

**RICHLAND HILLS CITY COUNCIL
BUDGET WORKSHOP
APRIL 10, 2023
MINUTES**

Roll Call:

Council present

Edward Lopez, Mayor
Curtis A. Bergthold, Mayor Pro Tem
Douglas Knowlton, Place 1
Travis Malone, Place 2
Javier Alvarez, Place 4
G.W. Estep, Place 5

Council absent

Staff present

Candice Edmondson, City Manager
Lindsay Rawlinson, City Secretary
Logan Thatcher, Assistant to the City Manager
Kip Dernovich, Director of Public Works and Capital Projects
Jason Brown, Director of Parks and Recreation
Patricia Albrecht, Finance Director
Chantele Hancock, Library Director
Kimberly Sylvester, Police Chief
Russell Shelley, Fire Chief

CITY COUNCIL WORKSHOP– 6:00 PM

1. Call to order

Mayor Lopez called the Workshop to order at 6:00 p.m.

2. Public Comments

Mary Sullivan, 2724 Spruce Park Drive, addressed several items including her preference for increasing fire department personnel to fully staff the ambulance, employ a street sweeping service, and utilize a beautification committee and fund to replace signage as cars enter the city limits.

Shannon Bledsoe, 2716 Spruce Park Drive, agreed with Ms. Sullivan regarding new welcome signage at the entrances to the City at Rufe Snow Drive and Highway 26 and Baker Boulevard and State Highway 820.

Theresa Bledsoe, 2716 Spruce Park Drive, addressed several items including the creek along Creek Trail Park, street sweeping, and seeking eligible grants for the City to apply.

Joyce Fiaccone, 3800 Labadie, requested the City Council consider installing road humps near schools and parks to slow traffic in those areas.

Jenny Clark, 6973 Hardisty Street, expressed her appreciation to the City Council for listening to the citizens and taking their ideas and suggestions to heart.

City Manager Candice Edmondson introduced new Director of Public Works and Capital Projects Kip Dernovich and announced that today was his first day of work.

3. Discussion: FY 2023 Midyear Review

Finance Director Patricia Albrecht gave a presentation on the FY 2023 Midyear Review. She provided historical data for governmental funds, including property tax, sales tax, and The Link Recreation Fund, as well as the Water and Wastewater Fund, over the previous 10 years.

4. Discussion: FY 2023 Capital Projects

Police Chief Kimberly Sylvester provided an update of the Animal Service Center renovations and advised that interior renovations have been completed and plans for exterior renovations including improving drainage issues surrounding the property are being drawn up as part of the next phase of renovations.

Fire Chief Russell Shelley advised of planned building improvements to the Fire Administration and Public Works building including a preliminary floor plan concept.

Library Director Chantele Hancock provided a brief update on the Library restroom improvement project funded through Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds awarded by Tarrant County and stated that the project is anticipated to take five weeks once notice to proceed has been given.

Director of Parks and Recreation Jason Brown provided an update on several projects including the indoor playground at The Link, Esports equipment, Baker Boulevard medians, and park amenities. Discussion ensued regarding construction of park restrooms and Council agreed that the previously approved restroom at Creek Trail Park should not be constructed and those materials should be utilized to build a park restroom at Rosebud Park instead.

City Manager Candice Edmondson discussed the Glenview Drive Corridor Master Plan project recently approved by the City Council and advised that a kickoff meeting was held March 30, 2023, and the process is anticipated to take approximately nine months to complete. Additionally, she advised of water system improvements including generators that have been ordered and assembled to bring the City into compliance with Senate Bill 3 requirements.

Assistant to the City Manager Logan Thatcher discussed the Request for Qualifications (RFQ) that recently went out for the Comprehensive Plan update.

Discussion ensued regarding a potential disc golf park and a bike trail south of SH 121.

5. Discussion: Debt Obligations and Debt Capacity

Finance Director Patricia Albrecht provided an overview of the City's current property tax supported debt including bonds issued in 2016, 2017, and two in 2019, and provided a listing of eight Capital Improvement Plan projects in order of priority. The total cost for paving, drainage, and water and sewer improvements for these street projects is estimated to be \$7,711,000. She next presented a listing of the next 10 street projects in order of priority and advised that the cost for these 10 projects is estimated to be \$17,050,000. The total cost for these 18 projects is estimated to be \$24,761,000.

Based on the results of the recent citizens survey and comments received by citizens during Council meetings, infrastructure and street improvements have shown to be an urgent issue and of great importance to the residents. Ms. Albrecht presented a possible debt issuance plan and stated the City's financial advisors, Hilltop Securities, have suggested a three cent, three year tax rate increase to finance the top priority projects. If approved, the City Council would authorize three debt issuances in August 2023, 2024, and 2025.

Mayor Lopez recessed the workshop for a brief break at 7:57 p.m. and reconvened at 8:10 p.m.

6. Discussion: Economic Development & Park Development

Assistant to the City Manager Logan Thatcher presented the Economic Development update and provided an overview of undeveloped properties along with the associated zoning. Additionally, he presented a priority listing of park amenities and the total costs related to each park's improvements.

Discussion ensued regarding disc golf in parks, bike trails, new welcome signs at the entry points to the City, and potentially partnering with the City of North Richland Hills for public art.

7. Discussion: FY 2024 Budget Priorities

City Manager Candice Edmondson requested feedback on Council priorities.

Council discussed items such as speed humps to help slow traffic near schools and parks, additional employees for customer service roles and backup staffing, drainage issues on Hovenkamp, a Beautification Committee, grant funding research, and lighting along the hike and bike trail.

Ms. Edmondson provided a brief recap of the budget process and the required timeline for budget consideration and approval. She advised that staff would hold a budget kickoff meeting on Wednesday, April 12, 2023.

8. Adjournment

Motion: A motion was made by Councilmember Knowlton and seconded by Councilmember Estep to adjourn.

Motion carried by a vote of 5-0.

There being no further business to come before the City Council, Mayor Lopez declared the meeting adjourned at 9:30 p.m.

ATTEST:

APPROVED:

Lindsay Rawlinson, City Secretary

Edward Lopez, Mayor