

A regular meeting of the Groves City Council was held September 11, 2023 in the Groves City Council Chamber with Mayor Chris Borne, Mayor Pro Tem Mark McAdams, Councilmember Rhonda Dugas, Councilmember Paul Oliver, and Councilmember Rob Vensel in attendance. Mayor Borne called the meeting to order and welcomed the attendees. Members of the local VFW then led the prayer and pledge of allegiance.

APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE AUGUST 28, 2023 CITY COUNCIL MEETING AND PUBLIC HEARING: Councilmember Vensel moved to approve the minutes of the August 28, 2023 City Council Meeting and Public Hearing as written and Councilmember Oliver seconded. Mayor Borne asked for discussion and there was none. Motion passed unanimously.

Mayor Borne asked for reports and Interim City Manager Lance Billeaud informed Council of an outage with INCODE today which basically runs most things within the city including water billing. Mr. Billeaud wanted to inform Council in case they get any calls concerning this.

Mr. Billeaud then informed Council that he has Jeff Leavins and Steven West from Lead Engineering to talk to Council about the road work of 25th St. Mr. Leavins informed Council that the problems with the roads cracking are more than likely caused by the lack of rain and the high temperatures. Mr. Leavins also informed Council that they are suggesting the contractors continue to seal these roads when they do crack. Councilmember Vensel asked how much longer do we have for the warranty with the contractor and Mr. West stated that this project hasn't even been closed yet. Once the project closes then the 12-month warranty period will start.

The next report was from Sargent Chris Robbin from the Groves Police Department concerning the National Night Out. Sargent Robbins explained that National Night Out is a community outreach initiative to build and enhance relationships between the community, neighbors and first responders. Sargent Robbins also informed Council that this will be the 7th annual National Night Out and will be held October 3rd at Lion's park from 4:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.

The last report was from the local VFW regarding Patriot's Day and National Day of Service and Remembrance known to most as 9/11.

Mayor Borne asked for citizen comments and there were none.

CONSIDER APPROVAL OF A CARNIVAL LICENSE APPLICATION FOR THE GROVES PECAN FESTIVAL TO BE HELD IN LION'S PARK OCTOBER 12TH – 15TH, 2023: Mayor Pro Tem McAdams made a motion to consider approval of a Carnival License Application for the Groves Pecan Festival to be held in Lion's Park October 12th – 15th, 2023 and Councilmember Vensel seconded. Chamber Director Letha Knaus informed Council that the inspections of the rides still need to be completed. Those inspections are usually completed in September so as soon as they are complete Council will be informed. There were no further questions and the motion passed unanimously.

CONSIDER AND APPROVE A DATE TO RECEIVE INFORMATION FROM SLAVIN AND CONDUCT INTERVIEWS FOR CANDIDATES FOR THE OFFICE OF CITY MANAGER: Councilmember Dugas made a motion to consider and approve a date to receive information from Slavin and conduct interviews for candidates for the office of City Manager. Councilmember Oliver seconded. Slavin made suggestions on what dates would work best for them. Council then agreed on September 23, 2023 at 9:00 a.m. Councilmember Dugas amended her previous motion to include the date of September 23, 2023 at 9 a.m. and Councilmember Oliver seconded. There was no further discussion and the motion passed unanimously.

CONSIDER ADOPTION OF FY 2023-2024 MAINTENANCE AND OPERATIONS TAX RATE OF \$0.561584 / \$100 BY RECORD VOTE: Councilmember Vensel made a motion to consider adoption of FY 2023-2024 maintenance and operations tax rate of \$0.561584 / \$100 by record vote. Mayor Pro Tem McAdams seconded. Finance Director Lamar Ozley informed Council that this is the first step in approving the budget and tax rate for the FY 2023-2024 fiscal year for the city. There were no questions with Mayor Chris Borne, Mayor Pro Tem Mark McAdams, Councilmember Paul Oliver, Councilmember Rob Vensel and Councilmember Rhonda Dugas all in favor of this item. Motion passed unanimously.

CONSIDER ADOPTION OF FY 2023-2024 INTEREST AND SINKING TAX RATE OF \$0.048106 / \$100 BY RECORD VOTE: Councilmember Vensel made a motion to consider adoption of FY 2023-2024 interest and sinking tax rate of \$0.048106 / \$100 by record vote and Councilmember Dugas seconded. Finance Director Lamar Ozley informed Council that this is the second step, this approves the debt service payment out of the tax rate. We will be combining the M&O that we just passed plus the INS tax rate to get the total tax rate that was discussed during the Public Hearing of the \$0.609691 when combined. There were no further questions. Motion passed unanimously with Mayor Chris Borne, Mayor Pro Tem Mark McAdams,

Councilmember Paul Oliver, Councilmember Rob Vensel and Councilmember Rhonda Dugas all in favor of this item.

CONSIDER ADOPTION OF FY 2023-2024 BUDGET BY RECORD VOTE: Councilmember Dugas made a motion to consider adoption of FY 2023-2024 budget by record vote and Councilmember Oliver seconded. Motion passed unanimously with Mayor Chris Borne, Mayor Pro Tem Mark McAdams, Councilmember Paul Oliver, Councilmember Rob Vensel and Councilmember Rhonda Dugas all in favor of this item.

