

A regular meeting of the Groves City Council was held on August 11, 2025, at 5:00 p.m. in the Groves City Council Chamber with Mayor Chris Borne, Mayor Pro Tem Pete Konidis, Councilmember Mark McAdams, Councilmember Brandon Holmes, and Councilmember Rae Shauna Gay in attendance. Mayor Borne called the meeting to order, and a representative from VFW Post 4820 in Port Neches, Texas, then led the prayer and pledge of allegiance.

Mayor Borne asked for reports, and City Manager Kevin Carruth updated Council about the new remote-control brush hog mower that is taking care of the right-of-way. In the past, we have used a tractor with a side boom mower, and our current one is in bad shape. Last year, we started looking at replacing it, and the cost to replace it was \$174,000. We ended up finding a demonstration model remote control mower for \$30,000, which is about 1/5 of the tractor cost, and it does it much faster. They were able to mow the entire circuit in 5-6 days instead of the 3 – 3.5 weeks it had taken in the past. He said it is also safer not only for the operator but also for the public, citing the example of drivers on Hogaboom. Mr. Carruth stated he wanted to make sure Council understood that, since some people have commented on it but don't fully understand the facts. There were no further reports.

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

Mayor Borne then paused the Council Meeting and opened up the first Public Hearing portion of the meeting for the proposed FY2025-2026 appropriation ordinance at 5:05 p.m.

**CONDUCT A PUBLIC HEARING AT GROVES CITY HALL FOR THE PURPOSE OF REVIEWING THE PROPOSED FY2025-2026 APPROPRIATION ORDINANCE:**

Mayor Borne then read the Notice of the public hearing as follows: "Notice is hereby given that the City Council of the City of Groves, Texas will hold a Public Hearing Monday, August 11, 2025 at 5:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers at City Hall, 3947 Lincoln Avenue, Groves, Texas for the purpose of reviewing the proposed FY2025-2026 appropriation ordinance. All interested persons are welcome to attend. A copy of the entire City Manager Budget Estimate is available for inspection in the City Manager's Office at City Hall, 3947 Lincoln Avenue, Groves, Texas, or on the City's website at [www.cigrovestx.com](http://www.cigrovestx.com)." Finance Director Lamar Ozley stated that, per the City Charter, we must hold a public hearing regarding the appropriation ordinance, which breaks down the expenditures by department.

Mayor Borne asked for questions from Council concerning the appropriation ordinance, and there were none.

Mayor Borne then asked for comments from any Citizens who wished to speak in support of the appropriation ordinance, and there were none.

Mayor Borne then asked for comments from any Citizens who wished to speak against the appropriation ordinance, and there were none.

Mayor Borne then stated that no action will be taken at this time, and the first public hearing for the appropriation ordinance adjourned at 5:08 p.m.

The second public hearing to review the proposed FY2025-2026 budget then started at 5:09 p.m.

CONDUCT A PUBLIC HEARING AT GROVES CITY HALL FOR THE PURPOSE OF REVIEWING THE PROPOSED FY2025-2026 BUDGET: Mayor Borne then read the Notice of the public hearing as follows: "Notice is hereby given that the City Council of the City of Groves, Texas will hold a Public Hearing Monday, August 11, 2025 at 5:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers at City Hall, 3947 Lincoln Avenue, Groves, Texas for the purpose of reviewing the proposed FY2025-2026 budget. This budget will raise more total property taxes than last year's budget by \$494,535 or 7.01%, and of that amount \$232,908 is tax revenue to be raised from new property added to the tax roll this year. All interested persons are welcome to attend. A copy of the entire proposed budget is available for inspection in the City Manager's Office at City Hall, 3947 Lincoln Avenue, Groves, Texas, or on the City's website at [www.cigrovestx.com](http://www.cigrovestx.com)." Finance Director Lamar Ozley stated that this public hearing is per State law.

