

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 SPECIAL MEETING

CITY OF BRIDGE CITY

March 22, 2021

The City Council of Bridge City met in a regular session on Tuesday, March 22, 2021, at the City Hall of Bridge City, 260 Rachal, Bridge City, Texas.

1. **CALL TO ORDER**

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

CITY COUNCIL PRESENT:

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

CITY COUNCIL ABSENT: None.

CITY STAFF PRESENT:

City Manager Jerry D. Jones
City Secretary Jeanie McDowell
City Attorney Paul Fukuda
Finance Director Karen Morgan
Police Chief Paul Davis
Assistant Utility Superintendent Mike Die
Public Works Director Mike Lund

2. INVOCATION

Invocation given by City Attorney Paul Fukuda.

3. PLEDGE TO THE UNITED STATES FLAG AND THE STATE OF TEXAS FLAG

Mayor Rutledge led in the pledge of allegiance to the United States flag and to the State of Texas flag. At the conclusion of the pledges, Mayor Rutledge thanked everyone for coming to the meeting.

4. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Council Member Gauthier made a motion to approve the agenda, seconded by Mayor Pro-Tem Fields.

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

MOTION CARRIED.

Ayes: Mayor Rutledge, Mayor Pro-Tem Fields, Council Members Harbert, Reed, Fisette, Harrington, Gauthier.

Noes: None.

Absent: None.

5. PRESENTATION OF PROCLAMATIONS

(a) *Presentation of Proclamation declaring March 2021 as "Blinded Veterans Day", as requested by John Lee of the Southeast Texas Chapter of the Blind Veteran Association*

Mayor Rutledge read the proclamation (Attachment No. 1). Mayor Rutledge explained that Mr. Lee was not able to attend the meeting.

6. REPORTS AND COMMENTS FROM:

(a) *City Manager*

City Manager Jerry Jones had the following report for Council:

1. Yard lines - for this year will begin in April. The project will start shortly after bids are awarded. This will be the City's fourth year and is glad the program will continue.
2. Water Well at Sunnyside - the engineer firm is working on the plans and specifications. The project will be bid out after the specifications are complete, and the City does have it funded.
3. Fire plug replacement - has been completed. The contractor replaced all but four (4), because they could not cut off the water to those plugs. The City will replace those at a later date.
4. Self-reading meter system - the City has a repair company coming in to resolve the problems the City has had with the system.

(b) City Council

Council Member Carl Harbert

None.

Council Member Mike Reed

None.

Council Member Tammi Fiset said she received a call last week from Mr. Woodard, and she directed him to Mr. Jones regarding him applying for the yard line grant, she asked if he was able to get on the list for the grant.

Mr. Jones said he has been on the list since November of 2020.

Council Member Fiset said to Mayor Rutledge the City Council had talked about a possible workshop, she asked if there were any updates on it.

Mayor Rutledge said it was discussed to postpone it until May, because the City Staff is working on grants, some they have to open and some they have to close, insurance claims are being made from the freeze, and the ongoing work with Laura and all other disasters. Mayor Rutledge said City Staff are really busy in April, so he asked to have the workshop in May.

Council Member Danny Harrington

None.

Council Member Gauthier said she had information she wanted to update the City Council on the Economic Development regarding a small business recovery grant program, which the deadline has been extended until March 31, 2021. She said the funds are distributed to any small businesses in Orange County that has been affected by COVID-19, Hurricane Laura, Hurricane Delta and the recently added winter storm. She said if the City Council knows any small businesses that need assistance, that was not aware, please let them know about the grant program. She said she had a copy of the application, but small businesses can go onto the EDC website and download a copy of it or fill out the information online. She said the EDC had quite a bit of money left and really needed small businesses to apply for the \$1,000 grants. Council Member Gauthier said she also wanted to say a little something about the Southeast Texas Forecast Breakfast, which was week before last and she was able to attend it with the EDC Board, she said everyone was excited to be back together in a large meeting. She said it was in Beaumont and they had a new regional marketing video they presented and Bridge City was in it. She said they were putting out all the region has to offer for industries that want to come into this area. She also said it was a great presentation and this region has a lot of things to really still look forward to even after all we have been through. The disasters have set us back some, but Orange County has some great exciting projects that are still coming on board and still coming to this area. She mentioned a few like the CPM project, still moving forward, Entergy announced a new site being located in Orange, the hospital development, and the coastal levy project. Those are just some, but as these things develop in Orange County it is really good for our city because it brings in new families and drives our retail. She said she wanted to let City Council know all the good things happening that the city has to look forward to for this next year.