CONSIDER RATIFICATION OF PROPERTY TAX INCREASE REFLECTED IN THE FY 2023-2024 BUDGET: Councilmember Vensel made a motion to consider ratification of property tax increase reflected in the FY 2023-2024 budget and Mayor Pro Tem McAdams seconded. Finance Director Lamar Ozley informed Council that per state law Council is required to ratify or approve the tax rates that were just approved. There were no questions and the motion passed unanimously.

CONSIDER ADOPTION OF A RESOLUTION 2023-04 APPROVING THE INVESTMENT POLICY FOR THE CITY OF GROVES, TEXAS: Mayor Pro Tem McAdams made a motion to consider adoption of a Resolution 2023-04 approving the Investment Policy for the City of Groves, Texas and Councilmember Vensel seconded. Finance Director Lamar Ozley then 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 of investment strategies." Mr. Ozley informed Council that there were no changes from last year to this year and that this is done yearly with the budget process. There were no questions and the motion passed unanimously.

CONSIDER APPROVAL OF ORDINANCE 2023-13 TO AMEND THE WATER AND SEWER RATE STRUCTURES: Councilmember Dugas made a motion to consider approval of Ordinance 2023-13 to amend the water and sewer rate structures and Councilmember Vensel seconded. Finance Director Lamar Ozley then read 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 rates; providing for a savings clause; providing for codification; and providing an effective date." Mr. Ozley informed

Council that this is where we are changing the rate structure to where the base rate will include 1,000 gallons for water and 1,000 gallons for sewer. Mr. Ozley stated that previously is was 2,000 gallons for water and 1,500 gallons for sewer. Councilmember Dugas asked Mr. Ozley what we are hoping that this does and Mr. Ozley stated that we are hoping that this will create additional revenue for the water and sewer funds. There were no further question and the motion passed unanimously.

CONSIDER APPROVAL OF THE ANNUAL APPROPRIATION ORDINANCE 2023-14 OF THE CITY OF GROVES, TEXAS FOR THE 2023-2024 FISCAL YEAR, APPROPRIATING FUNDS FOR DISBURSEMENT FOR THE VARIOUS PURPOSES AND USES OF THE CITY, PROVIDING A SAVINGS CLAUSE AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE: Mayor Pro Tem McAdams made a motion to consider approval of the annual appropriation Ordinance 2023-14 of the City of Groves, Texas for the 2023-2024 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 Dugas seconded. Finance Director Lamar Ozley then read the caption as follows: "Annual appropriation ordinance of the City of Groves for the 2023-2024 Fiscal Year, appropriating funds for disbursement for the various purposes and uses of the City, providing a savings clause; and providing an effective date." Mr. Ozley informed Council that this is required by the City Charter and it lays out all of the expenditures by department. There were no questions and the motion passed unanimously.

CONSIDER APPROVAL OF ORDINANCE 2023-15 APPROVING THE TAX ASSESSMENT ROLLS FOR THE YEAR 2023, LEVYING AND ASSESSING TAXES FOR THE SUPPORT OF THE CITY OF GROVES AND THE MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT THEREOF; APPORTIONING EACH LEVY FOR SPECIFIC PURPOSES; LEVYING AND ASSESSING OCCUPATION TAXES AND A HOTEL OCCUPANCY TAX; PROVIDING THE DATE FOR THE COLLECTION OF TAXES; PROVIDING A SAVINGS CLAUSE; AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE: Councilmember Vensel moved that the property tax rate be increased by the adoption of a tax rate of \$0.609690 / \$100 which is effectively a 7.90 percent increase in the tax rate." Councilmember Oliver seconded. Finance Director Lamar Ozley then read the caption as follows: "An ordinance approving the Tax Assessment Rolls for the year 2023, 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." Mr.

Ozley informed Council that this is the final step for approving the budget and tax rate for the upcoming FY 2023-2024. There were no questions and the motion passed unanimously.

INVOICES: Interim City Manager Lance Billeaud presented invoices for payment totaling \$125,295.52 as follows:

City of Port Arthur	Landfill fees. 7/26/23 – 8/25/23.	17,050.00
Core & Main, LP	Meter Registers.	16,302.90
DXI Industries, INC.	Chlorine used for disinfection: -	6,861.60
Leavins Engineering & Design, LLC	TCEQ TPDES Permit Renewal Prep.	6,000.00
Lower Neches Valley Authority	Raw water purchased July 2023.	44,845.02
Texas Pride Utilities	Pay application #7 for 2022-2023 CLFRF Pipe Bursting Project.	34,236.00

Mayor Pro Tem Mark McAdams moved to approve payment of the invoices totaling \$125,295.52 and Councilmember Vensel seconded. Mayor Pro Tem McAdams asked for an update on the meter registers and Mr. Ozley informed Council that they just sent a lot of old ones back to get partial credit. Mr. Ozley then informed Council that Zone 3 is done and half of Zone 2 has been done. Councilmember Oliver asked Interim City Manager Lance Billeaud where are we at with the payments to Texas Pride and Mr. Billeaud stated that we have not done the final walkthrough to be able to finish paying them. Councilmember Oliver stated that he wants everything fixed that Texas Pride is responsible for before we give them the final payment. There were no further questions and the motion passed unanimously.


Mayor Borne asked for Councilmember comments and there were none.

There was no further business and Mayor Borne adjourned the meeting at 5:49 p.m.



Mayor

ATTEST:



City Clerk