Mayor Borne asked for questions from the Council. Mayor Borne asked if the proposed employee pay increases of 3% are included in this, and Mr. Ozley stated they are. Mayor Borne also wondered if the change for the TMRS from 6% to 7% is also in this, and Mr. Carruth stated it is. Mr. Carruth also noted that this will come up later in the agenda, but we did get final numbers on the group health, and that came in lower than expected. Mayor Borne stated that this is also using the *de minimis* tax rate, which allows us to go up to \$500,000, and Mr. Ozley stated that's correct if we are a city under 30,000 population. Councilmember Holmes asked if the COLA is a one-time thing and is not recurring, and Mayor Borne stated that we have alternating years where one year we have step increases and the next year we have COLAs. Councilmember Holmes asked if the COLAs are optional, and Mayor Borne stated that they are not required.

City Manager Kevin Carruth stated that we are talking about two separate things. The COLA for retirees that we have previously discussed, we will not be doing. Mr. Carruth then said that what the Mayor is talking about is the COLA for all active employees, separate from TMRS. Councilmember Holmes asked if, at our next meeting, we could look at possibly doing some street work ourselves, and Mr. Carruth stated that we have discussed this over the last couple of years, but we currently do not have the money for that. Mr. Carruth also said that we do have some roadwork planned for this fiscal year, and we are waiting on a couple of bids to come back, but that stuff is contracted out. There were no further questions from Council.

Mayor Borne asked for questions from any citizens. James Morein of 6921 Hanson Street asked about the pie that breaks down where all of the money goes. Mayor Borne stated that there is one that shows a breakdown of the total budget for the entire city, showing all the percentages. Mayor Borne then informed Mr. Morein that the discussion here is regarding property taxes and that 95% of everything we get from property taxes goes to Fire and Police, and what's left goes into the general fund. Mr. Morein asked if there is a fee coming for the streets, and City Manager Kevin Carruth stated that what the Council is considering is a transportation use fee (TUF), but that has not been decided. That would require the Council to agree and have a firm conduct a study on how to assess each parcel of land. Mayor Borne stated that the fee is not in this budget. Mr. Carruth told Mr. Morein where on the website he could locate the pie chart he was looking for, as well as information on the TUF. There were no further citizen questions.

Mayor Borne stated that no action would be taken at this meeting and adjourned this public hearing at 5:20 p.m.

Council reconvened into the regular City Council Meeting at 5:20 p.m.

DELIBERATE AND ACT TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE JULY 28, 2025, CITY COUNCIL MEETING: Mayor Pro Tem Konidis made a motion to deliberate and act to approve the minutes of the July 28, 2025, City Council Meeting, and Councilmember McAdams seconded. There were no questions, and the motion passed unanimously.

DELIBERATE AND ACT TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE AUGUST 4, 2025, SPECIAL MEETING: Councilmember McAdams made a motion to deliberate and act

to approve the minutes of the August 4, 2025, Special Meeting, and Councilmember Holmes seconded. There were no questions, and the motion passed unanimously.

RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE AUGUST 4, 2025, PLANNING AND ZONING MEETING: Mayor Borne stated that all of Council have received a copy of the August 4, 2025, Planning and Zoning Minutes in their packets.

DELIBERATE AND ACT ON THE APPROVAL OF AN APPLICATION BY PASSION CHURCH FOR AN EVENT AT LION'S PARK ON SEPTEMBER 6, 2025:

