

MINUTES OF AN ONLINE STUDY SESSION OF THE TOWN COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF HIGHLAND PARK, TEXAS, HELD VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE, ON TUESDAY, MAY 19, 2020, AT 8:12 A.M.

Prior to the study session, Gayle Kirby, Town Secretary, explained that as provided by the State of Texas, this online Town Council study session could be viewed online via the Town's website or listened to by telephone, and gave the toll-free and alternate telephone numbers, as well as the access number for citizens to call. Ms. Kirby conducted a roll call of the Town Council Members.

Present at the study session were Mayor Margo Goodwin, Mayor Pro Tem David Dowler, and Town Council Members Jimmy Grisham, Marc Myers, Lydia Novakov, and Craig Penfold.

Mayor Goodwin called the study session to order.

UPCOMING AGENDA DISCUSSION

Action

“Review, discuss, and consider approval of a contract with Dustrol, Inc. and TexasBit for the 2020 Street Resurfacing Project.” On a motion by Council Member Penfold, seconded by Council Member Novakov, the Town Council unanimously approved a contract with Dustrol, Inc. and Texas Bit for the 2020 Street Resurfacing Project. Lori Chapin, Director of Engineering, explained that the three streets included in this year's resurfacing project are Mt. Vernon Avenue, Willow Wood Circle, and Fairfield Avenue. In response to questions, Ms. Chapin explained that a preservation seal is applied to the asphalt; the seal will not weather as quickly as asphalt and will hold its color longer; and Dustrol, Inc. and TexasBit were selected as part of cooperative purchasing agreements with Dallas County and Tarrant County, allowing the Town to utilize favorable pricing and satisfy the State's bidding requirements.

“Review, discuss, and consider approval of Resolution No. 002-20 denying Oncor Electric Delivery Company, LLC's request to amend its Distribution Cost Recovery Factor.” On a motion by Council Member Myers, seconded by Council Member Novakov, the Town Council unanimously approved Resolution No. 002-20 denying Oncor Electric Delivery Company, LLC's request to amend its Distribution Cost Recovery Factor. Steven Alexander, Director of Administrative Services and Chief Financial Officer, explained that the Town is a member of the Oncor Cities Steering Committee (“OCSC”), a coalition of 162 cities served by Oncor, and OCSC has engaged the services of a consultant to review the filing and determine any adjustments that should be made to Oncor's filing. In response to questions, Mr. Alexander explained that the consultant fees are paid by OCSC, and ultimately by utility passes the fees paid along to its customers in the form of a rate increase. If a settlement between OCSC and Oncor cannot be reached, the Public Utility Commission may decide the case. As filed, the impact to Oncor's customers, would be a rate increase of approximately \$0.88 monthly for average residential bills; Oncor would realize an increase of \$75 million to \$79 million in annual revenue.

RESOLUTION NO. 002-20

A RESOLUTION OF THE TOWN OF HIGHLAND PARK, TEXAS FINDING THAT ONCOR ELECTRIC DELIVERY COMPANY LLC (“ONCOR”)’S APPLICATION FOR APPROVAL TO AMEND ITS DISTRIBUTION COST RECOVERY FACTOR TO

INCREASE DISTRIBUTION RATES WITHIN THE TOWN SHOULD BE DENIED; AUTHORIZING PARTICIPATION WITH THE ONCOR CITIES STEERING COMMITTEE; AUTHORIZING THE HIRING OF LEGAL COUNSEL AND CONSULTING SERVICES; FINDING THAT THE TOWN'S REASONABLE RATE CASE EXPENSES SHALL BE REIMBURSED BY ONCOR; FINDING THAT THE MEETING AT WHICH THIS RESOLUTION IS PASSED IS OPEN TO THE PUBLIC AS REQUIRED BY LAW; AND REQUIRING NOTICE OF THIS RESOLUTION TO ONCOR AND LEGAL COUNSEL.

“Review, discuss, and consider confirming the Mayor’s appointment of the Mayor Pro Tem.” On a motion by Council Member Penfold, seconded by Council Member Novakov, the Town Council unanimously approved the appointment of David Dowler as the Mayor Pro Tem. Mayor Goodwin explained that the Mayor Pro Tem conducts Town Council meetings and other duties in the Mayor’s absence, and if a vacancy shall occur in the office of the Mayor, the Mayor Pro Tem shall become Mayor until the next regular election.

