

A regular meeting of the Groves City Council was held September 14, 2020 in the Groves City Council Chamber with Mayor Pro Tem Sidney Badon, Councilmember Chris Borne, Councilmember Kyle Hollier, and Councilmember Karen Theis in attendance. Mayor Brad Bailey was not present. Mayor Pro Tem Badon called the meeting to order and welcomed the attendees. Councilmember Theis led the prayer and pledge of allegiance.

APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE AUGUST 17, 2020 CITY COUNCIL MEETING, AUGUST 31, 2020 PUBLIC HEARING, AND AUGUST 31, 2020 CITY COUNCIL MEETING: Councilmember Theis made a motion to approve the minutes of the 08/17/20 and 08/31/20 council meetings and the 08/31/20 public hearing as written and Councilmember Borne seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Mayor Pro Tem Badon asked for citizen comments or reports. Public Works Director Troy Foxworth discussed the Monroe Blvd. project. The street reconstruction cost from Main Ave. to State Highway 347 is \$262,835.97 for materials. The cost of Equipment and Labor is \$98,530.00, for a total cost of \$361,365.97.

Utilities Superintendent Michael Tentrup gave an update on debris collection from Hurricane Laura. Six months' worth of debris has been picked up during the two weeks since Hurricane Laura made landfall on August 27, 2020. Saturday, September 12, 2020 was the deadline for the hurricane debris pick up. However, if debris/green waste was put out before September 12th and has not yet been picked up, it will be picked up as part of the storm debris. Sanitation will begin working their regular schedule on Monday, 09/21/20. Current rules limit green waste pick up to two (2) cubic yards. Mr. Sosa asked Mr. Tentrup to discuss the importance of a chipping site. Mr. Tentrup stated that having a chipping site is extremely important. The City hauled 600 loads to its chipping site and only 96 loads to the landfill in the aftermath of the hurricane. Hauling to the City's chipping site is a timesaver, as our trucks can get caught in long lines at the landfill, along with travel time. Mayor Pro Tem Badon questioned how the chipper charges and Mr. Tentrup stated that the chipper charges by the ton. Councilmember Borne asked with the large amounts of trash pick up were the sanitation workers having trouble with the recycling company operating out of Beaumont. Mr. Tentrup responded that he was not aware of a recycling company making pick ups in Groves and Councilmember Borne stated that it is an individual company and that items to be recycled are put in green bags out to the curb. Mr. Tentrup stated that the company is supposed to register with the City in order to operate in the city. Mr. Sosa stated that he would take care of this issue. Councilmember Theis stated that the neighbor behind her café had lost his roof. She asked if his debris could be picked up by the City and Mr. Tentrup stated that it could.

CONSIDER APPROVAL OF THE ANNUAL APPROPRIATION ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF GROVES, TEXAS FOR THE 2020-2021 FISCAL YEAR: City Attorney James Black presented proposed Ordinance No. 2020-06, reading the caption as follows: "Annual appropriation ordinance of the City of Groves for the 2020-2021 Fiscal Year, appropriating funds for disbursement for the various purposes and uses of the City, providing a savings clause; and providing an effective date."

Councilmember Hollier moved to approve Ordinance No. 2020-06, appropriating funds for Fiscal Year 2020-2021 and Councilmember Borne seconded. Councilmember Theis asked if the \$1,653,812 appropriated to Streets includes drainage and Mr. Sosa stated that it does. Mayor Pro Tem Badon asked if grant money was included in the budget and Mr. Sosa stated it was not. Councilmember Borne asked if the ordinance approves the disbursement of funds and Mr. Sosa stated that it does. There was no further discussion and the motion passed unanimously.

CONSIDER ADOPTION OF AN ORDINANCE APPROVING THE TAX ASSESSMENT ROLLS FOR THE YEAR 2020, AND ASSESSING TAXES FOR THE SUPPORT OF THE CITY OF GROVES AND THE MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT: Mr. Black presented proposed Ordinance No. 2020-07 and read the caption as follows: "An ordinance approving the tax assessment rolls for the year 2020, levying and assessing taxes for the support of the City of Groves and the municipal government thereof; apportioning each levy for specific purposes; and levying and assessing a hotel occupancy tax; providing the date for the collection of taxes; providing a savings clause; and providing an effective date."

Councilmember Borne made a motion to adopt Ordinance No. 2020-07 as follows: "I move that the property tax rate be increased by the adoption of a tax rate of \$0.749185 which is effectively a 3.185 percent increase in the tax rate". Councilmember Hollier seconded and Mayor Pro Tem Badon asked for discussion. Councilmember Borne asked Director of Finance Lamar Ozley why the tax rate went down but resulted in an increase. Mr. Ozley stated that Maintenance and Operations had increased, but Interest and Sinking had decreased. Mr. Sosa commented that state law caps tax increases at 3.5% without voter approval and Mr. Ozley stated that was correct. There was no further discussion and the motion passed unanimously.

