

A regular meeting of the Groves City Council was held March 29, 2021 in the Groves City Council Chamber with Mayor Chris Borne, Mayor Pro Tem Sidney Badon, Councilmember Rhonda Dugas, Councilmember Mark McAdams and Councilmember Paul Oliver in attendance. Mayor Borne called the meeting to order. Mayor Pro Tem Badon led the prayer and pledge of allegiance.

APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MARCH 15, 2021 CITY COUNCIL MEETING: Councilmember Dugas moved to approve the minutes of the March 15, 2021 City Council meeting as written and Councilmember McAdams seconded. Mayor Borne asked for questions and there were none. Motion passed unanimously.

Mayor Borne asked for reports.

REPORT – UPGRADE AND CONVERSION TO ALLOW FOR COUNCIL MEETINGS TO BE RECORDED IN AUDIO AND/OR VIDEO: Information Technology Director William Spell addressed the Council and reported on different options for recording Council meetings and making them available to the public. He stated that the cost and means used to record the meetings depends on what the Council wants. He requested that the Council provide him with some guidelines and that he will come back with some options. Mayor Borne explained that this began as an idea to broadcast council meetings live to the City's website with a link so that it could be posted on the City's Facebook page. Mr. Spell reminded the Council that there would be storage requirements. Councilmember McAdams asked what the security measures are and Mr. Spell stated that with a live feed there is no cutting in. Councilmember Dugas requested that the recordings be clear for viewing on Facebook. Mr. Spell explained that the current audio equipment in the council chamber will need to be replaced. Mayor Borne stated that the project would include updating the audio, video, and potentially the speakers in the council chambers. Mr. Spell agreed. Councilmember Oliver asked how long the recordings would stay on the City's website. Mr. Spell stated that they would be available for three months unless otherwise specified. He plans to update the Council in the next month.

RECEIVE FYE 2020 ANNUAL FINANCIAL REPORT FROM THE CITY AUDITOR: Finance Director Lamar Ozley stated that the auditors were present and that they report directly to the City Council. He introduced Jeremy Triska and Pat O'Neil of Wathen, DeShong & Juncker, LLP in Beaumont. Mr. Triska presented the report. Financial Statements: The City received an unmodified rating, which is a "clean opinion". There were no deficiencies found regarding internal control over financial reporting. Federal Awards: There were no deficiencies found regarding internal control over major programs (Coronavirus Relief Fund). Mr. Triska reported that

the majority of expenditures for the Coronavirus Relief Fund were for the Police and Fire Departments. Mr. Trista then highlighted the Statement of Net Position, Changes in Net Position, Schedule of Revenues, Expenditures, and Changes in Fund Balance – Budget and Actual – General Fund, Notes to the Financial Statements, and Schedule of Changes in Net Pension Liability and Related Ratios Texas Municipal Retirement System.

Councilmember Dugas asked if City staff had worked well with their firm and Mr. Trista stated that they had. Mayor Borne thanked Mr. Trista and Mr. O'neil and stated that he looks forward to working with them in the future. Mayor Borne commended the City staff.

Mayor Borne asked for citizen comments. Neil David of 6316 Gonzales addressed the Council and requested that they not take action on the agenda item regarding an agreement between the City of Groves and the Groves Chamber of Commerce and Tourist Center. Mr. David remarked that he thinks the Chamber is not following their objectives. He stated that the City gives the Chamber \$60,000 per year and feels that the City is not getting much out of the Chamber for the amount they are given. He asked that the item be tabled. Mayor Borne thanked Mr. David for his comment.

