

A regular meeting of the Groves City Council was held March 27, 2023 in the Groves City Council Chamber with Mayor Chris Borne, Mayor Pro Tem Mark McAdams, Councilmember Rob Vensel, Councilmember Rhonda Dugas and Councilmember Paul Oliver in attendance. Mayor Borne called the meeting to order and welcomed the attendees and news media. Representatives from the local VFW then led the prayer and pledge of allegiance.

APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MARCH 13, 2023 CITY COUNCIL MEETING: Councilmember Rob Vensel moved to approve the minutes of the March 13, 2023 City Council meeting as written and Councilmember Paul Oliver seconded. Mayor Borne asked for questions and there were none. Motion passed unanimously.

RECEIVE THE MINUTES FROM THE MARCH 20, 2023 PLANNING AND ZONING MEETING: Mayor Borne stated that the minutes have been received and all Councilmembers have a copy.

Mayor Borne then asked for reports and Interim City Manager Lance Billeaud stated that he had a small report on behalf of Event Coordinator Libbie LeJeune and HR Director Stephanie Gaspard. Ms. LeJeune wanted to give Council a report on Spring Fest 2023. She wanted to thank the Mayor and Council for coming out to support this event and all of the City employees to help make this event possible. Ms. LeJeune also stated that she had a lot of positive feedback from all of the vendors. HR Director Stephanie Gaspard also thanked the City employees for all of their hard work in putting on this event. Mrs. Gaspard also stated that they were able to get quite a few leads in regards to open positions in the City.

There was also a report from the VFW on the Country of Somalia. Mayor Borne then asked for Citizen Comments and there were none.

RECEIVE FYE 2022 ANNUAL FINANCIAL REPORT FROM THE CITY AUDITOR: Finance Director Lamar Ozley introduced Pat O'Neal from Wathen, DeShong & Juncker L.L.P as the City Auditor. Mr. Ozley then proceeded to inform Council that Mr. O'Neal reports directly to them. Mr. O'Neal then gave his report. Financial Statements: The City received an unmodified rating, which is a "clean opinion", regarding internal control over financial reporting. Mr. O'Neal then stated that their opinion is that the financial statements present fairly the financial positions of the City and the result of operations for the 12 months ending September 30th. Mr. O'Neal also stated that there weren't any material weaknesses identified or any significant

deficiencies identified. Mr. O'neal then stated that since the City had received over \$750,000 of Federal money during the year then they are required to do what is called a single audit to look and see if there were any material weaknesses related to the Federal money and there were not. Mr. O'neal also stated that these are all answers that you would like to have and the fact it is a clean report. Mr. O'neal then went over the rest of the summary report. See attached.

Councilmember Oliver asked about the unearned revenues and asked Mr. O'neal about his statement that we would have to make up a portion of that expense. Mr. O'neal responded that normally the Federal Government gives you money after it's already spent and when you get approved for the grant you would have to get reimbursed. He then stated when Covid hit they were giving the money ahead of the projects and you would just have to prove that the money was spent on what it was earmarked for. Mr. O'neal also stated that as of September there was still 3.8 million that hasn't been reported to the government on what it is being spent for. Mr. Ozley then explained to Council that the pipe bursting project has just started and the report for that is due at the end of April. Councilmember Dugas then asked Mr. O'neal how much debt is the City in and he showed her where the numbers are located in the summary reports.

Councilmember Oliver then asked the auditor to explain the money shortfall that has already been spent from the Federal Government Grants and Mr. O'neal explained that some of the money is not there right now, it's being used for operations. Mr. O'neal then stated that it's being used for operations instead of having to borrow the money and getting charged interest. Councilmember Oliver then asked if we have a log of where and what the grant money has been used for? Mr. Ozley then stated that he can get him a log of those transactions. Councilmember Dugas stated that she is concerned about the financial health of the City and Mr. O'neal stated that it is tight. Councilmember Dugas asked if this report included the wording "no assurance provided" and Mr. O'neal stated that no what our opinion says is that it presents fairly the financial position of the district. There were no further questions. No vote needed for this item.