CONSIDER APPROVAL OF AN ORDINANCE AMENDING WATER AND SEWER RATE STRUCTURES: Mr. Black presented proposed Ordinance No. 2020-08, reading the caption as follows: "An ordinance amending Chapter 27, "Utilities. Article II. "Rates and Charges" of the Code of Ordinances, City of Groves, Texas, by amending Section 27-28. "Sewer Rates and Charges"; Section 27-28.1. "Industrial Sewer Rate and Surcharge"; and Section 27-29. "Water Rates and Charges", revising said sections to adjust the water, and sewer rate; providing for a savings clause; providing for codification; and providing an effective date." Mr. Sosa explained that this ordinance amends the base rate for water from \$11.00 to \$12.00 for 2,000 gallons or less; and the sewer rate from \$11.25 to \$12.00 for 1,500 gallons or less.

Councilmember Borne moved to approve Ordinance No. 2020-08 amending water and sewer rate structures. Councilmember Theis seconded the motion and Mayor Pro Tem Badon asked for discussion. Mr. Sosa added that if approved by the Council, these increases will enable the City to become more liberal with adjustments on some portions of the water bill if there is a valid reason, such as a leak. Councilmember Hollier asked how many adjustments are done per month. Mr. Sosa stated approximately two or three. Mayor Pro Tem Badon asked if the reasons for requests for adjustments are investigated and Mr. Sosa stated that they are and that there is a request form that has to be completed along with the City's customer service representative going to the residence to verify the issue. There was no further discussion and the motion passed unanimously.

CONSIDER ADOPTION OF A RESOLUTION APPROVING THE 2020 CERTIFIED TAX ROLL FOR THE CITY OF GROVES, TEXAS: Mr. Black presented proposed Resolution No. 2020-12, reading the caption as follows: "A resolution of the City Council of the City of Groves, Texas, approving the 2020 certified tax roll from the assessor-collector of taxes for Jefferson County, Texas, pursuant to the Texas Property Tax Code, Section 26.09." Councilmember Hollier moved to adopt Resolution No. 2020-12 approving the 2020 Certified Tax Roll and Councilmember Theis seconded. Mayor Pro Tem Badon asked for questions or discussion.

Councilmember Borne asked what would happen if Council did not approve the certified tax roll. Mr. Ozley responded that approval of the certified tax roll by the city is State law and that it is just a certified roll. Mr. Sosa stated that part of the City's job is to protect property values. The Code Enforcement, Fire, and Police Departments work diligently to keep the City's values up. Motion passed unanimously.

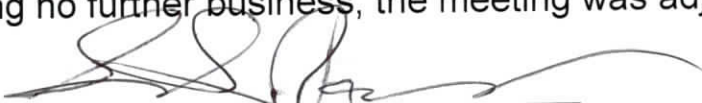
CONSIDER ADOPTION OF A RESOLUTION APPROVING THE INVESTMENT POLICY FOR THE CITY OF GROVES, TEXAS: Mr. Black presented proposed Resolution No. 2020-13 and read the caption as follows: "A resolution of the City Council of the City of Groves establishing a review of the Investment Policy of the City of Groves and recording changes to the Investment Policy or investment strategies." Councilmember Hollier made a motion to approve Resolution No. 2020-13 approving the Investment Policy and Councilmember Borne seconded. Councilmember Theis asked if any changes had been made to the policy and Mr. Ozley stated there had not been. Motion passed unanimously.

INVOICES: City Manager D.E. Sosa presented invoices for payment totaling \$59,766.01 as follows:

Alfa Laval Corp.	Centrifuge #1 controls repair (Waste Water Pl.)	5,400.00
Delta Industrial Svc. and Supply	Battery operated combination tool- jaws of life for Fire Department.	10,755.00
	Misc. equipment and bunker gear (Fire Dept.)	8,401.64
Hol-Mac Corporation	Replacement boom assembly- #46 limb picker.	18,818.45
Republic Services	Dumpster and sludge disposal.	7,240.92
South Western Environmental Technicians	Double disc pump rebuild (Waste Water Plant).	9,150.00

Councilmember Theis moved to approve payment of the invoices totaling \$59,766.01 and Councilmember Borne seconded. Mayor Pro Tem Badon asked for questions and Councilmember Borne asked if the Fire Department equipment was a replacement. Fire Chief Lance Billeaud stated that the gear is for the new firefighter and the tools are new. Councilmember Borne asked if these were budgeted items. Chief Billeaud stated that the tool was not budgeted, but that there were funds available for the purchase. Motion passed unanimously.

Mayor Pro Tem Badon asked for Council Comments and there were none. There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 5:36 p.m.



Mayor Pro Tem

ATTEST:


City Clerk