

**VERNON CITY COMMISSION
SPECIAL MEETING
MARCH 31, 2015**

Mayor Joe Rogers called the Special Meeting of the Vernon City Commission to order at 6:30 p.m., and a quorum was declared present.

Present: Mayor Joe Rogers

Commissioners: Danny McMahan, Ruben Hinojosa, Travis Taylor and Pat Bryant.

Staff Present: Municipal Prosecutor Jonathan Whitsitt, Public Works Director Darell Kennon, Police Chief Tom Wilson, Community Development Director Monica Wilkinson, EMS Coordinator Kade Long and City Secretary Linda Byers.

Commissioner McMahan made the motion to have the prayer before the Pledge of Allegiance.

Commissioner Hinojosa seconded the motion, which passed by unanimous vote.

Commissioner McMahan led the group in the Invocation followed by the Pledge of Allegiance to the U.S. and Texas flags.

CHANGE AGENDA ORDER

Commissioner Bryant made the motion to switch Agenda Item No. 11 (Discuss Emergency Budget Reductions) with Agenda Item No. 9 (Consider Ordinance No. 1660).

Commissioner Hinojosa seconded the motion, which passed by unanimous vote.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Commissioner Taylor made the motion to enter Executive Session at 6:33 p.m. under Government Code Section 551.072 – Deliberation concerning Real Property.

Commissioner McMahan seconded that motion, which passed by unanimous vote.

RESUME REGULAR SESSION

Commissioner McMahan made the motion to resume regular session at 7:08 p.m.

Commissioner Hinojosa seconded that motion, which passed by unanimous vote.

ACTION FOLLOWING EXECUTIVE SESSION

Commissioner McMahan made the motion to direct the City Attorney to draft a Memorandum of Understanding on subject tract of land A, and to negotiate on subject tract of land B.

Commissioner Taylor seconded that motion, which passed by unanimous vote.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Commissioner Hinojosa made the motion to enter Executive Session at 7:09 p.m. under Government Code Section 551.074 – Deliberation concerning Personnel – Interim City Manager.

Commissioner Taylor seconded that motion, which passed by unanimous vote.

RESUME REGULAR SESSION

Commissioner Taylor made the motion to resume regular session at 7:33 p.m.

Commissioner McMahan seconded that motion, which passed by unanimous vote.

ACTION FOLLOWING EXECUTIVE SESSION

Commissioner Hinojosa made the motion to appoint Kade Long as Interim City Manager until the new City Manager arrives on May 4.

Commissioner McMahan seconded that motion, which passed by unanimous vote.

EMERGENCY BUDGET REDUCTIONS

The following items were discussed concerning emergency budget reductions.

- Legislative – discussed cutting salary to Commission members. Finance Director Garmon was given a directive to cut salaries as much as was legal. Dues and Conference expenses were reduced.
- City Secretary made cuts to travel and agreed to possible cuts to salary.
- Legal – cuts to billable hours only way to cut.
- Street Department made cuts of \$75,000 from seal coat and one position that will remain unfilled.
- Garage – cut housekeeping costs.
- Cemetery – only has two positions so there is nothing to cut.
- Pool reduced advertising costs and made cuts to repair costs.
- Parks reduced by not hiring extra seasonal help and reducing materials costs.
- Water Department is already two people short and will not rehire. The Nitrate Plant beads will not be purchased, saving \$25,000. Reductions will also be made to machinery & tools, and a jackhammer for the backhoe will not be purchased.
- Wastewater Plant – machinery costs will be lowered.

Public Works Director Kennon voiced the following concerns: motor fuel cuts depend upon prices remaining low, the utility budget was cut from last year & should not have been, need to adjust budget to realistic numbers for concession, the sludge budget was cut from \$21,000 last year to \$10,000 and should not have been, and the wastewater sewer treatment plant budget was cut without explanation.

Director Kennon had several proposals for the swimming pool: Expenses total \$26,000 and cuts bring expense down to \$17,000. The average attendance is 12,890.

Proposal #1 to increase admission price: \$3.50 - under age 11; \$5.00 - over age 11.

Proposal #2 = \$5.00 per admission.

Digital Recording on file

Police Chief Wilson made a 2% reduction in the Police Department budget in operating costs for fuel, wearing apparel, food supplies, dues, travel, meals, advertising, façade improvements, furniture, and instruments/computers.

Commissioner Bryant wants 10% cut to Public Safety. Police Chiefs Wilson response was that they can only make cuts by cutting services - all positions have multiple jobs.

Following discussion the Commission directed Chief Wilson to cut an additional \$70,000 or 6% from his budget. There was additional discussion concerning reduction of services and costs to the taxpayer.

RECESS REGULAR SESSION

Mayor Rogers called a recess at 8:33 pm.

The Regular Session resumed at 8:39 pm

EMERGENCY BUDGET REDUCTIONS (cont)

Municipal Court reduced office supplies, postage, communication, training, building security expense.

Fire Department put off as many expenses as possible until after October 1. Interim City Manager Long proposed that the Fire Department consolidate and combine non-operational staff positions into one job and delegate jobs where possible, to shift personnel. Mr. Long also suggested the Commission look into adding a fuel charge into the Ambulance Ordinance.

Code Enforcement reduced extra help, the online code enforcement program, and special services such as engineer reviews, etc.

There was discussion of furloughs for City Hall personnel, and a discussion of savings at city hall only versus a city wide furlough, with the consensus being that the furloughs would be for city hall only. There was discussion of the expense for the July 4th fireworks of \$6,000, and it was decided to keep this expense in budget.

Finance Director Garmon noted that total cuts would equal \$509,000.

CONSOLIDATE CAPITAL LEASE & LOAN FINANCING

Finance Director Garmon requested authorization to request proposals to consolidate all capital lease and loan financing with one institution, and seek more favorable terms.

Following a short discussion, there was unanimous consent to proceed.

ORDINANCE NO. #1660

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING SECTION 26-35 AND SECTION 26-36(a) OF ARTICLE II, COLLECTION AND REMOVAL SERVICES OF CHAPTER 26 – GARBAGE AND TRASH; AMENDING SECTION 54-152 OF ARTICLE V – WATER OF CHAPTER 54; AND SECTION 54-62 OF ARTICLE III – SEWERS OF CHAPTER 54 – UTILITIES, OF THE CODE OF ORDINANCES OF THE CITY OF VERNON; PROVIDING FOR A REPEALING SECTION; A SAVINGS SECTION; A RECORDING SECTION; AND PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

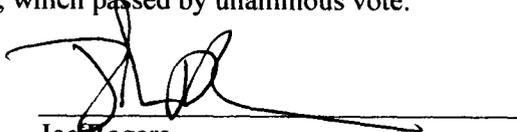
Commissioner Bryant made the motion to table the ordinance until no later than May 1.

Commissioner McMahan seconded that motion, which passed by unanimous vote.

ADJOURN

Commissioner Taylor made the motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:20 p.m.

Commissioner Hinojosa seconded the motion, which passed by unanimous vote.



Joe Rogers
Mayor

ATTEST:



Linda Byers
City Secretary