

CARL HARBERT <i>Council Member, Place 1</i>	DAVID RUTLEDGE <i>Mayor</i>	DANNY HARRINGTON <i>Council Member, Place 4</i>
MIKE REED <i>Council Member, Place 2</i>		TERRI GAUTHIER <i>Council Member, Place 5</i>
TAMMI FISETTE <i>Council Member, Place 3</i>		LUCY FIELDS <i>Mayor Pro-Tem/Council Member, Place 6</i>

CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING
CITY OF BRIDGE CITY

July 21, 2020

The City Council of Bridge City met in an regular session followed by a special meeting on Tuesday, July 21, 2020, via telephone conference with the Mayor at the City Hall of Bridge City, 260 Rachal, Bridge City, Texas.

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Rutledge called the City Council meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

IDENTIFICATION OF A QUORUM (ROLL CALL)

CITY COUNCIL PRESENT:

- Mayor David Rutledge
- Council Member Carl Harbert
- Council Member Tammi Fisette
- Council Member Mike Reed
- Council Member Danny Harrington
- Council Member Terri Gauthier
- Council Member Lucy Fields

CITY COUNCIL ABSENT: None.

The City Staff present but was not part of the roll call is as follows:

CITY STAFF PRESENT:

- City Manager Jerry D. Jones
- City Secretary Jeanie McDowell
- City Attorney Paul Fukuda
- Finance Director Karen Morgan
- Police Captain Tod McDowell

2. INVOCATION

Invocation given by Council Member Fisette.

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Council Member Harbert made a motion to approve the agenda, seconded by Council Member Reed.

With no other corrections, additions, or deletions, Mayor Rutledge called for a vote.

MOTION CARRIED.

Ayes:

Mayor Rutledge	Yes
Mayor Pro-Tem Fields	Yes
Council Member Harbert	Yes
Council Member Reed	Yes
Council Member Fisette	Yes
Council Member Harrington	Yes
Council Member Gauthier	Yes

Noes: None.

Absent: None.

4. REPORTS AND COMMENTS FROM:

(a) City Manager Report

City Manager Jerry Jones had the following report:

1. Ditch Project - phase one is complete. Phase two will be awarded on this agenda. The project has a few more ditches in it and will start soon.
2. Master Drainage Plan – working on it and also the outfall ditch, the Engineers are working on both.
3. Fire Plug (Flushing Valves) – replacement and repair will start next month. The fire plug (flushing valves) contract will be awarded the first of August.
4. City Crews – are digging ditches and mowing outfalls, everyone is busy.

(b) City Council Report

Council Member Carl Harbert ask Mr. Jones if the Center Ditch was all the contractors were going to clean. He asked if they were going to clean the ditch on Rosen St.

Mr. Jones told Council Member Harbert, the City will do some additional work. Mr. Lund, Public Works Director met with contractor regarding a ditch that was filled in, but the City cannot clean from Rosen St. down to the marsh because that is wetlands. We cannot get a permit in there.

Council Member Mike Reed

None.

Council Member Tammi Fisette

None.

Council Member Danny Harrington

None.

Council Member Terri Gauthier

None.

Council Member Lucy Fields

None.

(c) City Staff Report

City Attorney Paul Fukuda

None.

Miscellaneous City Staff:

None.

(d) Mayor

Mayor David Rutledge had the following report:

None.

5. CITIZEN COMMENTS

None.

6. ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION & POSSIBLE ACTION

(a) Consideration and possible action to approve the following minutes:

June 16, 2020 City Council Meeting Minutes

July 7, 2020 City Council Meeting Minutes

Council Member Reed made a motion to approve the June 16, 2020 City Council Meeting Minutes and July 7, 2020 City Council Meeting Minutes, seconded by Council Member Fisette.

With no other corrections, additions, or deletions, Mayor Rutledge called for a vote.

MOTION CARRIED.

