

AARON ROCCAFORTE <i>Council Member, Place 1</i>	DAVID RUTLEDGE <i>Mayor</i> 	PATTY COLLINS <i>Council Member, Place 4</i>
GINA MANNINO <i>Council Member, Place 2</i>		TERRI GAUTHIER <i>Mayor Pro-Tem/Council Member, Place 5</i>
BRYANT CHAMPAGNE <i>Council Member, Place 3</i>		SHERBY DIXON <i>Council Member, Place 6</i>

CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

CITY OF BRIDGE CITY

September 3, 2024

The City Council of Bridge City met in a meeting on Tuesday, September 3, 2024, 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 a.m.

CITY COUNCIL PRESENT:

Mayor David Rutledge
Mayor Pro-Tem Terri Gauthier
Council Member Aaron Roccaforte
Council Member Gina Mannino
Council Member Bryant Champagne
Council Member Patty Collins
Council Member Sherby Dixon

ABSENT: None.

CITY STAFF PRESENT:

City Secretary Jeanie McDowell
Chief of Police Tod McDowell
Director of Finance Katrina Jones
Director of Public Works Mike Lund
Utility Superintendent Mike Die

2. **INVOCATION**

The invocation was given by Council Member Gina Mannino.

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 THE AGENDA**

Council Member Roccaforte made a motion to approve the agenda, seconded by Council Member Dixon.

With no changes, discussion, or alterations, Mayor Rutledge called for a vote.

MOTION CARRIED.

Ayes: Mayor Rutledge, Mayor Pro-Tem Gauthier, and Council Members Roccaforte, Mannino, Champagne, Collins, and Dixon.

Noes: None.

Absent: None.

5. PUBLIC HEARING

(a) City Council to hear and consider public comments regarding the proposed ad valorem tax rate for the 2024 tax year for the City of Bridge City, Texas, levied as follows:

\$0.088839 per \$100.00 valuation - Debt Service Rate (Interest and Sinking)

\$0.379421 per \$100.00 valuation - Maintenance and Operations Rate

\$0.468260 per \$100.00 valuation - Total Tax Rate

After reading Agenda Item 5(a), Mayor Rutledge opened the public hearing at 6:02 p.m. Mayor asked for comments on the ad valorem tax rate.

With no discussion or comments, Mayor Rutledge closed the public hearing at 6:03 p.m.

6. CITIZEN COMMENTS

None.

7. REPORTS & COMMENTS FROM:

(a) City Manager's Report

None.

(b) City Council

None.

(c) City Staff

Katrina Jones, Director of Finance

Ms. Jones said she was working on the credit card fees she went over during budget, but she hit a little snag the way the firewall is set up through Incode. She said she would be working with Incode and the Payment Group to get that solved.

(d) Mayor David Rutledge report:

1. John Scales would be on contract to keep up with the inspections until the position is filled. Brenda Scales would also be on contract for keeping up with the permits until the position was filled. He said because the Council was told the city could not get any grants for the library without having a director, he named Jeanie McDowell, City Secretary the Director of Library Services and he also put the code enforcement and community development under the direction of Mike Lund, Director Public Works.

Council Member Champagne asked if the City would be posting those jobs since they were temporary.

Mayor Rutledge said yes, they would work on the job descriptions and were trying to decide what the workload should be for each job.

Council Member Champagne asked if they would be discussing combining the two together. Mayor Rutledge said that would be in the discussions on the job descriptions.

Council Member Mannino said last month when Council had the budget meeting, they talked about having a library workshop, she understood about the role Ms. McDowell would have to make sure the city would have that title so they could apply for grants. She asked when that workshop would be scheduled so the Council could discuss hours, grants, and other opportunities and if that position needs to be a permanent position and who would supervise the rest of the library staff.

Council Member Collins asked if the City investigated if they need a Director of Library Services. Mayor Rutledge said it did not matter if the City does than we have one. Mayor Rutledge said it was not an increase in pay and she would be taking it on as additional job duties.

Council Member Mannino said the citizens have the concern of the number of hours and the employee that is currently managing that service indicated the city needed a certain number of hours in order to qualify for additional funding, but if the city would be cutting the hours because the budget can not support them than to her knowing they need to apply for those grants would be important. She said to her it would be two things 1) what is required of a city library in order to function as a city library and then apply for the funding that might be available for it and 2) what does the city want to provide as a city for the library. She said those were the questions she would like to be answered in a workshop.

Council Member Collins said she thought the Council made it clear to the citizens that were in the room that night they would take this issue up and they heard them loud and clear, and they need to approve a budget, and they were working on doing that. She said they heard them loud and clear. She said those that have contacted her, she made it clear that night the Council would have a workshop to look into this further.

Council Member Mannino said she had a group approach her at an event and as they were talking to her about their concerns somebody got a text message in the group that said Jeanie McDowell is now the Director of Library. She said does that mean she is no longer the City Secretary. She said the point is the Council have several questions that they need to be able to answer the citizens and as a Council she knows they would like to continue to provide top notch services to the citizens which include the ability to have a library.

