

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

## CITY COUNCIL SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES

### WORKSHOP SESSION

CITY OF BRIDGE CITY

July 23, 2020

The City Council of Bridge City met in a special meeting on Thursday, July 23, 2020, at the City Hall of Bridge City, 260 Rachal, Bridge City, Texas.

#### **1. CALL TO ORDER**

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Mayor David Rutledge called the City Council Special Meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

#### **IDENTIFICATION OF A QUORUM (ROLL CALL)**

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##### **CITY COUNCIL PRESENT:**

Mayor David Rutledge  
 Council Member Carl Harbert  
 Council Member Mike Reed  
 Council Member Tammi Fisette  
 Council Member Danny Harrington  
 Mayor Pro-Tem 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  
 Finance Director Karen Morgan  
 Chief Paul T. Davis  
 Police Captain Tod McDowell

#### **2. INVOCATION**

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Invocation was given by Council Member Gauthier. At the conclusion of the invocation, Mayor Rutledge thanked everyone for coming to the meeting.

#### **3. WORKSHOP SESSION - ITEM FOR DISCUSSION ONLY**

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

Mr. Jones said the Council will have to decide which items they would like to address such as the tax rate, raises, police raises, birthday holiday pay the police have ask for in the contract and an additional holiday. Mr. Jones said he would like the Council to discuss the above items.

Mayor Rutledge asked for questions.

Council Member Reed asked Mr. Jones if the Police were asking for their birthday holiday, for a holiday plus another holiday, or is it one of the same.

Mr. Jones said no they are separate. He said they are asking to be paid on the birthday holiday instead of taking it, that is one request. The second request was to add Veteran's Day as an additional holiday.

Mayor Pro-Tem Fields asked if the Council gave that to the Police would we still give it to all of the employees.

Mr. Jones said we do operate that way, if Council does something it will be for everyone.

Mayor Pro-Tem Fields asked if it would be an additional expense to the City.

Mr. Jones said yes, there will be an additional expense on paid holidays, because that particular person on the birthday holiday will be getting double time.

Council Member Gauthier asked if the surrounding cities have the birthday holiday pay.

Mr. Jones said no, the holidays each city have are different.

Mayor Pro-Tem Fields asked if city employees get their birthdays off.

Mr. Jones said it is one of the City's 12 holidays.

Mayor Pro-Tem Fields asked the police officers get that day off, but now they are asking to be paid for it.

Mr. Jones said the police officers want the option to either be paid for it and continue working or take the day off.

Council Member Harbert said instead of a pay raise they are asking for an additional holiday.

Mayor Pro-Tem Fields asked how much money will it be to fulfill those two requests and is it in the budget.

Mr. Jones said both of those the City can handle with what is in the budget.

Mayor Pro-Tem Fields asked without raising taxes.

Mr. Jones said without doing anything, the budget you have those two requests can be absorbed without any changes.

Council Member Fisette asked Mr. Jones if the City granted the additional holiday, it would cost the City about \$20,000 to have Veteran's Day versus about \$70,000 for raises.

Mr. Jones said \$20,000 for the additional holiday is correct, the paid holiday is about \$18,000, raises at 2% was \$71,400 and 3% was \$111,000.

Council Member Harbert asked Mr. Jones City employees who are getting the day off is that pay figured in the budget already. He also said if the City doesn't give a raise and give the Veteran's Day, he said they will come out good.

Mayor Pro-Tem Fields said it sounded good to give the holiday and give the option to take the birthday holiday or be paid for it.

Council Member Harrington asked if Veteran's Day will be a mandatory day off with City Hall being closed for that day.

Mr. Jones said if it is a holiday for the City, then everything will be closed down, except for the Police Department.

Mayor Pro-Tem Fields asked Mr. Jones for clarification if the Council was talking about giving Veteran's Day and also giving the paid holiday.

Mr. Jones said he thought they were talking about both.

The City Council all agreed to give employees Veteran's Day and paid birthday holiday in lieu of a pay raise.

Council Member Gauthier said she wanted make sure she understood that the City Council was not giving raises this year and giving the extra holidays.

Mr. Jones said that is the way City Staff put the budget together, because of all the problems and people out of work. He said City Staff felt like this is not a good year to be giving raises.

Council Member Harrington asked if the only difference is that reduced tax rate.

Mr. Jones said yes and the tax rate is .055170 which is below last year's tax rate.

Council Member Harbert said he believed the City Council should stay with this tax rate and give the citizen's a little help.

Mayor Pro-Tem Fields asked Mr. Jones to explain why the paper will show a 3.5% increase but it is not really an increase.

Mr. Jones said when the City gets all these new houses that come in this year there will be a lot of additional taxable value. Even at that lower rate, the City will produce more income because of all the new things that are coming on.

Mayor Rutledge said if you were to look up the definition of effective tax rate, and really study what it is telling you, it would make more sense to you what Mr. Jones just told you. He said the effective rate means the no new revenue rate. In other words, it will be the rate the City would set on the property to raise the exact same amount of taxes as they did last year. He also said since we are adding value to the City from one year to the next then that looks like the City is raising 3.5% more income, but in effect the rate is actually going down. Each citizen will pay less if their valuation on their property did not go up. If the valuation on the property stayed the same, then the property tax bill will actually decrease. Now because the increase in valuation of property plus the additional property value added to the tax rolls in the City, then the total amount gained in total value goes up. Consequently, it looks like the City is doing a tax rate the way it has to be reported, but the City is not.

Mr. Jones answered Council Members questions regarding specific items in several departments.

The next meetings are scheduled for Tuesday, July 28, 2020, Wednesday, July 29, 2020 and Thursday, July 30, 2020 if needed. The final budget will have to be submitted to the City Secretary by Friday, July 31, 2020.

#### **4. ADJOURN**

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Council Member Harrington made a motion to adjourn the workshop session at 6:45 p.m. seconded by Mayor Pro-Tem Fields.

#### **MOTION CARRIED.**

#### **Ayes:**

Mayor Rutledge

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

**Noes:** None.

**Absent:** None.

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David Rutledge, Mayor

ATTEST:

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Jeanie McDowell, City Secretary