Ayes:

- Mayor Rutledge Yes
- Mayor Pro-Tem Fields Yes
- Council Member Harbert Yes
- Council Member Reed Yes

Council Member Fisette Yes
Council Member Harrington Yes
Council Member Gauthier Yes

Noes: None.

Absent: None.

(b) *Consideration and possible action to approve the City Bills for the month of June 2020*

Council Member Fisette made a motion to approve the City Bills for the month of June 2020, seconded by Council Member Harrington.

Council Member Harbert asked what was the Code of Ordinances on page 25 in the amount of \$1,715.40.

Karen Morgan, Finance Director said the Ordinances are coded to be put on the internet.

Council Member Harbert asked what was damages underground electrical feeders on page 26 in the amount of \$3,000.

Karen Morgan, Finance Director said that was repairs made at the Sewer Plant.

Mr. Jones said for the filter press.

Council Member Harbert said when they cut the electrical line.

Council Member Fisette said as she was looking at the COVID expenses for CARES Grant she noticed the signs for temp kiosk and for the buildings, hand sanitizer, mask and gloves and half of the glass for City Hall was on the CARES Grant. There were two temperature kiosk that were not on the CARES Grant, she wanted to know if they are covered under the grant.

Mr. Jones said yes they are. They are on the \$400,000 grant the City received.

Council Member Fisette said she noticed a \$3,000 difference, she wanted to know if there is a difference between the machines.

Karen Morgan, Finance Director said it was the amount of units ordered.

Council Member Fisette asked if that was more than one kiosk.

Mr. Jones said yes it was.

Council Member Fisette said she also noticed the City purchased a riot shield for the Police Department and asked if that was the only riot shield the City had in the Police Department.

Mr. Jones said the Police Department has a total of four.

With no further discussion, Mayor Rutledge called for vote.

MOTION CARRIED.

Ayes:

Mayor Rutledge Yes
Mayor Pro-Tem Fields Yes
Council Member Harbert Yes
Council Member Reed Yes
Council Member Fisette Yes
Council Member Harrington Yes

Council Member Gauthier Yes

Noes: None.

Absent: None.

(c) Consideration and possible action to amend the Service Recognition Award and Retirement Recognition Award

Council Member Harrington made a motion to amend the Service Recognition Award and Retirement Recognition Award, seconded by Council Member Gauthier.

Mr. Jones said the basic changes were the City did not have a 35 or 40 years of service, and we have some employees that are approaching those numbers. He said before it actually happens it was decided the City needs to include those two benchmarks in with the service package.

With no further discussion, Mayor Rutledge called for vote.

MOTION CARRIED.

Ayes:

Mayor Rutledge Yes

Mayor Pro-Tem Fields Yes

Council Member Harbert Yes

Council Member Reed Yes

Council Member Fisette Yes

Council Member Harrington Yes

Council Member Gauthier Yes

Noes: None.

Absent: None.

(d) Consideration and possible action to approve an amended agreement with Gary R. Traylor & Associates, Inc. to render certain professional/administration services in connection with the 2017-2019 FEMA Hazard Mitigation Grant Program, Pre-Disaster Mitigation Grant Program, and the Flood Mitigation Assistance Grant Program

Council Member Gauthier made a motion to approve an amended agreement with Gary R. Traylor & Associates, Inc. to render certain professional/administrative services in connection with the 2017-2019 FEMA Hazard Mitigation Grant Program, Pre-Disaster Mitigation Grant Program, and the Flood Mitigation Assistance Grant Program, seconded by Mayor Pro-Tem Fields.

Mr. Jones said the amendment is something that the State required, it actually includes the professional services that were not originally included in that grant.

