

## REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING – August 10, 2020

The City Council of the City of La Grange met in Regular Session on Monday, August 10, 2020, in the City Hall Council Chambers at 155 E. Colorado St. with the following members present: Mayor Janet Moerbe, Mayor Pro tem John J. Cernosek, Councilmember Bonnie Busch, Councilmember Jan Dockery, Councilman Quenten Gonzalez, Councilman Pat Janca, Councilman Ken Taylor, Councilmember Kathy Weishuhn, and Councilmember Violet Zbranek. Staff present: City Manager Shawn Raborn, Chief of Police David Gilbreath, and City Secretary Janet Bayer. Visitors: Stacey Norris, Pastor Candy O'Meara, Tom Hudson.

Mayor Moerbe called the meeting to order. Next were pledges to the US and Texas Flags. Pastor Candy O'Meara of St. Paul Lutheran Church gave the invocation.

Under Petitions, Tom Hudson spoke.

### CONSENT AGENDA

Discuss and or Consider approval of July minutes.

Discuss and or Consider Appointment to Main Street Advisory Board. The Main Street Advisory Board is requesting that Ms. Lauren Lehmann who currently owns a building on the Square and works at the Thrivent office on the Square be appointed to the Main Street Advisory Board.

Discuss and or Consider Appointment to La Grange Housing Authority. The La Grange Housing Authority's Board of Commissioners is recommending the appointment of Mr. William "Billy" Roensch as a Commissioner. He will be taking the vacant spot of Ms. Brenda Gilmore.

A **Motion** was made by Councilmember Zbranek, **Second** Councilmember Dockery to approve the Consent Agenda item(s) as presented. Motion carried 8-0.

### REGULAR AGENDA

Discuss and or Consider a Resolution adopting the updated Parks Master Plan. Staff is currently working on the submittal of the grant application for the new proposed park at Hope Hill. TPWD recently moved the deadline up one month and now the application is due November 6<sup>th</sup>. In order to be eligible for grant funding in November, we need to update our current Parks Master Plan. Our current plan expired in June and we are now presenting for Council approval the updated plan. Staff utilized the input from the community that we obtained as part of the KaBoom project to assist in the updating of the current plan. We are currently working to finalize the updated plan and are requesting Council approval of the draft plan so that we can submit the plan for consideration to Texas Parks and Wildlife by September 1<sup>st</sup>. Staff will review the draft plan as part of the meeting and will provide a copy of the final plan to council in September. **Motion** Mayor Pro tem Cernosek, **Second** Councilman Janca to approve the draft plan of the Parks Master Plan. Motion carried 8-0

Report on General Obligation Refunding Bonds, Series 2020. Staff gave a report on the refunding of the 2011 Certificate of Obligation. In June, Council authorized staff to proceed with the refunding, if our Net Present Value Savings (NPVS) was saving at least five (5%) percent. The current outstanding par value of the 2011 CO is \$4,420,000 with a future interest rate between 3.00% - 3.75% over the remaining 10 years of the bond. The City of La Grange obtained bids in July and we received a very good bid from Citizens State Bank. The Net Present Value Savings is 10.97%. We are going to be able to realize a

savings of \$533,331.86 in future interest costs. The transaction is scheduled to be completed on August 17, 2020.

Discuss and or Consider Proposed Property Tax Rate and Schedule Public Hearings. As previously discussed, the process of adopting the property tax rate to support the budget changed this year. In 2019, the Texas Legislature passed Senate Bill 2, also known as the Texas Property Tax Reform and Transparency Act of 2019. S.B.2 changed the system of property taxation in three primary ways: (1) lowering the tax rate a taxing unit can adopt without voter approval and requiring a mandatory election to go above the lowered rate; (2) making numerous changes to the procedures by which a city adopts a tax rate; and (3) making several changes to the property tax appraisal process. Staff is proposing to set the maintenance and operations (M&O) property tax rate at \$0.1436 per \$100 valuation, and the interest and sinking (I&S) rate at \$.0657 per \$100 valuation. The total remains the same as FY 2019-2020. Staff requested Council action to accept the proposed current tax rate of .2093 and setting a public hearing on the tax rate for September 14<sup>th</sup>, 2020 at 6:10 pm, at the City Hall Council Chambers. **Motion** Councilmember Weishuhn, **Second** Councilman Gonzalez to accept the proposed current tax rate of .2093 and setting a public hearing on the tax rate for September 14<sup>th</sup> at 6:10 pm. Motion carried 8-0.

Staff then did a presentation on the 2020-2021 Fiscal Year (FY) Annual Operating Budget with City Council. This budget reflects the ongoing mission of the La Grange City Council to maintain cost effective programs while continually focusing on preserving and enhancing the quality of life that is enjoyed by all La Grange citizens. The development of this annual budget required many hours of research and preparation. The City Manager thanked staff and each department for their input and efforts. The budget is driven this year by grant programs and funding associated with Hurricane Harvey. The funds provided will make a lasting impact on the infrastructure of this community and our ability to meet the current and future needs of the community. The total budget is down 8.38% over the total budget for FY 2019-2020. While the COVID-19 global pandemic has created many challenges and opportunities for the upcoming budget year, the City remains in a strong financial position. This budget will continue to provide the appropriate resources to support our public safety services, maintain quality leisure and recreational opportunities, and continued investment in the City's infrastructure. The City of La Grange will continue to be diligent in the use of City funds and will remain flexible to adapt to the changing environment.