CONSIDER APPROVAL OF AN APPLICATION FOR HOTEL OCCUPANCY TAX REVENUE FUNDS TO BE USED FOR THE GROVES KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS 16TH ANNUAL ESTELLE AND ALLEN FETTERS GOLF TOURNAMENT: Mayor Pro Tem McAdams made a motion to consider approval of an application for Hotel Occupancy Tax Revenue Funds to be used for the Groves Knights of Columbus 1

Annual Estelle and Allen Fetters Golf Tournament and Councilmember Vensel seconded. Interim City Manager Lance Billeaud then introduced the representative from the Knights of Columbus Mr. Leroy Falcon. Councilmember Dugas asked Mr. Billeaud if the Knights of Columbus have to bring a receipt and then get reimbursed for their expenses and he stated that was correct. Mr. Falcon then stated that they will usually do a proposed budget then once the event is complete then they will bring in receipts along with a final report. Mayor Pro Tem McAdams amended his motion to consider approval of an application for Hotel Motel Occupancy Tax revenue funds to be used for the Groves Knights of Columbus 16th Annual Estelle and Allen Fetters Golf Tournament not to exceed \$4,000 and Councilmember Vensel seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

CONSIDER SETTING A DATE FOR A JOINT PUBLIC HEARING ON A REQUEST TO REZONE 5589 GULFWAY DRIVE FROM R-2 & C-1 TO C-3: Councilmember Rob Vensel made a motion to consider setting a date for a Joint Public Hearing on a request to rezone 5589 Gulfway Drive from R-2 & C-1 to C-3 on April 24, 2023 immediately following the regularly scheduled City Council Meeting at 5:00 p.m. Mayor Pro Tem Mark McAdams seconded this motion. Motion passed unanimously.

CONSIDER APPROVAL OF RESOLUTION 2023-02 TO AUTHORIZE A MEMBERSHIP FOR TEXAS SMARTBUY PROGRAM: Councilmember Vensel made a motion to consider approval of Resolution 2023-02 to authorize a membership for Texas SmartBuy Program and Mayor Pro Tem McAdams seconded. Finance Director Lamar Ozley then explained to Council that this is a request from the Police Department to be able to purchase field testing equipment from this company. Mr. Ozley then stated to be able to do that we have to be a member which requires Councils approval. Motion passed unanimously.

CONSIDER AND APPROVE ORDINANCE 2023-04 AMENDING CHAPTER 3 OF THE CODE OF ORDINANCES OF THE CITY OF GROVES; CREATING CHAPTER 3 – ADVERTISING, ARTICLE III. – SIGNS [2], SEC. 3-30 – SEC. 3-33: Councilmember Vensel made a motion to consider approval of Ordinance 2023-04 and Councilmember Dugas seconded. City Attorney Brandon P. Monk presented proposed Ordinance No. 2023-04, reading the caption as follows “An Ordinance amending Chapter 3 of the Code of Ordinances of the City of Groves; creating Chapter 3 – Advertising, Article III. – Signs [2], Sec. 3-30 – Sec. 3-33; providing for codification; providing for publication by publishing the caption only; making findings of facts; and providing for an effective date.” Council then discussed recent changes that were made from the last draft. Motion passed unanimously.

INVOICES: Interim City Manager Lance Billeaud presented invoices for payment totaling \$42,669.78 as follows:

Brenntag Southwest, INC	Sodium Hydroxide used for PH adjustment at the Water Plant.	7,376.14
City of Port Arthur	Landfill fees. (1/26/23 - 2/24/23).	16,400.00
Epic Engineering, LLC	Endress + Hauser Ultrasonic Flow Meter and Labor.	18,893.64
TOTAL		42,669.78

Councilmember Rob Vensel moved to approve payment of the invoices totaling \$42,669.78 and Mayor Pro Tem McAdams seconded. Mayor Pro Tem McAdams asked about the Ultrasonic Flow Meter and Mr. Billeaud stated that ants destroyed the flow meter and could no longer be calibrated. There were no further questions and motion passed unanimously.

Mayor Borne asked for Councilmember comments. Councilmember Vensel thanked Mr. Monk for his work on the Sign Ordinance. Mayor Pro Tem McAdams thanked Event Coordinator Libbie LeJeune and all employees who helped with Spring Fest. Finance Director Lamar Ozley thanked the KC workers for feeding the City workers with gumbo last week.

Mayor Borne thanked everyone for their attendance and adjourned the meeting at 6:18 p.m.



Mayor

ATTEST:



City Clerk