

MINUTES
WORK SESSION MEETING
OF THE PERRY CITY COUNCIL
September 19, 2011
5:00 P.M.

1. Call to Order: Mayor James E. Faircloth, Jr. presiding officer called to order the work session meeting held September 19, 2011 at 5:00pm.

2. Roll:

Elected Officials: Mayor James E. Faircloth, Jr., Mayor Pro-Tempore Randall Walker, Council Members Phyllis Bynum-Grace, Riley Hunt, William Jackson, Willie King, and Joe Posey.

Staff: City Manager Lee Gilmour, Mike Beecham – Director of Community Development, Capt. William Phelps – Public Safety, Brenda King – Director of Administration, and Christine Sewell – Recording Secretary.

Guests: Ms. Sheila Jones, Mrs. Ellie Loudermilk, Mrs. Terre Walker, Mrs. Vickie Graham, and Mr.& Mrs. Walton Wood.

Press: Jessica Clark – Houston Home Journal

3. Items of Review/Discussion: Mayor James E. Faircloth, Jr.

- 3a. Presentation relative to New Harmonies Exhibit coming to City – Ms. Ellie Loudermilk / Ms. Sheila Jones

Ms. Sheila Jones with the Convention & Visitors Bureau showed a PowerPoint presentation of the New Harmonies exhibit coming to the City from September 08th thru October 20th 2012 which celebrates American roots music and will be housed at the Perry Arts Center. The CVB is asking for council's support, as well as the community and a steering committee is already in place and will be out with further details as time progresses.

- 3b. Request to provide a sculpture at the James E. Worrall Community Center.

Mr. Gilmour reviewed with council the request from Ms. Ellie Williams for permission to place a bench, along with a life-size bronze sculpture of Kody Lucas at the Worrall Community Center at Rozar Park. Mr. Kody Lucas is a lifelong resident of Perry and is battling a brain tumor and has been an outstanding citizen with his contributions to the community. If permission is granted there will be no cost to the city, as all fundraising efforts, sculpture, bench etc, will be handled by Ms. Williams.

Council concurred to allow Ms. Williams to proceed with the project.

3c. Consider authorizing funding requirements for H.E.A.T. program.

Mr. Gilmour advised that a request was made to send all customers, particularly natural gas customers information on the H.E.A.T. program, which provides funds for communities whose citizens may need assistance with their utility bills (gas and electric). It was noted information has been sent about every other year on the program, and last year with the tough economic times, it was decided not to.

Councilmember Hunt inquired on how much had been raised last time; per Mr. Gilmour approximately \$1500 to \$2000. Councilmember Jackson asked if there was any cost to the city to send out; per Mr. Gilmour there would be none as the notice would be sent with the utility bills. In discussions it was noted that the funds may not always come back to assist a citizen of the City, but funds would be brought back into Houston County. On conclusion of discussions, Council agreed that this was a worthy cause, but felt the timing was once again not right and therefore concurred to pass on again this year.

3d. Continue to allow collection of City fees at Worrall Community Center.

Mr. Gilmour advised that currently the Parks & Recreation Department collects fees for various programs, of which 42% are cash transactions and there had been concerns voiced by staff of the exposure of collecting cash and having on site, therefore the question before council should Parks & Recreation continued to allow for collection of cash fees, cease cash collections, or pay cash fees at city hall.

Councilmember Hunt inquired if there had been an audit or any discrepancies; Mr. Gilmour advised an audit has been performed and there were no discrepancies and stressed the issue was with having cash on the premises. Discussion centered on the inconvenience of having customers come to city hall to pay fees and if a risk would be taken in doing so with the potential of losing customers. Councilmember Jackson inquired if all aspects of security have been reviewed. On conclusion of discussions it was the concurrence of Council to have Mr. Gilmour and Capt. Phelps immediately review the facility for security measures currently in place and those that can be added and to address the employees concerns and bring back to Council.

3e. Consider proposal changes to speed limits on GDOT routes in City.

Mr. Gilmour reviewed with council correspondence received from GDOT on updating speed zones. The request was to review speed limits and determine if any needed changed; as well Capt. Phelps provided a memo with recommendations from Public Safety and reviewed with Council. On conclusion of discussions it was the concurrence of Council to incorporate the suggestions of Administration and the recommendations of Public Safety and bring back to Council for final review at the next meeting prior to GDOT's deadline.

- 3f. Consider hiring additional school crossing guard to release certified patrol officer at Matt Arthur Elementary School.

Mr. Gilmour reviewed the request from Public Safety to request hiring and training an additional school crossing guard to relieve the need of a certified police officer at Matt Arthur School, which would relieve an officer each day and allow them to answer other 911 calls for service.