Councilmember Gay made a motion to deliberate and act on the approval of an application by Passion Church for an event at Lion's Park on September 6, 2025, and Mayor Pro Tem Konidis seconded. Kathy Richard introduced herself to the Council. Ms. Richard is one of the Associate Pastors at Passion Church. Mayor Borne asked Ms. Richard to tell Council about what they want to do for this event. Ms. Richard then stated that they are requesting the use of Lion's Park and the Pavilion on Saturday, September 6, 2025, between 4:00 p.m. and 8:00 p.m., which would include setup, outreach, and takedown. The purpose of this outreach is to bless our community in an atmosphere of celebration with music, free food, and prizes. Mayor Borne asked what the standard practice is for reserving Lion's Park because it's usually first-come, first-served, and Mr. Carruth stated that the Pecan Festival is the only regular exclusive use that we have for it. Mr. Carruth asked Ms. Richard if they just wanted to use the stage and adjoining area, and she stated that was correct. Ms. Richard asked about electricity for the stage, and Public Works Director Troy Foxworth noted that they can turn it on for the event. Councilmember McAdams asked about sanitation with the garbage cans, and Mr. Foxworth stated that they will make sure they are dumped on the Friday before the event and again after the event. Mayor Borne then asked if the wastewater would be able to handle 100 people, and Mr. Foxworth stated it should be able to, as there are three commodes on each side. Mayor Borne asked if City Attorney Brandon P. Monk had any issues with the insurance that was provided, and Mr. Monk stated that he had no problems with it. Councilmember Holmes asked about parking, and Mayor Borne noted that the cable allows parking on two sides of the park, and the street could accommodate about 30 vehicles. Council then decided that they would like postings that the area is reserved, but attendance is welcome by everyone. There were no further questions, and the motion passed unanimously.

DELIBERATE AND ACT ON HOTEL OCCUPANCY TAX FUNDING REQUEST BY GROVES PECAN FESTIVAL: Mayor Pro Tem Konidis made a motion to deliberate

and act on Hotel Occupancy Tax funding request by Groves Pecan Festival. Councilmember Gay seconded. Chamber Director Letha Knaus stated that they are adding a Cajun Sunday to the festival this year. Ms. Knaus then went over all of the advertising that they will be doing for this year's festival. Mayor Borne stated that we have \$25,000 budgeted for the entire Hotel Motel Tax. Mayor Pro Tem Konidis thanked Ms. Knaus for the layout of the map showing where the billboard advertisements will be. Ms. Knaus then discussed the live radio broadcasts that will be present at the festival, and there will also be live characters again for the kids. Mayor Pro Tem Konidis amended his previous motion to include a not to exceed of \$18,000, with reimbursement using receipts, and Councilmember Gay seconded. There were no further questions, and the motion passed unanimously.

DELIBERATE AND ACT ON AN AGREEMENT WITH GROVES CHAMBER OF COMMERCE FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF PICKLEBALL COURTS AND AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER TO NEGOTIATE AND EXECUTE ALL NECESSARY DOCUMENTS: Councilmember Gay made a motion to deliberate and act on an agreement with Groves Chamber of Commerce for the construction of pickleball courts and authorizing the City Manager to negotiate and execute all necessary documents. Mayor Pro Tem Konidis seconded. City Manager Kevin Carruth informed the Council that Ms. Knaus has been working on this for the last couple of years, and CenterWell was her previous employer. Mr. Carruth stated that they were only going to do one court, but Ms. Knaus talked them into two courts. Ms. Knaus stated that the pickleball courts will be at John Spikes Park. Mayor Borne asked how much this would cost the City, and Ms. Knaus stated zero dollars. Mayor Pro Tem Konidis asked if they would be fenced in, and Ms. Knaus indicated that it would not be at this time. Mayor Pro Tem Konidis thanked Ms. Knaus for all of the hard work she has done for the City. Mayor Borne then stated that all that is needed from the City is the approval to use the land, and Ms. Knaus noted that this is correct. Mayor Borne also stated that the contract states that this property will be given back to the city lien-free from all expenses associated with the pickleball court construction. Mr. Carruth informed Council that CenterWell has requested a slight change to the name of the pickleball courts, and they would like it to be named CenterWell Pickleball Courts at Groves. Mayor Borne asked City Attorney Brandon P. Monk if there was anything in this agreement that we needed to be concerned with, and Mr. Monk stated that it looked good. There were no further questions, and the motion passed unanimously.

