waste rates, as those were adopted by Ordinance when necessary during the annual budget process. City Manager Gee stated if approved, the Ordinance and accompanying fee schedule would take effect January 1, 2024.

City Manager Gee concluded Staff recommended City Council consider approval on First Reading of an Ordinance establishing a City of Lufkin Fee Schedule.

Councilmember Guessippina Bonner asked for public input prior to adopting the Ordinance adopting the fee schedule. Councilmember Brent Watkins asked when the budget review process would begin and if delaying the Ordinance would impact that process.

Councilmember Guessippina Bonner moved to postpone the First Reading of an Ordinance adopting a comprehensive fee schedule to a future City Council meeting once public meetings are held regarding the same. The motion also requested that a Public Hearing be added to the First Reading of the Ordinance item when placed on a future agenda for consideration. Councilmember Robert Shankle seconded the motion and the motion passed with a five (5) – one (1) vote; Councilmember Rocky Thigpen opposed the approval.

Councilmember Guessippina Bonner asked for clarification regarding both the Convention Center fees as well as the Park pavilion and gazebo fees. Convention Services Director, Brant Lee and Parks and Recreation Director Buddy Timme responded respectively. City Manager Kevin Gee asked Fire Chief Jesse Moody to speak regarding the increase of some EMS billing fees. Chief Moody explained the rates had not been revised since 2014. City Manager Gee provided information to Council regarding the increase of water and sewer tap fees. Councilmember Guessippina Bonner asked for clarification regarding the fee to apply to buy property from the City. City Manager Gee responded and discussion ensued.

There being no further business, Mayor Mark Hicks adjourned the meeting at 5: 29 p.m.



ATTEST:

Kara Andrepont, City Secretary

Mark Hicks, Mayor