Mayor Pro-Tem Lucy Fields

None.

(c) City Staff Report

None.

City Attorney Paul Fukuda

None.

(d) Mayor

Mayor David Rutledge had the following report:

1. Mayor Rutledge congratulated Mr. Jones on his 20th anniversary with the City. He said he wanted to thank him for his service to the City.
2. Traffic safety enhancements will be coming on FM 1442, the Texas Department of Transportation will be dropping the speed limit down to 60 mph and hopefully it will improve the safety of that roadway. Mayor Rutledge said it will become effective on March 30, 2021.
3. On April 6, 2021, the City will have the first meeting of the month and the second meeting on April 20, 2021. The City is going back to two (2) meetings a month.
4. HB 749 was written and sponsored by Representative Mayes Middleton, and he has introduced this bill which is a community censorship. The bill is trying to make it where the cities do not have a voice in Austin. Mayor Rutledge said it is intended the cities will have to take what is given to us and we have no recourse. Mayor Rutledge said Judge Gothia and himself has spoken to Speaker of the House, Dave Phelan and he is aware of this bill and he doesn't think it will go anywhere, but it will be heard in the State Affairs Committee this Thursday. He said if you have any friends anywhere outside of this area that has another representative in the house besides our speaker, please encourage them to talk to their representative about getting rid of this bill. He said TASB, (Texas Association of School Boards), Texas Association of Counties and TML are all opposing this bill and would like this bill defeated.

7. CITIZEN COMMENTS

None.

8. ORDINANCE

(a) Consideration and possible action to approve Ordinance 2021-04 approving the election officials for the May 1, 2021 General Election

Mr. Fukuda read the caption only of Ordinance No. 2021-04, thereby constituting the reading of the ordinance as required by City Charter, Section 3.10.

Council Member Fisette made a motion to approve Ordinance No. 2021-04 approving the Election officials for the May 1, 2021 General Election, seconded by Council Member Harbert.

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

MOTION CARRIED.

Ayes: Mayor Rutledge, Mayor Pro-Tem Fields , Councilmembers Harbert, Reed, Fisetete, Harrington, Gauthier.

Noes: None.

Absent: None.

9. RESOLUTIONS

(a) Consideration and possible action to approve Resolution No. 2021-02(R) supporting the candidacy of Mayor David Rutledge for the position of President-Elect of the Texas Municipal League (TML)

Mr. Fukuda read Resolution No. 2021-02(R).

Councilmember Harbert made a motion to approve Resolution No. 2021-02(R) supporting the candidacy of Mayor David Rutledge for the position of President-Elect of the Texas Municipal League (TML), seconded by Council Member Gauthier.

Mayor Rutledge explained, the current TML President Karen Hunt, City of Coppell is not running for re-election; therefore, the President Elect will take her place in May of 2021. He said the President Elect job will be opened and normally the term of office is from October to October, but this particular term the President is making the terms from May 2021 to October 2022. He said for this term only it is 1 ½ years and he was applying for this position.

Mayor Rutledge stepped out of the room before the vote was made.

With no further discussion, Mayor Pro-Tem Fields called for a vote.

MOTION CARRIED.

Ayes: Mayor Pro-Tem Fields, Councilmembers Harbert, Reed, Fisetete, Harrington, and Gauthier.

Noes: None.

Absent: None.

10. ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION & POSSIBLE ACTION

**(a) Consideration and possible action to approve minutes of the following meetings:
February 18, 2021 City Council Special Meeting
February 21, 2021 City Council Special Meeting**

Council Member Harrington made a motion to approve the minutes of the February 18, 2021 City Council Special Meeting and February 21, 2021 City Council Special Meeting, seconded by Council Member Fisetete.

