

MINUTES OF AN ONLINE MEETING OF THE TOWN COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF HIGHLAND PARK, TEXAS, HELD VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE, AT 8:00 A.M. ON TUESDAY, AUGUST 18, 2020.

Tempest Brunson, Interim Town Secretary, explained that as provided by the State of Texas, this online Town Council meeting could be viewed online or listened to by telephone, and gave the toll-free and alternate telephone numbers, and the access number for citizens to call. The public was provided an opportunity to email a question or comment, which closed at 3:00 p.m. on Monday, September 17, 2020. Mrs. Brunson conducted a roll call of the Town Council Members. Present at the meeting were Mayor Margo Goodwin, Mayor Pro Tem David Dowler, and Town Council Members Jimmy Grisham, Marc Myers, Lydia Novakov, and Craig Penfold.

Mayor Goodwin introduced herself, called the work session to order at 8:01 a.m., and asked if any Town Council Members wished to discuss any of the items on the Regular Agenda. Hearing none, Mayor Goodwin closed the work session at 8:03 a.m.

Mayor Goodwin gave the Invocation.

Mayor Goodwin asked if anyone calling in wished to address the Town Council and explained that the Town Council may not discuss or make decisions on items not listed on the agenda. Issues raised may be referred to staff for research and possible future action. No callers responded.

On a motion by Council Member Grisham, seconded by Council Member Novakov, the Town Council voted unanimously to approve Items A. through D. on the Consent Agenda. Prior to the vote, Mayor Goodwin explained that the Town Council reviewed these items prior to the meeting. She asked if any Town Council Member wished to ask questions or make any revisions or corrections, to which there was no response.

- A. *Consider awarding the Town's employee health insurance plan for Fiscal Year 2020-21 to Cigna and the dental insurance plan to United Health Care.*
- B. *Consider approval of the minutes of the Town Council meeting held on August 4, 2020.*
- C. *Consider approval of the minutes of the Town Council study session held on August 4, 2020.*
- D. *Consider approval of the minutes of the Special Town Council meeting held on August 6, 2020, at Douglas Park.*

Consider approval of the Town Council appointment of the Town Secretary. This agenda item is provided as an opportunity for the Town Council to consider the appointment of the Town Secretary; as required by Section 3.06 and 4.03 of the Town Charter. Joanna Mekeal has been employed with the Town for the last five years currently working with the Finance and Human Resources Department. In addition to her regular duties, Mrs. Mekeal prepares the agenda packets

and minutes for the Finance and Audit Committee. Mayor Goodwin and Mayor Pro Tem Dowler were part of the interview committee. Council Member Penfold commented that he knows Mrs. Mekeal and was happy to hear she applied for this position. On a motion by Mayor Pro Tem Dowler, seconded by Council Member Penfold, the Town Council voted unanimously to approve the appointment of Joanna Mekeal, Finance and Human Resources Specialist, to Town Secretary.

Consider approval of a contract with Axis Contracting, Inc. for the Overhill Drive Reconstruction and Utility Improvements project. The Mayor recused herself from this item as she resides on Overhill Drive. Lori Chapin presented the item, explaining the Pavement Asset Management Plan (PAMP) and the pavement condition index (PCI) value was determined for each roadway within the Town. Overhill Drive exhibited significant road deterioration, resulting in a score of thirty-eight (38) out of a possible one hundred (100) points. The low score confirmed the need for a total reconstruction of the roadway including the pavement, subbase, and curb and gutter. In addition, the water and sewer lines that are located within the roadway will also be replaced. ADA ramps and sidewalks will be replaced on an as needed basis. Funding will be from the Capital Projects Fund. Mayor Pro Tem Dowler asked for questions from the Council, and there were none. On a motion by Council Member Novakov, seconded by Council Member Grisham, the Town Council voted unanimously to approve a contract with Axis Contracting, Inc. for the Overhill Drive Reconstruction and Utility Improvements project.