CONSIDER AUTHORIZING AN EXTENSION OF THE TRUE NORTH DEBRIS MONITORING CONTRACT TO EXTEND IT THROUGH JUNE 30, 2024: City Manager D.E. Sosa stated that this is a contract the City has in place in case there is debris after a hurricane or other disaster. There is an option in the current contract for a one year extension and staff is requesting that we take that option. The cities of Port Neches and Nederland are also extending their contracts. Mayor Pro Tem Badon made a motion to authorize the extension of the True North Debris monitoring contract to extend it through June 30, 2024 and Councilmember Dugas seconded. Mayor Borne asked for questions and Councilmember McAdams asked if the City has used True North in the past. Mr. Sosa stated that the City has not had to use them yet, as we did not need them after the last two hurricanes. Mayor Borne asked if they are approved by FEMA on their rates. Mr. Sosa stated yes and that they verify the amounts in our trucks. Motion passed unanimously.

CONSIDER APPROVAL OF AN AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE CITY OF GROVES AND THE GROVES CHAMBER OF COMMERCE & TOURIST CENTER: Mr. Sosa stated that he had gotten a call from the Chamber Director, Ronnie Boneau, last week asking that this item be tabled because the Chamber Board of Directors had

not had a chance to review the agreement. Councilmember McAdams moved to table this item and Councilmember Dugas seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

DISCUSS AND TAKE ACTION TO AUTHORIZE THE AWARDING OF THE CONTRACT FOR THE GENERAL LAND OFFICE FUNDED STREET IMPROVEMENTS: David Waxman of Waxman & Associates, the City's grant administrator, and William Larrain of Action Civil Engineers, both gave presentations on the street improvements project. Mayor Pro Tem Badon moved to award the contract for the General Land Office Funded Street Improvements to Gulf Coast of Beaumont, TX in the amount of \$827,528.00 and Councilmember McAdams seconded. Mayor Borne asked for discussion. Councilmember McAdams asked if Mr. Larrain will oversee the project and Mr. Larrain stated that his firm will. Mr. Waxman stated that his firm will review the paperwork. Councilmember Oliver asked if the Council will be getting reports on the draws and Mr. Larrain stated that he will keep Mr. Sosa updated. Councilmember Oliver asked if they will come to Council and Mr. Larrain responded yes. Motion passed unanimously. Mr. Waxman stated that there will be some funds left over and that the City has to decide what project it will do. He, as administrator, will have to submit an amendment. He explained that "low to middle income" have to live on whichever street is added. Mr. Sosa added that there are streets that will qualify and that the City will come back with a change order. Mr. Waxman stated that we cannot change more than 25%, but we can come back with another bid. Mayor Borne asked when this has to be done and Mr. Waxman stated within four to six weeks. The amendment will cover the same things that this bid has covered.

DISCUSS AND TAKE ACTION TO AUTHORIZE THE AWARDING OF THE CONTRACT FOR THE GENERAL LAND OFFICE FUNDED TAFT LIFT STATION IMPROVEMENTS: Nestor Barroeta of Schaumburg & Polk, Inc. recommended awarding the bid to BDS Constructors LLC dba Mk Constructors in the amount of \$890,208.00. Mr. Waxman explained that there was only one bid, and that the procurement guidelines uses the wording "competition", so he will need to ask the General Land Office for permission. He stated that he felt like they will probably allow it. He suggested that this item be tabled. The General Land Office will convert the bid to a single source bid. The other option would be to reject the bid and rebid the project. Mayor Borne asked how many other contractors were offered the bid and Mr. Barroeta stated that seven contractors picked up packets. Four were out of Houston and three were in our area. Some felt that this was a difficult project. Mayor Borne asked if time was an issue and Mr. Barroeta stated that it was not. Mayor Pro

Tem Badon moved to table this item and Councilmember McAdams seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

CONSIDER ACCEPTING THE PRIVATE ROAD KNOWN AS HITT ST., FROM FOX AND GRAHAM DEVELOPERS: Councilmember McAdams made a motion that the City accept the private road known as Hitt St. from Fox and Graham Developers and Mayor Pro Tem Badon seconded. Mayor Borne stated that the following were key points from the work session held on this item. The City had an assessment on the road done by Whiteley Oliver Engineering firm. Mayor Borne stated that he felt it was in the best interest of the City to accept the road so that the businesses can move forward. Councilmember McAdams stated that he had also discussed that the street not be done until after the tenants build, so repairs will not have to be done again. There was no further discussion or questions and the motion passed unanimously.