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

MOTION CARRIED.

Ayes: Mayor Rutledge, Mayor Pro-Tem Fields, Council Members Harbert, Reed, Fisetta, Harrington and Gauthier.

Noes: None.

Absent: None.

(b) Consideration and possible action to approve the City Bills for the month of February 2021

Council Member Fisetta made a motion to approve the City Bills for the month of February 2021, seconded by Mayor Pro-Tem Fields.

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

MOTION CARRIED.

Ayes: Mayor Rutledge, Mayor Pro-Tem Fields, Council Members Harbert, Reed, Fisetta, Harrington and Gauthier.

Noes: None.

Absent: None.

(c) Presentation and possible action to accept the City of Bridge City Annual Audit for the year ending September 30, 2020 as prepared by Keri Michutka, C.P.A.

Council Member Harbert made a motion to accept the City of Bridge City Annual Audit for the year ending September 30, 2020, seconded by Council Member Reed.

Ms. Curd said she wanted to thank the Mayor and City Council for giving her the opportunity to do the audit for the City this year. She told City Council she would give them the highlights of the audit. She said on page 1 is the Independent Auditor's Report which states she audited the accompanying financial statements of the City of Bridge City as of and before the year ended September 30, 2020. The last paragraph is the **Opinion:** In our opinion, the financial statements presented above presents fairly, in all material respects, the respective financial position of the City of Bridge City as of September 30, 2020 is issued a clean and unmodified opinion.

Financial Statements:

Balance Sheet for the Governmental Funds

Exhibit C-1 the General Fund ended with total fund balance as of September 30, 2020, \$1,099,000 and \$1,046,000 of that is Unassigned Fund Balance. Hotel/Motel Fund had a restrictive fund balance of \$982,000; Debt Service Fund was \$1,429,000; Capital Projects was \$1,644,000; other funds combined was \$627,000 for a Total Governmental Fund Balance of \$5,784,000 as of September 30, 2020.

Changes in Fund –The General Fund had a net decrease for the year of \$87,000 and this included extraordinary expenses related to Hurricane Laura and COVID-19. She said already in 2021 the City has received \$350,000 in grant funds to cover some of the COVID expenses we incurred in 2020. **Capital Projects Fund** – the \$864,000 transfer was to the Utility Fund that was using the Bond Funds for the Wastewater Treatment Plant Project. Overall, the City had a decrease of Total Governmental Funds of \$667,000 for the year, which included the transfer.

Utility Fund:

Exhibit D-1 *Statement of Net Position Proprietary Funds:* As of September 30, the City had an ending total net position of \$6,751,000 and of that unrestricted net position was \$2,704,000.

Exhibit D-2 *Statements of Revenues, Expenses, and Changes in Fund Net Position for the Utility Fund:* the City had a net increase for the year of \$828,000, which included that transfer-in of the Bonds of \$864,000 for the project at the Wastewater Treatment Plant.

Notes to the Financial Statements:

Deposits and Investments - at September 30, 2020, the carrying amount of the City's deposits was \$9,856,000.

Capital Asset Activity – at September 30, 2020 the City's Governmental Funds had fixed assets net appreciation of \$10,499,000.

The Utility Funds Business-type Activities Fixed Assets Net Depreciation is \$4,285,000. General Long-Term Debt for the City, with the bonds and compensated absences for a Total Ending Debt Payable of \$6,327,000. Overall, it was a good clean audit and the City had a good year.

Council Member Fisette asked if the City would get more COVID-19 funding. Mr. Jones said if it is available City Staff will attempt to get it.

After discussion, Mayor Rutledge called for a vote.

MOTION CARRIED.

Ayes: Mayor Rutledge, Mayor Pro-Tem Fields, Council Members Harbert, Reed, Fisette, Harrington and Gauthier.

Noes: None.

Absent: None.

(d) Consideration and possible action to approve HOT TAX application for the Bridge City Chamber of Commerce Historical Museum for building repairs in the amount of \$59,076.63

Council Member Gauthier made a motion to approve HOT TAX application for the Bridge City Chamber of Commerce Historical Museum for building repairs in the amount of \$59,076.63, seconded by Mayor Pro-Tem Fields.