Consider approval of an Interlocal Agreement by the Town of Highland Park and the City of University Park with the Highland Park Independent School District providing an allocation of Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act Funding. The Town of Highland Park ("Town") and the City of University Park ("City") staff recently discussed with Highland Park Independent School District ("District") an initiative to allocate up to ten percent (10%) of their respective Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act ("CARES Act") funds to the District. In addition to the State's \$50,000, the District will receive \$185,000 provided by the Town and the City through the proposed revenue-sharing participation. The Town and City have determined they will not expend their full share of the funds. CARES Act projects must be completed by November 30, 2020. Any unspent funds will be returned to the County, and ultimately the federal government, by December 11, 2020. A secondary benefit of the proposal is keeping citizens' federal tax dollars local. The Town's participation is limited and will not exceed \$49,956. Council Member Penfold requested the invoices for related attorney's fees. He also suggested instead of giving the District a lump sum, the Town may choose to provide five (5) Wello temperature devices to the District. The Mayor indicated that the money provided to the District was held to the same restrictions as the Town and the City. The District would provide an itemized list of how the money is used to the County. It is up to the County to accept or reject the District's allocations. On a motion by Council Member Myers, seconded by Council Member Grisham, the Town Council voted unanimously to approve the interlocal agreement by the Town and the City to provide an allocation of Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act funding to the District.

Review and discuss a proposal to set a preliminary property tax rate of \$0.230000 per \$100 of taxable assessed value, and schedule one public hearing to receive public comments regarding the proposal to consider the tax increase. The Texas Property Tax Code requires that when a proposed tax rate exceeds the "no-new-revenue tax rate," the taxing unit's governing body must vote on a

proposal to consider a tax increase. The 2020 Tax Rate Calculation Worksheet, resulting from these values, is expected to be available by August 23, 2020 and will detail the computation of the Town's "no-new-revenue tax rate" and "voter-approval tax rate." On a motion by Council Member Penfold, seconded by Council Member Myers, the Town Council voted unanimously to approve a proposal to set a preliminary property tax rate of \$0.230000 per \$100 of taxable assessed value, and schedule one public hearing to receive public comments regarding the proposal to consider the tax increase.

Review, discuss, and consider approval of a resolution directing the Budget Officer or designee to calculate the voter-approval tax rate in the manner provided for a special taxing unit. Senate Bill 2 (S.B. 2), also known as the Texas Property Tax Reform and Transparency Act of 2019, passed during the 2019 legislative session, making significant changes to the property tax rate setting process. Texas Tax Code Chapter 26 Assessment Section 26.04 (c-1) Submission of Roll to Governing Body; No-New-Revenue and Voter-Approval Tax Rates, as amended by S.B. 2, permits the governing body of a taxing unit other than a special taxing unit to direct the designated officer or employee to calculate the voter-approval tax rate of the taxing unit in the manner provided for a special taxing unit if any part of the taxing unit is located in an area declared a disaster area during the current tax year by the governor or by the president of the United States. Calculation of the voter-approval rate in the manner provided for a special taxing unit (8%) is as follows: no-new-revenue maintenance and operations rate x 1.08 + current debt rate. Note that as the Town has no current debt, the current debt rate is \$0. Adoption of the tax rate rests solely with the Town Council and is not predicated on the no-new-revenue rate or the voter-approval rate. The calculation only changes the voter-approval rate threshold that triggers an automatic election from 3.5% to 8% above the no-new-revenue rate. To the extent that Council approves the proposed resolution, the voter-approval rate presented in the Adopted Budget and in required publications will be at the 8% threshold rather than the 3.5% threshold. The Mayor stated that the Council had no intention of raising the tax rate, but this preserves future options for the Council. The Mayor then asked the Council if they had questions or comments, to which there were none. On a motion by Council Member Penfold, seconded by Council Member Novakov, the Town Council voted unanimously to approve a resolution directing the Budget Officer or designee to calculate the voter-approval tax rate in the manner provided for a special taxing unit.

Approved on this the 1st day of September 2020.

APPROVED:



Margo Goodwin

Mayor

ATTEST:



Tempest Brunson
Interim Town Secretary