Mayor Rutledge said the amounts that are shown on page 32, the numbers are actually a little lower. There was another amendment that the City received on Monday, July 20, 2020. The figures are as follows:

Phase 1 Application Development including Scope of Work (SOW), budget, and schedule was \$13,250 now is \$13,075. The next item Coordinate Responses to FEMA/State Requests for Information (RFI) was \$6,625 is now \$6,400. Cost-Benefit Analysis with engineer or local staff was \$6,625 is now \$6,400. On the next page those amounts did not change except the grand total which was \$140,000 is now \$139,375. That will be a difference of \$625 less than the original.

With no further discussion, Mayor Rutledge called for vote.

MOTION CARRIED.

Ayes:

Mayor Rutledge	Yes
Mayor Pro-Tem Fields	Yes
Council Member Harbert	Yes
Council Member Reed	Yes
Council Member Fisette	Yes
Council Member Harrington	Yes
Council Member Gauthier	Yes

Noes: None.

Absent: None.

(e) Consideration and possible action to award a bid on the Road Ditch Cleaning and Repair Project, FEMA Project Nos. 42541, 42542, 42543 to Texas Drainage, Inc. in the amount of \$539,459.70

Mayor Pro-Tem Fields made a motion to award a bid on the Road Ditch Cleaning and Repair Project to Texas Drainage, Inc in the amount of \$539,459.70, seconded by Council Member Harbert.

Mr. Jones said the City had a grant in the amount of \$1,300,000 to do this project, but the project came in at \$539,459.70 leaving a balance of approximately \$800,000. The City requested FEMA allow us to use that money on some other type project, but they would not allow it. The money had to be used for the specific ditches they set out.

Council Member Harbert asked Mr. Jones about the Center Street ditch being on the list, and he said the contractors just did that ditch last year.

Mr. Jones said yes they did, there will be some of the ditches that the City has completed on the list, but they will give us credit for those ditches for the City's matching monies on the grant.

Council Member Harbert asked Mr. Jones if the City will be able to keep that money.

Mr. Jones said no sir, the City cannot do anything with the other \$800,000, that money was allocated for certain ditches. The City cannot even change the ditches on the Grant.

With no further discussion, Mayor Rutledge called for vote.

MOTION CARRIED.

Ayes:

Mayor Rutledge	Yes
Mayor Pro-Tem Fields	Yes
Council Member Harbert	Yes
Council Member Reed	Yes
Council Member Fisette	Yes
Council Member Harrington	Yes
Council Member Gauthier	Yes

Noes: None.

Absent: None.

(f) Consideration and possible action to extend the Emergency Declaration of Local Disaster

Council Member Harbert made a motion to extend the Emergency Declaration of Local Disaster for 30 days, seconded by Council Member Reed.

Council Member Harbert asked instead of extending the Declaration by 30 days can the City extend it by 90 days.

Mayor Rutledge said no, we cannot extend the Declaration by 90 days in accordance with state law.

With no further discussion, Mayor Rutledge called for vote.

MOTION CARRIED.

Ayes:

Mayor Rutledge	Yes
Mayor Pro-Tem Fields	Yes
Council Member Harbert	Yes
Council Member Reed	Yes
Council Member Fisette	Yes
Council Member Harrington	Yes
Council Member Gauthier	Yes

Noes: None.

Absent: None.

WORKSHOP

7. WORKSHOP ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION ONLY

(a) Discussion of the City of Bridge City 2020 – 2021 Fiscal Year Budget

Council Member Fisette made a motion to discuss the City of Bridge City 2020 – 2021 Fiscal Year Budget, seconded by Council Member Harrington.

With no further discussion, Mayor Rutledge called for vote.

MOTION CARRIED.

Ayes:

Mayor Rutledge	Yes
Mayor Pro-Tem Fields	Yes
Council Member Harbert	Yes
Council Member Reed	Yes
Council Member Fisette	Yes
Council Member Harrington	Yes
Council Member Gauthier	Yes

Noes: None.

Absent: None.

Mr. Jones presented an overview of the 2020-2021 Proposed Budget. Mr. Jones gave the City Council amended numbers to the proposed budget, because of the new estimated tax numbers the Finance Department received.

