

A special meeting of the Groves City Council was held February 21, 2023 in the Groves City Council Chamber with Mayor Chris Borne, Mayor Pro Tem Mark McAdams, Councilmember Paul Oliver, Councilmember Rob Vensel, and Councilmember Rhonda Dugas in attendance. Mayor Borne called the meeting to order and then led the prayer and pledge of allegiance. He welcomed all attendees.

APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE FEBRUARY 8, 2023 SPECIAL MEETING: Councilmember Rob Vensel made a motion to approve the minutes of the February 8, 2023 Special Meeting and Councilmember Paul Oliver seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE FEBRUARY 13, 2023 JOINT PUBLIC HEARING REGARDING GAME ROOMS AND GAMING MACHINES: Councilmember Rhonda Dugas made a motion to approve the minutes of the February 13, 2023 Joint Public Hearing regarding Game Rooms and Gaming Machines and Mayor Pro Tem Mark McAdams seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE FEBRUARY 13, 2023 JOINT PUBLIC HEARING REGARDING FOOD TRUCKS: Councilmember Vensel made a motion to approve the minutes of the February 13, 2023 Joint Public Hearing regarding Food Trucks and Mayor Pro Tem McAdams seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Mayor Borne then asked for reports and Interim City Manager Lance Billeaud stated he was asked about the plans for the Water Meter situation and Michael Tentrup was there to give a report on this. Mr. Tentrup stated that the meter reading responsibilities were moved to Utilities in November so he has been over it for four months which was part of the process for improving all of this. This allowed the City to decrease the amount of dedicated meter readers from 2 to 1 and also allowed for help from the utilities department in between projects. Mr. Tentrup then showed Council what a meter looks like and explained all of the different parts including the base, register, the encoder and antenna. The antenna sends a signal every 14 seconds and the battery lasts 15 to 20 years. Mr. Tentrup also said the City is divided into 3 zones so three times a month the City will drive around with a laptop and big antenna attached to the truck to pick up the signals and record it. Once that data is collected the workers will put it on a USB Drive and bring it to the Water Office where it is loaded into the system. Mr. Tentrup stated that from there it will let us know which addresses did not read and will require a manual reading. Mr. Tentrup then stated that if you have a meter that they can't get to then it will be estimated, all estimating is calculated by the computer. The City is also having a problem with getting new meters in to replace the ones that no longer work and currently have 768 of them on back order. Mr. Tentrup also stated that in 2006 the City decided to get electronic meters so that one person can just drive by and read them but they are all dying at the same time. In 2020 all of the meters started dying and that is right when Covid hit so we are unable to get enough supplies in to be able to fix this issue. Mayor Pro Tem McAdams asked what do the Citizens need to do if they find out their bill is much higher than normal and Finance Director Lamar Ozley stated that they need to let us know so we can look at it. Councilmember Oliver asked if there is a program being looked at to implement that this doesn't happen again and Mr. Tentrup stated that he wants to do a phased approach by zones to make sure that they don't all go out at the same time again. Councilmember Dugas then asked if most of the meters are in the front yard and Mr. Tentrup stated that it is about half and half between front and backyard. Mr. Tentrup also explained to Council that when they change out meters they are trying to change out the ones in the backyards first since they are harder to get to. Councilmember Oliver asked Mr. Tentrup if he can give Council a game plan for the next five years on what they are doing to fix the water meter issue. There were no other reports.


Mayor Borne then asked for citizen comments and there were none.

DISCUSS AND TAKE VOTE ON SELECTING AN EXECUTIVE SEARCH FIRM TO HIRE CITY MANAGER: Councilmember Vensel made a motion to discuss and take vote on selecting an executive search firm to hire City Manager and Councilmember Dugas seconded. Mayor Borne stated that if everyone wants to share who

their top 2 picks are so Council can discuss them. Councilmember Vensel stated that his top pick is Baker Tilly and Slavin. Mayor Pro Tem McAdams then stated that was his exact 2 picks. Councilmember Oliver and Dugas stated that their top pick was Slavin. Mayor Borne stated that he also narrowed it to Baker Tilly as first pick and Slavin second. Councilmember Vensel amended his motion to hire Baker Tilly as the search firm and Mayor Pro Tem McAdams seconded. Council then discussed their picks more and decided that they would like to see sample contracts for all three of the companies before making a final decision. Councilmember Vensel amended his motion again to table the selection of an executive search firm until sample contracts can be looked at and Councilmember Dugas seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Mayor Borne asked for Councilmember comments and Councilmember Vensel stated that we do not need to rush into making a decision on selecting a search firm.

Mayor Borne thanked everyone for their comments and adjourned the meeting at 6:13 p.m.



Mayor

ATTEST:



City Clerk