Council Member Champagne said he had another thing to say about it for Ms. McDowell and she could look into before the workshop is the possibility of putting a scan code on the door and being able to reduce the staff to one and increase the hours. If the city scan codes the doors that would take the security concern out of the library to have two people there. He said that was an option the Council could discuss in the workshop.

Ms. McDowell said the workshop could be scheduled at the next regular meeting, which is September 17th.

Mayor Rutledge said on the 17th of September agenda there would be a workshop on the library.

8. ORDINANCE

(a) Consideration and possible action to approve Ordinance No. 2024-10 adopting and levying municipal ad valorem taxes for the 2024 tax year for the City of Bridge City, Texas as follows:

\$0.088839 per \$100.00 valuation - Debt Service Rate (Interest and Sinking)

\$0.379421 per \$100.00 valuation - Maintenance and Operations Rate

\$0.468260 per \$100.00 valuation - Total Tax Rate

Mayor Pro-Tem Gauthier made a motion "I move to that the tax rate remain the same as last year's rate by the adoption of a total tax rate of \$0.468260, which is effectively a 5.23 percent increase over the calculated No New Revenue tax rate. The tax rate is \$0.379421 for maintenance and operations and 0.088839 for debt service with a total of \$0.468260 per \$100 valuation. This rate is the same rate as last year's rate." Motion was seconded by Council Member Collins.

After discussion, Mayor Rutledge called for a vote.
Votes were as follows for Sections A and B:

MOTION CARRIED.

SECTION "A"

Ayes:

Mayor Rutledge	Yes
Mayor Pro-Tem Gauthier	Yes
Council Member Roccaforte	Yes
Council Member Mannino	Yes
Council Member Champagne	Yes
Council Member Collins	Yes
Council Member Dixon	Yes

Noes: None.

Absent: None.

SECTION "B"

Ayes:

Mayor Rutledge	Yes
Mayor Pro-Tem Gauthier	Yes
Council Member Roccaforte	Yes
Council Member Mannino	Yes
Council Member Champagne	Yes
Council Member Collins	Yes
Council Member Dixon	Yes

Noes: None.

Absent: None.

9. RESOLUTION

- (a) Consideration and possible action to approve Resolution No. 2024-11(R) in support of South East Texas Regional Planning Commission – Metropolitan Planning organization’s effort to redesignate and expand its planning area boundaries to accept Jasper County**

Mayor Pro-Tem Gauthier made a motion to approve Resolution No. 2024-11(R) in support of South East Texas Regional Planning Commission – Metropolitan Planning organization’s effort to redesignate and expand its planning area boundaries to accept Jasper County, seconded by Council Member Roccaforte.

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

MOTION CARRIED.

Ayes: Mayor Rutledge, Mayor Pro-Tem Gauthier, and Council Members Roccaforte, Mannino, Champagne, Collins, and Dixon.

Noes: None.

Absent: None.

10. ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION & POSSIBLE ACTION

- (a) Consideration and possible action to approve minutes of the August 20, 2024 City Council Regular Meeting**

Council Member Collins made a motion to approve the minutes of the August 20, 2024 City Council Regular Meeting with one change to Item 11c to designate Mayor Rutledge as Acting City Manager instead of appointing Mayor Rutledge as Acting City Manager, seconded by Council Member Roccaforte.

With no changes, discussion, or alterations, Mayor Rutledge called for a vote.

MOTION CARRIED.

Ayes: Mayor Rutledge, Mayor Pro-Tem Gauthier, and Council Members Roccaforte, Mannino, Champagne, Collins, and Dixon.

Noes: None.

Absent: None.

- (b) Consideration and possible action approving up to \$14,000 in HOT tax funds as requested by the Bridge City Chamber of Commerce for the Hot Air Balloon Glo Festival to be held in Bridge City on September 14, 2024**

Council Member Roccaforte made a motion to approve the HOT tax funds for \$14,000 requested by the Bridge City Chamber of Commerce for the Hot Air Balloon Glo Festival to be held in Bridge City on September 14, 2024, seconded by Mayor Pro-Tem Gauthier.

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

MOTION CARRIED.

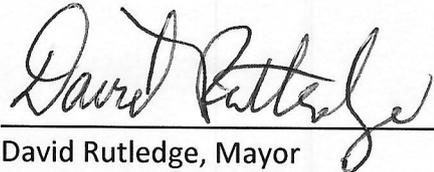
Ayes: Mayor Rutledge, Mayor Pro-Tem Gauthier, and Council Members Roccaforte, Mannino, Champagne, Collins, and Dixon.

Noes: None.

Absent: None.

11. ADJOURN

Mayor Rutledge adjourned the meeting at 6:21 p.m.



David Rutledge, Mayor

ATTEST:



Jeanie McDowell, City Secretary