Mr. Jones said he would like to point out the Significant One Time Expenses as follows:

Police Department:	Explorer Patrol Vehicle	\$48,000
Street & Drainage:	Tractor with Slope Mower	\$130,599
	Ford F150 with lights, tool box & tint	\$30,550
Water Department:	Ford F150 with lights, tool box & tint	\$30,550
	Waterwood Ground Storage Tank	\$162,000
	New Pipe Hunter Jet Cleaner	\$63,000
	SCADA Control for 3 Lift Stations	\$75,000

Council Member Harbert asked Mr. Jones about the gradall.

Mr. Jones said the City will not be purchasing a gradall this year, he said the cost is about \$370,000. He said the Department Heads would like to get the items that are needed right now and keep the gradall band aided together for one more year, and will be top priority for next year.

Council Member Harbert asked Mr. Jones if he could get him a list tomorrow of how many trucks the Street Department have and how many trucks the water department have.

Mr. Jones said he could get him a list and ask if he wanted just pickup trucks.
Council Member Harbert said yes, just pickup trucks.

Mr. Jones said the contingency fund will be \$97,901 for this year. This is money set aside in case something goes wrong.

Mr. Jones said the health, dental, life, and AD&D premium decreased from last year.

Mr. Jones said the Texas Municipal Retirement System rate is a decrease from last year. Mr. Jones said we are looking at a buyback for city employees who had previous city service and will be introducing that to the City Council at a later date.

Mr. Jones said the total amount of expenditures in this fund without capital is \$4,882,330. The sales tax rate is 8.25% with 1.5% contributed to the City's General Fund to help reduce the property tax rate.

Mr. Jones said the utility system under the Utility Fund, is 100% self-supporting, the rates, the water, the sewer and sales support the department and there are some transfers out of it.

Mr. Jones said next is Solid Waste. He said under solid waste, Republic Service is charging by contract a 3% increase this year. That will be passed on, so there will be no additional charges to the City. Mr. Jones said this is the last year of their contract. The City will have to bid their contract or renew; whichever, the City Council choose to do.

Council Member Harbert asked Mr. Jones if the City was charging for the use of the dumpsters behind City Hall.

Mr. Jones said we have not started charging for them, because everyone was cleaning up. Mr. Jones said the City did not want the citizens dumping their trash on side of road for City employees to pick up. He said he is proposing to begin charging again next month.

Mr. Jones said next is the Street Maintenance Fund and the Public Drainage Fund that is the fund that the City charges \$4.00 per month to the citizens. This fund does have money in it, so if we don't get the two or three streets the City is wanting to get done through the county or by some of the contractors, we do have money to have those streets done.

Mr. Jones said the Water and Sewer Maintenance Fund, the City will bring in an estimate of \$178,000. He said to give you a rough idea to re-do the Sunnyside Water Tank the estimates the City is receiving is around \$350,000, that will not paint and recondition one water tank, but it is a good way to keep up the maintenance on the tanks. He said right now the City has about \$100,000 in that fund.

Council Member Harbert said he was on page 129, the TML Survey, where it says the City has 3,836 customers that is \$184,000 per year and that is street and sewer, so that is doubled.

Mr. Jones said yes, we have right at 4,000 customers and it basically \$8.00 per month, it is \$4.00 for water and sewer and \$4.00 for street. He said it brings in enough to do maintenance out of those funds. The county quit repaving the City streets, he said the City is trying to get that back where they will help us with them. The City only had to buy the material and the county would repave the street. He also said the County Commissioner, Precinct 3 and other people are trying

to get that re-instated. He said, if not, the City has enough money to do some streets we need to do.