“Review, discuss, and consider approval of Resolution No. 003-20 confirming the Mayor’s appointment of members to the Board of Adjustment and Planning Review Board.” On a motion by Council Member Dowler, seconded by Council Member Myers, the Town Council unanimously approved Resolution No. 003-20 confirming the Mayor’s appointment of the following to the Town’s Board of Adjustment and Planning Review Board: Chuck Reeder, Chairman; Sherri Baer, Member; Stacey Furst, Member; Don Snell, Member; Steve Swenson, Member; Cynthia Beard, Alternate Member; and Joan Clark, Alternate Member. Mayor Goodwin explained that earlier this year, the Town Council established term limits of three two-year terms for members of the Board of Adjustment and Planning Review Board and the Zoning Commission. The retirement of Tom Boone, Chairman, created a vacancy in the Chairman position; Chuck Reeder, moving from a Member position, will be eligible to serve three terms as Chairman. Don Snell, moving from an Alternate Member position, and Cynthia Beard, newly appointed Alternate Member, will be eligible to serve three terms. The number of terms the other Members/Alternates may serve was determined by their length of service on the Board: Eligible to serve two additional terms that would end in 2024 are Member Stacey Furst and Alternate Member Joan Clark; eligible to serve one additional term that would end in 2022 are Members Sherri Baer and Steve Swenson. Mayor Goodwin recognized Council Member Penfold, having served ten years on the Board, six of which were as Chairman. Any member may resign their position at any time. She added that Alternate Members are expected to attend all meetings and be prepared to step in when a Member is absent or there is a conflict of interest in the case being considered.

RESOLUTION NO. 003-20

A RESOLUTION OF THE TOWN OF HIGHLAND PARK, TEXAS CONFIRMING THE APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS TO THE BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT AND PLANNING REVIEW BOARD FOR TWO-YEAR TERMS EXPIRING JUNE 3, 2022, AND APPOINTING A CHAIRMAN.

“Review, discuss, and consider approval of Resolution No. 004-20 confirming the Mayor’s appointment of members to the Zoning Commission.” On a motion by Council Member Novakov, seconded by Council Member Penfold, the Town Council unanimously approved Resolution No. 004-20 confirming the Mayor’s appointment of the following to the Town’s Zoning Commission: Margaret Keliher, Chair, and Members Brian Ficke, Alison Hunsicker, Rick Jones, and Carolyn

Seay. As previously referenced, Mayor Goodwin explained that pursuant to the previously established term limits, Madame Chair Keliher and Brian Ficke are eligible to serve three terms which would end in 2026; Rick Jones and Carolyn Seay are eligible to serve two terms which would end in 2024; and Alison Hunsicker is eligible to serve one term which would end in 2022. She reiterated that any member may resign at any time.

RESOLUTION NO. 004-20

A RESOLUTION OF THE TOWN OF HIGHLAND PARK, TEXAS CONFIRMING THE APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS TO THE TOWN'S ZONING COMMISSION.

Consent

No items assigned to this category.

FUTURE AGENDAS DISCUSSION

No items assigned to this category.

REPORTS

“Review and discuss the Financial and Investment Report for the period ending March 31, 2020.” Karen Kurtin, Controller, reviewed the report, explaining that March is the sixth month of the fiscal year, or 50.0% of the year. General and Utility Fund combined revenues were \$25,029,756, or 67.8% of the annual budgeted amounts. Combined expenses and encumbrances were \$18,938,925, or 50.9% of the annual budget. Property tax revenues were 99.4% of the year-to-date projection; sales tax revenues were 124.8% of the year-to-date projection; and building permit revenues were 101.9% of the year-to-date projection. General Fund expenditures were 55.0% of the budgeted amount. Water sales to date were \$43,937 less than projected; revenues were up 24.9% when compared to the same period in the prior year. Ms. Kurtin stated that water sales are largely impacted by rain; in March, rainfall was measured at 6.75 inches, as compared to 2 inches in the same month of the prior year. Utility Fund expenditures were 41.6% of the budgeted amount. The market value of the Town's investment portfolio as of March 31, 2020, was \$41,677,909, and the total portfolio yield was 1.71%. In response to questions, Ms. Kurtin stated that the percentage of the budget expenditures in the Information Technology Department reflects funds spent to date, plus funds encumbered by the issue of purchase orders/contracts for the remainder of the fiscal year; it does not mean that all funds reflected in the report have actually been spent. She added that this applies to other departments such as Parks. The next sales tax payment will be received in June, and will provide a better insight for forecasting sales tax revenues for the remainder of the fiscal year.

“Review and discuss the Quarterly Investment Report for the quarter ending March 31, 2020. Karen Kurtin explained that the Quarterly Investment Report was prepared by Valley View Consulting, the Town's investment advisors, and is normally presented by one of their representatives. Ms. Kurtin stated that the key takeaway for this quarter is that we are entering a period of declining interest rates, citing that TexPool is down approximately one point from the end of December through the current date, starting at 1.31% and ending at 0.3%, and there is a downward trend with the other benchmarks. A laddering strategy with investments maturing at 12, 18, and 24 months is being implemented. Some investments that matured in April were deposited into the Town's PlainsCapital account. Ms. Kurtin explained that Valley View recently

made a solicitation and placed \$3 million in CDs with the Bank of the Ozarks, which was the best option. In response to a question, Ms. Kurtin stated that Bank of the Ozarks has branches in Texas. She briefly summarized various types of investments and where they are placed.