DELIBERATE AND ACT TO APPROVE HEALTH, DENTAL, AND VISION INSURANCE FOR OCTOBER 1, 2025, TO SEPTEMBER 30, 2026: Councilmember Holmes made a motion to deliberate and act to approve health, dental, and vision insurance for October 1, 2025, to September 30, 2026. Councilmember McAdams seconded. City Manager Kevin Carruth stated that the preliminary budget anticipated a 20% increase, but the lowest proposal came in with a 6% increase. Human Resource Director Elizabeth Diaz then addressed Council, saying that they were pleased to receive this proposal. Ms. Diaz then introduced Ms. Leslie Harrison with Higginbotham, who is our consultant for our employee benefits. Ms. Diaz stated that the City issued a Request for Proposals with the help of Higginbotham, and we received six proposals from different carriers. The two main ones in the running were Blue Cross Blue Shield and UnitedHealthcare. Based on what came back, UnitedHealthcare was the best proposed rate, offering lower deductibles, out-of-pocket expenses, and copays. Vision and dental will remain at the same plan with a slight increase in the cost of dental premiums. Ms. Diaz then went over the different benefits with the Council. Councilmember Holmes asked if the employees would have the same providers in their network that they currently have. Ms. Diaz stated that they would, and that is something they always ask: if the provider's book is equal to or better than the current plan. Mayor Pro Tem Konidis asked if M.D. Anderson is in the network with the new plan, and Ms. Harrison stated that they are. Councilmember Holmes amended his previous motion to adopt the staff recommendation to select UnitedHealthcare for group medical insurance and Guardian for dental and vision insurance as presented. Councilmember McAdams seconded. There were no further questions, and the motion passed unanimously.

City of Groves  
Medical Benefits Proposal  
October 1, 2025

Carrier Name	BCBS Current Plans					UHC - Most Comparable REVISED			
	Current Base Plan		Current Buy Up Plan		Alt Base Plan		Alt Buy Up Plan		
Name of Plan	MTBCP032		MTBCP019		EIXW Rx KU		EIXG Rx KU		
Available Network	Blue Choice PPO		Blue Choice PPO		POS Premier		POS Premier		
Annual Deductible	In-Network	Out-of-Network	In-Network	Out-of-Network	In-Network	Out-of-Network	In-Network	Out-of-Network	
Individual	\$3,500	\$10,000	\$2,000	\$4,000	\$3,000	\$7,500	\$2,000	\$5,000	
Family	\$10,500	\$20,000	\$6,000	\$12,000	\$6,000	\$15,000	\$4,000	\$10,000	
Out of Pocket Maximum (Includes Deductible, Copays, & Coinsurance)									
Individual	\$8,150	Unlimited	\$5,000	Unlimited	\$6,000	\$15,000	\$6,000	\$10,000	
Family	\$16,300	Unlimited	\$14,700	Unlimited	\$12,000	\$30,000	\$12,000	\$20,000	
Co-insurance	70%	50%	80%	60%	70%	50%	80%	50%	
Lifetime Max Benefit	Unlimited		Unlimited		Unlimited		Unlimited		
Professional Services									
Telemedicine (Virtual Visits w/ MDLive)	\$0	N/A	\$0	N/A	\$0	N/A	\$0	N/A	
Physician Office Visit	\$35	Ded + 50%	\$30	Ded + 40%	\$30	Ded + 50%	\$30	Ded + 50%	
Specialist Office Visit	\$70	Ded + 50%	\$60	Ded + 40%	\$30 / \$60	Ded + 50%	\$30 / \$60	Ded + 50%	
Preventive Care	Covered 100%	Ded + 50%	Covered 100%	Ded + 40%	Covered 100%	Ded + 50%	Covered 100%	Ded + 50%	
Urgent Care	\$75	Ded + 50%	\$75	Ded + 40%	\$50	Ded + 50%	\$50	Ded + 50%	
Diagnostic Procedures									
Outpatient Lab	No Charge	Ded + 50%	No Charge	Ded + 40%	No Charge	Ded + 50%	No Charge	Ded + 50%	
Outpatient X-ray	No Charge	Ded + 50%	No Charge	Ded + 40%	No Charge	Ded + 50%	No Charge	Ded + 50%	
Complex Imaging (CT, PET, MRI, etc)	Ded + 30%	Ded + 50%	Ded + 20%	Ded + 40%	Ded + 30%	Ded + 50%	Ded + 20%	Ded + 50%	
Hospital Care									
Hospital Physician/Surgeon Charges	Ded + 30%	Ded + 50%	Ded + 20%	Ded + 40%	Ded + 30%	Ded + 50%	Ded + 20%	Ded + 50%	
In Patient	Ded + 30%	Ded + 50%	Ded + 20%	Ded + 40%	Ded + 30%	Ded + 50%	Ded + 20%	Ded + 50%	
Outpatient	Ded + 30%	Ded + 50%	Ded + 20%	Ded + 40%	Ded + 30%	Ded + 50%	Ded + 20%	Ded + 50%	
Emergency Room	\$500 + Ded + 30%		\$500 + Ded + 20%		\$500 + Ded + 30%		\$500 + Ded + 20%		
Pharmacy (Only In-Network Shown)	*Preferred	In-Network	*Preferred	In-Network	In Network		In Network		
Deductible	N/A		N/A		N/A		N/A		
Tier I or Preferred Generic	\$0	\$10	\$0	\$10	\$0		\$0		
Tier II or Non-Preferred Generic	\$10	\$20	\$10	\$20	\$20		\$20		
Tier III or Preferred Brand	\$50	\$70	\$50	\$70	\$45		\$45		
Tier IV or Non-Preferred Brand	\$100	\$120	\$100	\$120	\$80		\$80		
Specialty Drugs (Pref/Non-Preferred)	\$150	\$250	\$150	\$250	\$20/\$45/\$80		\$20/\$45/\$80		
Mail Order - 90 day supply	3X copay (Tier I-Tier IV)		3X copay (Tier I-Tier IV)		2.5X copay (Tier I-Tier IV)		2.5X copay (Tier I-Tier IV)		