CONSIDER APPROVAL OF PROPOSED DRAINAGE IMPROVEMENTS FOR HITT ST.: Councilmember Dugas moved to approve the proposed drainage improvements for Hitt St. and Councilmember Oliver seconded. Mayor Borne asked for questions or discussion. Mayor Borne stated that these improvements will improve the overall drainage from when it was originally designed and includes closing of 39th St. to improve drainage from one side to the other. Councilmember McAdams stated that this would have to be done for any businesses. Motion passed unanimously.

CONSIDER APPROVAL OF AN ORDINANCE SUSPENDING THE RATES PROPOSED BY TEXAS GAS SERVICE COMPANY'S GAS RELIABILITY INFRASTRUCTURE PROGRAM FILING OF FEBRUARY 11, 2021: City Attorney James Black presented proposed Ordinance No. 2021-04, reading the caption as follows: "Ordinance of the City of Groves, Texas suspending the rates proposed by Texas Gas Service Company's ("TGS" or "Company") Gas Reliability Infrastructure Program ("GRIP") filing made with the City on February 11, 2021; finding that the meeting complies with the Open Meetings Act; making other findings and provisions related to the subject, and declaring an effective date." He explained that Texas Gas Service has filed for a rate increase effective 04/12/2021 unless the City suspends the rate 45 days until 05/27/2021 to give its consultants time to review the rate increase.

Mayor Pro Tem Badon made a motion to approve Ordinance No. 2021-04 suspending the rates proposed by TGS GRIP filing of 02/11/2021 until 05/27/2021 and Councilmember Dugas seconded. Mayor Borne asked if other cities are doing

the same and Mr. Black stated that all area cities have suspended the rates. Motion passed unanimously.

INVOICES: City Manager D.E. Sosa presented invoices for payment totaling \$227,778.81 as follows:

Burton Accounting	Professional services for 2020 audit.	16,900.00
Core & Main	354 antennas for Neptune meters (9,441.18); 354 registers (35,817.72); (1) 1" meter & register (343.75).	45,602.65
Greenscapes Six, LLC	Woodlawn curb ribbon replacement payment #1 (122,148.00); Bay St. curb ribbon replacement payment #2 (12,909.60).	135,057.60
Jefferson Co. Appraisal District	2 nd quarter payment on 2021 entity allocations.	-16,264.23
Municipal H2O	Annual service contract for risk management plan required by the EPA.	6,000.00
Republic Svc.	New construction and Peace & Dignity Program. 4885 Beaumont, 4432 Lawndale, 4422 Lawndale, 3855 Main, Monroe/Indian Springs, 6234 Willis, 6169 32 nd , 5905 25 th , 6115 39 th , 4448 Wilson, 6900 Washington, 4748 Beaumont, 2620 1 st .	7,954.33

Councilmember Dugas made a motion to approve payment of the invoices totaling \$227,778.81 and Councilmember Oliver seconded. Mayor Borne asked if the antennas and registers from Core & Main are needing to be replaced regularly. Mr. Sosa explained that most of them are 10 years old and nearing the end of the radio read battery warranty. Mayor Borne asked if the payment for the Bay St. curb project is the final payment and Mr. Sosa stated it was. Mayor Borne asked if the job had been inspected and Mr. Sosa stated it had and that they had done a punch list three or four weeks ago. Motion passed unanimously.

Mayor Borne asked for Councilmember comments. Councilmember McAdams stated that he appreciated everyone agreeing to do a work session for the Hitt St. issue. Councilmember Oliver stated that it had shed light on a lot of things. Councilmember Dugas agreed.

There was no further business and Mayor Borne adjourned the meeting at 6:23 p.m.



Mayor Borne

ATTEST:



City Clerk