“Review and discuss a report on the School Based Law Enforcement officer program at Armstrong Elementary School and Bradfield Elementary School.” Mayor Goodwin explained that last year, Highland Park and University Park recognized a need for officers at each elementary school during drop-off and pick-up times. Twenty-five percent (25%) of the students in the Highland Park Independent School District are residents of Highland Park. Rather than the District hiring full-time officers and reducing funds from the pay structure for teachers, the Town of Highland Park chose to provide funding and resources to the District to pay for two law enforcement officers. By doing so, the officers are employees of the District and have the jurisdiction to go to any school within the District; if the officers were employees of the Town, their jurisdiction would be limited to the Town’s corporate limits, meaning that they would have limited jurisdiction in any school located in University Park. The City of University Park hired three full-time officers who are utilized for traffic/parking enforcement in the City when they are not at the three elementary schools within the City limits. Rick Pyle, Director of Public Safety, introduced Mark Rowden, Chief of Police for the District. Chief Rowden thanked the Town Council for the opportunity to report on the first quarter of the program. He explained that two officers were hired in December, David Robertson, a retired officer from Dallas County, and Michael Connell, who previously served as a School Resource Officer in the high school. Chief Rowden listed many assignments, calls, contacts, types of investigations, and training hours completed by the officers from January 6, 2020 to March 27, 2020. Their work structure changed abruptly with the closure of the schools in March as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. The officers’ focus on facilities security then became a priority, and included responding to reports of unauthorized activity on school grounds, distribution of devices to students, monitoring compliance with COVID-19 restrictions with end-of-year activities, as well as security systems audits, supplementing the HPDPS and the UP Police Department on calls immediately after the lockdown. In addition, legislative mandates in Senate Bill 11 required changes in emergency operations planning and standard response protocol. The officers acquired and distributed personal protection equipment (“PPE”) for first responders at the District, Highland Park, and University Park. Following a discussion regarding the officers’ activities at the schools between drop-off and pick-up times, activities away from the elementary schools, and daily logs of their activities, Mayor Goodwin stated that the Town gave the money to the District to provide the officers the flexibility as employees of the District, to be more useful between their primary hours at the elementary schools to provide service throughout the community. She reiterated that the schools are most vulnerable during the time of drop-offs and pick-ups when the doors are unlocked and students are going in and out; during the day, the schools are basically locked down. Following a discussion about school security, Rick Pyle stated that the Town’s regular patrol officers provide visibility around the school campuses during the school year by parking their patrol vehicles, and walk around the schools, in addition to their regular patrol duties in the Town.

“Review and discuss plans for resuming the Town’s full-service operations in response to the COVID-19 PANDEMIC.” Bill Lindley, Town Administrator, explained that during the past 60 days, the focus was placed upon meeting citizens’ needs while addressing safety for the residents, and for the staff in providing essential services. As of May 15, 2020, 18 confirmed cases of COVID-19 had been reported by Dallas County, with no deaths. Based on recommendations by President Donald Trump and Dallas County guidelines, the gradual reopening of businesses and

public facilities would be based on a 14-day flattening or decrease in cases. Due to more readily available testing, a slight short-term up-tick may be experienced. Two new “norms” during this time are continuing the practice of social distancing, maintaining a distance of at least six feet between persons, and requiring masks covering the nose and mouth to be worn in public buildings, which are consistent with State agencies. An up-tick in reported cases may require reverting back to more stringent practices. Mr. Lindley reviewed the precautions taken from March to April (Phase 1), which included shifting to online services, videoconferencing meetings, remotely working by 23% of the Town’s employees, and closing tennis courts and parks, to name a few examples. During Phase 2, from April through May, Town services were significantly reduced: the Municipal Court was closed pursuant to a State directive, and the Library was closed, but later began offering curbside pick-up and drop-off of materials reserved by patrons online and presenting children’s programs online. Phase 3, May through June, may require some curtailments in the level of service, such as offering lap-swim in the Town’s Swimming Pool, but not opening the pool for recreational swimming due to the challenge of maintaining social distancing, especially among children. Mr. Lindley asked the Town Council for input regarding the resumption of public meetings at Town Hall, and suggested various scenarios for the Town Council to meet in either the Town Council Chamber or the Map Room (Executive Conference Room). He presented photos demonstrating 6-foot social distancing, signage regarding required masks, and Plexiglas partitions utilized throughout the building for conference tables and public areas such as the Library and Customer Service. In response to a question, Bill Lindley stated that the Town is currently requiring any employee reporting to Town Hall to take their temperature and wear a mask when entering and exiting the building. Mayor Goodwin added that hand sanitizer stations have been located throughout the building as well. She commended Bill Lindley and the staff for an excellent job in proactively addressing safety precautions, citing as examples cordoning off playground equipment, removing nets from the tennis courts, removing park benches to insure social distancing, and utilizing Town employees to serve as park rangers speaking to patrons and politely enforcing social distancing and regulations prohibiting alcohol and food in the parks. Mayor Goodwin concluded by saying that the number of cases reported by Dallas County has held at 18 for almost one month, and for that, she is very pleased.

Mayor Goodwin adjourned the study session at 10:21 a.m.

APPROVED on this the 2nd day of June, 2020.

BY:



Margo Goodwin
Mayor

ATTEST:



Gayle Kirby
Town Secretary