DELIBERATE AND ACT ON APPROVAL TO HOLD A PUBLIC HEARING AT GROVES CITY HALL ON AUGUST 25, 2025, AT 5:00 P.M. FOR THE PURPOSE TO REVIEW THE CITY OF GROVES PROPOSED FY 2025-2026 TAX RATE AND INCREASE: Councilmember Gay made a motion to deliberate and act on approval to hold a public hearing at Groves City Hall on August 25, 2025, at 5:00 p.m. for the purpose to review the City of Groves proposed FY 2025-2026 tax rate and increase. Councilmember Holmes seconded. There were no questions, and the motion passed unanimously.

DELIBERATE AND ACT ON APPROVAL TO HOLD A VOTE FOR THE PURPOSE TO ADOPT THE CITY OF GROVES' PROPOSED FY 2025-2026 APPROPRIATION ORDINANCE AT THE CITY COUNCIL MEETING ON AUGUST 25, 2025: Councilmember McAdams made a motion to deliberate and act on approval to hold a vote for the purpose to adopt the City of Groves' proposed FY 2025-2026 Appropriation Ordinance at the City Council Meeting on August 25, 2025. Councilmember Gay seconded. Mayor Borne stated this is us voting on whether we can have a vote. There were no questions, and the motion passed unanimously.

DELIBERATE AND ACT ON APPROVAL TO HOLD A VOTE FOR THE PURPOSE TO ADOPT THE CITY OF GROVES' PROPOSED FY 2025-2026 BUDGET AT THE CITY COUNCIL MEETING ON AUGUST 25, 2025: Councilmember Gay made a motion to deliberate and act on approval to hold a vote for the purpose to adopt the City of Groves' proposed FY 2025-2026 Budget at the City Council meeting on August 25, 2025. Councilmember Holmes seconded. City Manager Kevin Carruth stated that there are people out there listening and saying that this looks like the same thing we have done four times already. This is due to one being the appropriation ordinance, and the other the budget, and aligning with the Charter's requirements, along with other things that are required by the state. There were no further questions, and the motion passed unanimously.