Councilmember Hunt inquired if the Board of Education would be willing to fund the position; Mayor Faircloth advised they would not and during budget sessions it was agreed the City would provide for this service, as the BOE felt it was the responsibility of the local jurisdiction. Councilmember Posey asked if there had been any incident of the officer having to be called away from traffic duty; Capt. Phelps could not recall that there had been and Mr. Gilmour reiterated this duty ties up a qualified officer from performing other duties. Councilmember King inquired on funding and training for the position; it was noted funding would be available for the position and training would be provided by Public Safety's field training officers. Mr. Gilmour also noted the best solution would be for a traffic signal at this location, which Mayor Faircloth had discussed with GDOT, but to no avail.

Council concurred to proceed with funding and training of the position.

- 3g. Consider proposal from ESG Operations, Inc. to manage natural gas operations.

Mr. Gilmour reviewed with Council the proposal from ESG Operations, Inc. and comments from Mr. Ronnie Jones relative to the management of natural gas operations being contracted with them. Mr. Gilmour noted there would not initially be a cost saving benefit, but some highlights of the proposal are: 1) ESG would be responsible for all training of staff, 2). Four full time employees would be shifted to ESG, and 3). One entity would be responsible for after hour calls for all utilities.

Mr. Gilmour felt it was in the best interest of the City to proceed, as ESG has done an excellent job for the City with water and sewer services. Councilmember Hunt inquired if the current employees will have the opportunity for the jobs if transferred to ESG; Mr. Gilmour advised that there is no guarantee, but yes they would. Mayor Pro Tempore Walker asked if the City was the first gas customer for ESG; Mr. Gilmour advised they were already taking care of at least two, if not three other municipalities.

Council concurred to proceed with the agreement between the City and ESG Operations, Inc. for the management of natural gas operations.

- 3h. Consider request from Perry High School for sidewalk extension.

Mr. Gilmour reviewed with Council the costs for the continuation of the sidewalk from Park Avenue to U.S. 41. All work can be done in house at an estimated

cost of \$6,850.00, with funding available from the general construction fund.

Councilmember Hunt was brought the request as a safety concern for the children. Mayor Pro-Tempore Walker inquired if the BOE could be asked to fund half the project; Mr. Gilmour advised they could not as it was not on BOE property. Mayor Pro-Tempore Walker also asked if this was on the project priority list, as it was agreed some time back that a priority of Council was King Circle.

Council concurred before proceeding further that Mr. Gilmour provide a list of priority projects for review.

- 3i. Review economic development coordinator job responsibilities and position qualifications.

Mr. Gilmour reviewed with council and from feedback received the examples of the positions' responsibilities were acceptable, but some changes/additions for qualifications were to be added: 1). Staff support for DDA, 2). Grant writing, and 3). Managing affiliate programs. Councilmember Hunt inquired on salary and where it was allotted from; Mr. Gilmour advised the Hotel/Motel tax; Councilmember Posey felt a requirement should be to attend all meetings; Council agreed. Mr. Gilmour also advised that a committee would be utilized in selecting the candidate.

Council concurred to allow for Mr. Gilmour to proceed with the advertisement of the position with the changes noted.

4. Other items as needed:

Mayor Faircloth advised tomorrow's pre-council meeting would be held in council chambers.

Mayor Faircloth advised the "Walk with Mayor & Council" will be on Thursday, September 22nd at 5:30pm starting at Faith Bible Fellowship Church on Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive.

Mayor Faircloth asked if any member of Council had any items for discussion:

Mayor Pro-Tempore Walker announced the upcoming golf tournament for Chief Potter being sponsored by the Rotary Club on October 27th at the Perry Country Club. Hole sponsorships are available and all proceeds will go to Chief Potter to offset medical expenses.

Councilmember's Bynum-Grace, Hunt, King, Jackson, and Posey had no reports.

Capt. Phelps reminded everyone the fair starts on October 06th and with manpower currently low and the number of citizens that will be attending he is respectfully requesting overtime during this period, which is estimated at approximately \$2500 to \$3000; Council agreed.

Brenda King – Director of Administration – advised two assessments have been done with software providers and three more scheduled this coming week; once completed information will be brought back to Council.

Mayor Faircloth entertained a motion to enter into Executive Session for pending litigation.

5. Executive Session entered at 6:45 p.m.: Mayor Pro-Tempore Walker moved to adjourn the regular meeting and enter into Executive Session for the purpose of pending litigation. Councilmember Hunt seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.
6. Executive Session adjourned; Council regular meeting reconvened. Council adjourned the Executive Session held September 19, 2011 and reconvened into the council regular meeting.
7. Adopted Resolution No. 2011-40 stating purpose of Executive Session held September 19, 2011 was to discuss pending litigation. Councilmember Jackson moved to adopt a resolution stating the purpose of the Executive Session held on September 19, 2011 was to discuss pending litigation. Councilmember Posey seconded the motion and it carried unanimously. (*Resolution 2011-40 has been entered in the City's official book of record*).
8. Adjournment: There being no further business to come before Council in the reconvened meeting held September 19, 2011, Councilmember Posey motioned to adjourn the meeting. Councilmember Jackson seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.