Mr. Jones said the structure is in bad shape, the siding needs to be re-done, the building needs to be painted completely, some of the beams underneath the building are bad and needs to be replaced, the AC unit needs replacing and raised, and the duct work in the ceiling needs to be re-done. Also, there is a lot of mold and mildew in the building and \$59,000 will cover all those repairs.

After discussion, Mayor Rutledge called for a vote.

MOTION CARRIED.

Ayes: Mayor Rutledge, Mayor Pro-Tem Fields, Council Members Harbert, Reed, Fisette, Harrington and Gauthier.

Noes: None.

Absent: None.

(e) Consideration and possible action to approve HOT TAX application for the Greater Orange Area Chamber of Commerce's 2021 Bassmaster Elite Fishing Tournament at Sabine River in the amount of \$20,000

Council Member Harbert made a motion to approve HOT TAX application for the Greater Orange Area Chamber of Commerce's 2021 Bassmaster Elite Fishing Tournament at Sabine River in the amount of \$20,000, seconded by Council Member Reed.

Mr. Jones said the City can help the Chamber sponsored event and this tournament will bring a lot of assets to Bridge City. He said during the last event, the City did not have a hotel room available and the eating establishments were very busy.

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

MOTION CARRIED.

Ayes: Mayor Rutledge, Mayor Pro-Tem Fields, Council Members Harbert, Reed, Fisetete, Harrington and Gauthier.

Noes: None.

Absent: None.

(f) Consideration and possible action to approve the 2021 Consumer Price Index (CPI) Adjustment increase of 0.7267% to be applied to the City's Municipal Telecommunications Right-of-Way Access Line Rates

Mayor Pro-Tem Fields made a motion to approve the 2021 CPI Adjustment increase of 0.7267% to be applied to the City's Municipal Telecommunications Right-of-Way Access Line Rates, seconded by Council Member Reed.

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

MOTION CARRIED.

Ayes: Mayor Rutledge, Mayor Pro-Tem Fields, Council Members Harbert, Reed, Fisetete, Harrington and Gauthier.

Noes: None.

Absent: None.

(g) Consideration and possible action to extend the Emergency Declaration of Local Disaster for COVID-19

Council Member Gauthier made a motion to extend the Emergency Declaration of Local Disaster for COVID-19, seconded by Mayor Pro-Tem Fields.

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

MOTION CARRIED.

Ayes: Mayor Rutledge, Mayor Pro-Tem Fields, Council Members Harbert, Reed, Fisette, Harrington and Gauthier.

Noes: None.

Absent: None.

(h) Consideration and possible action to extend the Emergency Declaration of Local Disaster for Hurricane Laura

Mayor Pro-Tem Fields made a motion to extend the Emergency Declaration of Local Disaster for Hurricane Laura, seconded by Council Member Harrington.

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

MOTION CARRIED.

Ayes: Mayor Rutledge, Mayor Pro-Tem Fields, Council Members Harbert, Reed, Fisette, Harrington and Gauthier.

Noes: None.

Absent: None.

(i) Consideration and possible action to extend the Emergency Declaration of Local Disaster for the Ice Storm of 2021

Council Member Harbert made a motion to extend the Emergency Declaration of Local Disaster for the Ice Storm of 2021, seconded by Council Member Fisette.

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

MOTION CARRIED.

Ayes: Mayor Rutledge, Mayor Pro-Tem Fields, Council Members Harbert, Reed, Fisette, Harrington and Gauthier.

Noes: None.

Absent: None.

11. ADJOURN

Council Member Harrington made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:31 p.m., seconded by Mayor Pro-Tem Fields.

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

MOTION CARRIED.

Ayes: Mayor Rutledge, Mayor Pro-Tem Fields, Council Members Harbert, Reed, Fisette, Harrington and Gauthier.

Noes: None.

Absent: None.

David Rutledge, Mayor

ATTEST:

Jeanie McDowell, City Secretary