DELIBERATE AND ACT ON APPROVAL OF THE PROPOSED TAX INCREASE AND RATE OF \$0.614926 / \$100 FOR THE FY 2025-2026 BUDGET VIA RECORD VOTE: Mayor Pro Tem Konidis made a motion to deliberate and act on approval of the proposed tax increase and rate of \$0.614926 / \$100 for the FY 2025-2026 Budget via record vote. Councilmember McAdams seconded. Mayor Borne stated this is to approve the de minimis tax rate, allowing us to go up to the threshold of \$500,000, and Finance Director Lamar Ozley noted that this is allowing Council to vote on that. Mr. Ozley also stated that this is not setting the rate; the rate will be set on August 25,



2025. Mr. Ozley then explained that this is the proposed rate that the City is considering, and he will send this to the tax assessor's collectors' office tomorrow, along with the Council's vote. City Attorney Brandon P. Monk stated that, for clarification, Mr. Ozley is stating that we have the Council approve the proposed rate, and then on August 25, 2025, there will be a vote on that rate itself, and Mr. Ozley stated that is correct. There were no further questions with Mayor Chris Borne, Mayor Pro Tem Pete Konidis, Councilmember Brandon Holmes, Councilmember Rae Shauna Gay, and Councilmember Mark McAdams all in favor of this item. The motion passed unanimously.

DELIBERATE AND ACT ON THE JULY 28, 2025, INVOICE LIST: Mayor Borne stated the date should read August 11, 2025. Councilmember Gay made a motion to deliberate and act on the August 11, 2025, invoice list, and Councilmember McAdams seconded.

INVOICES: City Manager Kevin Carruth presented invoices for payment totaling \$118,695.59 as follows:

1. Brenntag Southwest, INC	Sodium hydroxide for PH adjustment.	\$7,238.53
2. Chameleon Industries	Polymer for Water Plant.	\$34,728.40
3. Core & Main L.P.	Brass and clamps.	\$11,939.36
4. Lower Neches Valley Authority	Raw water.	\$31,116.47
5. Port Neches-Groves School District	Summer rec program.	\$9,280.00
6. Republic Services, Inc	Container services for June 2025.	\$9,671.83
7. Ruddy & Morris L.L.C.	Compressors for the Activity Building air conditioners.	\$14,721.00

Mayor Borne asked for questions. Mayor Borne requested that the costs for sodium hydroxide, polymer for the Water Plant, and raw water be included on the list we are putting together for pricing increases. Mayor Borne asked if the air conditioning work was completed, and Mr. Carruth stated that the compressors had to be changed out five times. This was not an issue with Rutty & Morris, but the distributor continued to send the wrong compressors. Mr. Carruth also informed the Council that we were not charged for all of those instances, and the issue has been resolved. There were no further questions, and the motion passed unanimously.

CITY COUNCIL WILL HOLD AN EXECUTIVE SESSION PURSUANT TO THE PROVISIONS OF CHAPTER 551 OF THE TEXAS GOVERNMENT CODE, IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE AUTHORITY CONTAINED IN:

- A. SECTION 551.071 (1) (A) – CONSULTATION WITH ATTORNEY WHEN THE GOVERNMENTAL BODY SEEKS ADVICE OF ITS ATTORNEY ABOUT PENDING OR CONTEMPLATED LITIGATION
- B. SECTION 551.072 – DELIBERATION REGARDING REAL PROPERTY.
- C. RECONVENE INTO OPEN SESSION.

Council then convened into Executive Session at 6:08 p.m.

RECONVENE OPEN SESSION: Council reconvened into open session at 7:12 p.m.

Mayor Borne asked for Council comments. Councilmember Holmes thanked the City Manager and staff for their hard work with the budget process. The meeting was adjourned at 7:13 p.m.

ATTEST:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
City Clerk

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Mayor