Mr. Jones said there are several options on the tax rate and City Staff choose the 0.55170, because basically it is less than what the tax rate is right now. But even with that, with the way the City has to present it and because of the new construction and all the things that are going on, it will show in the paper like we have a 3.5% increase. But the City really doesn't, we are not going to have any increase. The other option is that the City can go up more if the Council choose to do so. You can also increase the revenue the City will get, right now the money we will get from that rate is \$91,638.18. If the City went to 0.55350, which is what it is now, we will get \$98,574.01 additional monies. If the City goes up to 0.57416, which the state says we can do, up to 8% because we had a disaster that would raise \$160,535.44. The discussions the City Staff had around here were because all the stuff going on and people out of work that we really did not want to go up. He said the City would have that option and without it triggering a roll back election, because we had a disaster. He said we can go up to 8%, but that is a decision the Council will have to make. Mr. Jones said what is in this budget is 0.55170 which is the tax rate that is actually less than last years.

Mayor Pro-Tem Fields said she feels with the COVID and the hardships people are facing, the way City Staff presented the budget in her opinion, is the way the Council should go.

Council Member Harrington said he agreed with Mayor Pro-Tem Fields.

Council Member Gauthier said she agreed with Mayor Pro-Tem Fields.

Mr. Jones said City Staff put a lot of time and thought in this budget and it does not seem like the right time to hit people with an 8% tax increase, but if the Council wanted that additional funds, we certainly can do that legally and not trigger an election.

Mr. Jones said there are no raises in this budget. He said he did not put raises in it, but he did a survey with other cities, like Port Neches, Orange, West Orange most of those are giving 2 to 3% increase. The option is the Councils, but in this budget presented to you is zero raises for anyone. Council Member Harbert asked Mr. Jones instead of a raise can the Council give employees another holiday. He said the employees are still getting something, but it does not really cost the City anything.

Mr. Jones said the Council can certainly do that. A holiday will cost the City regardless, because you have the police department that will have to work. Mr. Jones said he would have to pay double time to the employees who have to work. He said if you talk to the police department they would probably want it, but as administrator I have to tell you it is not free.

Council Member Harbert said it is not free, but it is not nearly much as giving a 2% raise.

Mr. Jones said a 2% raise would cost the City \$71,450 and a 3% raise is \$111,900. A holiday will cost approximately \$20,000, so that is the difference.

Council Member Harbert said yes a big difference.

Mr. Jones said the Police Contract has asked for a couple of things, they have asked for their birthday holiday to be paid instead of taking the day off. They also asked for Veteran's Day off.

The \$400,000 that is in there, when you start looking for that you will find it in things that drastically increased. The testing is a big one that has increased, there is also some additional cost, because the City bought more equipment this time than we did last year.

Mayor Rutledge asked Mr. Jones to explain the testing increase.

Mr. Jones told Council the testing increase is because, TCEQ now requires the City to have a lot more test. There is a new monthly and weekly test TCEQ requires that is added to the Wastewater Treatment Plant. Also, the City will be required to continue the 24-hour test that is done quarterly. These test are very expensive. When sending in the samples, the City could get labs like Sabine River Authority and a couple of more that could do a lot of the test we have. TCEQ now requires those test be sent to different labs and they are more expensive. He said a lot of that money is going to testing. He said basically if you look at this budget it is almost no increase from last year.

The Mayor and Council agreed to cancel the meeting on Wednesday, July 22, 2020 and meet on Thursday, July 23, 2020 at 6:00 p.m.

10. ADJOURN

Council Member Harrington made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:15 p.m., seconded by Council Member Harbert.

With no further discussion, Mayor Rutledge called for a vote.

MOTION CARRIED.

Votes were orally given as follows:

Mayor Rutledge	Yes
Mayor Pro-Tem Fields	Yes
Council Member Harbert	Yes
Council Member Reed	Yes
Council Member Fisette	Yes
Council Member Harrington	Yes
Council Member Gauthier	Yes

Noes: None.

Absent: None.

David Rutledge, Mayor

ATTEST:

Jeanie McDowell, City Secretary