

MINUTES OF SPECIAL
CITY COUNCIL WORKSHOP MEETING HELD
AUGUST 1, 2022

The City Council of Olmos Park, Texas held a special meeting on August 1, 2022 commencing at 5:30 p.m. in the Council Chambers at City Hall. Mayor Deanna Rickabaugh presided and Council members present were Will Brooks, Erin Harrison, Kenyon McDonald and Sharon Plant. Council member not present was Juliana Dusek. Staff present was City Manager, Celia DeLeon; and City Secretary, Kyndra Munoz; Police Chief, Rene Valenciano; Fire Chief, Michael Goodreau; and Public Works Director, Gilbert DeLeon. Also present was Robert Adelman, 120 E. Wildwood Dr.

Mayor Deanna Rickabaugh called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

Citizens to be heard: This time is provided for citizens to address the Council on issues and concerns. No action can or will be taken on issues raised under this portion of the meeting. Please state your name and address for the record and limit your remarks to a period not to exceed three minutes.

There were no citizens to be heard.

Discussion of the FY2023 Budget

Mayor Rickabaugh stated I want to have a general discussion and hear from all of the department heads so we can give City Manager Celia DeLeon some feedback as she prepares the budget.

Celia DeLeon stated with the 2019 legislative update Senate Bill 2 was passed that reduces the rate calculation from 8% to 3.5%. We have been using 3.5% since 2019 and this has affected cities quite a bit. For our I&S rate, our interest is \$286,611 and our principal is \$140,000 so our payment due next year is \$426,611. I have just received the paperwork for the tax roll for this year, however, there is an error in the calculation so I have kicked this back to tax office.

Councilwoman Harrison asked when we receive the monthly sales tax, does this include a list of the businesses we receive it from?

Celia DeLeon stated I requested this list about 3 months ago and I just received it last week. This is a confidential list and it does show there has been a lot of Amazon purchases. If it is purchased in Olmos Park, we receive the tax. We also require the local merchants have Olmos Park Texas on their sales tax certificate and request of copy of the certificate. Police Chief Rene Valenciano has suggested installing an Amazon locker at the Fire Station; I have I started to look into this. For City Hall and Fire Station needs, we have 3 AC units at City Hall and 2 AC units at the Fire Station in which a total of 3 AC units that are not in very good condition. In December 2021, we received a quote to replace 4 AC units in the amount of \$120,000. We now only need 3, however with costs increasing, I would like to include \$120,000 in the budget to replace the AC units. On top of the AC units, we have the roof issue in which we are working with TML on. Also, David Givler has presented a street and drainage maintenance project recommended for patching Annie, Judson and Olmos Drive in the amount of \$300,000.

Councilwoman Plant stated my recommendation is to place \$50,000 in the building maintenance fund.

Celia DeLeon stated next are departmental needs. Ric is our Building Official and Code Compliance Officer. As you all are aware, he has been extremely busy. The Fire Department Lieutenants and Captains are fully trained as his backup and have been a great help. I would like to request to increase staff with one part-time position without benefits to help Ric.

Public Works Director Gilbert DeLeon stated I would like to discuss the oldest garbage vehicle which is the backup truck. I have received recommendations on what needs to be done on the truck. The recommendations included replacing the outside lights and replacing the rubber bushings which are worn out. There is also a leak in the motor. Right now, it is not bad; I do not want it to get to the point where it is bad and it can't be refurbished to fix these issues.

Fire Chief Michael Goodreau stated we try to get the best people in here and when we get them, we work really hard to retain them. Our challenge seems to be turnover and when you look at their exit papers, the main reason for turnover in the Fire Department is they are going after benefits. Of this turnover, 8 personnel have left for Fire Departments offering 7%, 2:1 ratio retirement plan along with a 457 plan. I have asked TMRS to complete a change study plan and present this information to you. Out of the 21 Alamo area cities surveyed, 18 of them are 7% with 2:1 ratio. All members of the Fire Department are certified engineer drivers who wear multiple hats. Our average Firefighter is a certified fire officer, certified inspector, fire instructor, incident safety officer, and driver operator.

Councilwoman Plant stated our plan is extremely fair. We do not just offer 5% for TMRS but the additional 457 that the City has agreed to match up to 3% but a lot of employees don't utilize this one. I have reached out to Enzo Pellegrino who is a former Council member and very knowledgeable about this to ask if he would come and speak on the consequences of this plan. I wish we could do all of this, but we can't compete with larger cities that have larger budgets.

Police Chief Rene Valenciano stated we recently had a few burglaries at Otra Vez and we have apprehended 2 of the suspects today. I have provided information regarding calls of service for the Police Department. We are now dealing with a lot of mental health issues and homeless people which is very labor intensive. I can have an officer out at the jail and one at University Hospital then receive a phone call from a resident saying there is a suspicious person at their home. The mutual aid agreement no longer works like it did 5 years ago. For me, it is more about what level of service do you want? Olmos Park has been rated on the safest suburbs in Bexar County 3 times. I have applied and obtained grant money in excess of \$150,000 that has helped. We would like to have the resources, because not having the resources affects the officers physically, emotionally and mentally.

Councilwoman Plant stated in this climate this is all across the board right now and you will have to adjust. I am okay with raising salaries but to make us competitive as you say is not something we can do. What is the complete cost of adding one officer?

Celia DeLeon stated for a patrolman with benefits, this would cost roughly \$55,000.

Councilman McDonald stated these have been issues since as long as I have been on Council and we have always been a stepping stone City. Keeping the status quo is going to be really hard to do. We can see where we can cut back and where we can add on. We don't have a choice on infrastructure, this must be done. We can see what we can do for the Police and Fire Department and hold off on the Public Works truck.

Councilwoman Harrison stated we can come up with a survey to give current employees; ask them what is important and what they view as a benefit. This way we could look for potential ways of cutting something that is not viewed as a benefit. I would love to look through the interlocal agreement to find better ways to support our Police and Fire Department; is there a way to redefine some of the things we need from Bexar County that could help assist specifically to

mental health? Since things have changed so much, we can take another look at some of the polices we currently have to see if they are still applicable in this day and age.

Councilman Brooks stated I will reiterate the idea of identifying costs and the compensation structure because it sounds like it is the most attractive feature for both the Fire and Police Department. I think we could also try to focus on funding for more officers because of how chaotic it is right now. I would love to see everyone get what they want. It would help to see the potential pluses and minuses of the pension structure and the financial impact of adding another officer.

Councilwoman Plant stated I would like Enzo to come in and speak to the impact on Olmos Park regarding the pension plan. We could also have TMRS come in as well. It helps to show data of surrounding cities to include budget, ad valorem, the number of homes, and square footage of the city. We can't pay what some of these other cities pay. With our tax structure right now, there is no way this City could support the numbers provided by the Fire and Police Chiefs. I have talked about this before, I support bumping up salaries and I think that is important.

Celia DeLeon stated I currently do not have any plans to include a COLA or merit. Is this something you want me to include.

Mayor Rickabaugh stated we have taken some initiative and steps to free up some money on our M&O budget. I think Policing is something we really need to think about. I also believe with inflation where it is, you will have to add COLA or merit raises.

Discussion on general information about Council procedures

This item was not discussed.

There was no further business and the meeting was adjourned at 7:14 p.m.

Deanna Rickabaugh
Mayor

ATTEST:

Kyndra Munoz
City Secretary