#### Chief of Police Update

Chief of Police David Gilbreath gave his report for July 2020. Chief Gilbreath reported that there were 12 units at Weeren Storage that were burglarized over the weekend, but the stolen property valued at around \$18,000 was recovered. There has been a reported vehicle burglary on Sarah Jo Street, but the valuables were abandoned close by. The department continues to receive lots of MHMR calls. The department is also working to clean up abandoned vehicles located throughout the City.

#### City Manager Update

La Grange ISD opens for the new school year on August 20th. The last residential bulk pick up held July 25<sup>th</sup> was a success. Several truck loads were picked up throughout the city limits. The Home to Texas Internship Program went well this summer. The City is planning to participate again next year. The Splashpad is being well utilized this summer. Parents/Students are signing up for the After-School Program offered through the Randolph Recreation Department.

At 7:13 PM a **Motion** was made by Councilmember Weishuhn, with a **Second** by Councilman Taylor that the meeting be adjourned. Motion carried.

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Janet Bayer, City Secretary  
These Minutes Approved by City Council on:

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Janet Moerbe, Mayor

## **REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING – August 24, 2020**

The City Council of the City of La Grange met in Regular Session on Monday, August 24, 2020, in the City Hall Council Chambers at 155 E. Colorado St. with the following members present: Mayor Janet Moerbe, Mayor Pro tem John J. Cernosek, Councilmember Bonnie Busch, Councilmember Quentin Gonzalez, Councilmember Pat Janca, Councilmember Ken Taylor, Councilmember Kathy Weishuhn, and Councilmember Violet Zbranek. Councilmember Jan Dockery was absent. Staff present: City Manager Shawn Raborn, Chief of Police David Gilbreath, and City Secretary Janet Bayer. Visitor: Stacey Norris.

Mayor Moerbe called the meeting to order. Next were pledges to the US and Texas Flags. Councilmember Pat Janca gave the invocation.

### **REGULAR AGENDA**

Discuss and or Consider charge off of delinquent utility accounts. Our charge off dollar amount for this period is \$13,877.72 and the number of uncollectible accounts has increased from the prior period from 47 to 53. Office staff collected \$8,544,633 out of a total sales of \$8,558,511 which is a collection rate of 99.8%. A total of 37,210 bills were prepared and mailed for the period and 37,157 of these were collected and paid in full. Out of an average of 3,100 bills per month, there is an average of 350 which remain unpaid after the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month. On the 26<sup>th</sup> day of the month the Utilities office prepares a list of accounts which remain unpaid. An average of 30 accounts are left unpaid and are dispatched to be disconnected. The office staff works diligently to collect all unpaid bills. They maintained an excellent and outstanding record by collecting 99.8% of all bills mailed for the twelve month period covered in this report. This has been made possible by their adhering to our established disconnect policy. Enforcement of this policy is not always a pleasant job and therefore the office staff and disconnect servicemen are to be highly commended for their hard work and dedication. Mayor Moerbe on behalf of the city council thanked the staff for the outstanding job they do. **Motion** Mayor Pro tem Cernosek, **Second** Councilmember Weishuhn to approve the charge off of delinquent utility accounts. Motion carried 7-0.

The next item was a public hearing on FY 2020-21 City of La Grange Budget. The Public Hearing was opened by Mayor Moerbe at 6:15 PM. As a part of the annual budget process the city is required to hold a public hearing on the adoption of the FY 2020-2021 operating budget for the City of La Grange. The FY 2020-2021 Operating Budget is \$13,906,960. The General Fund is \$4,581,333; Utility Fund is \$9,085,080; and the Debt Service Fund is \$240,547. There being no comments from the public, the Public Hearing was closed at 6:16 PM.

Staff reviewed the Annual Operating Budget for the Fiscal Year of 2020-2021. This budget reflects the ongoing mission of the La Grange City Council to maintain cost effective programs and services at current levels, while continually focusing on preserving and enhancing the quality of life that is enjoyed by all La Grange Citizens. The total budget is \$13,906,960 with a General Fund of \$4,581,333, a Utility Fund of \$9,085,080, and a Debt Service Fund of \$240,547. The budget is driven this

year by grant programs and funding associated with Hurricane Harvey. The funds provided will make a lasting impact on the infrastructure of this community and our ability to meet the current and future needs of the community. The total budget is down 8.38% over the total budget for FY 2019-2020. This budget will raise more total property taxes than last year's budget by \$16,495, or 3.32%, and of that amount, \$6,839 is tax revenue to be raised from new property added to the tax roll this year.

The next item was to discuss and or Consider on First Reading of an Ordinance making appropriations for the support of the City of La Grange for the fiscal year beginning October 1, 2020 and ending September 30, 2021; appropriating money to a sinking fund to pay interest and principal due on the City's indebtedness; and adopting the annual budget of the City of La Grange for the 2020-2021 fiscal year which includes the General Fund, the Utility Enterprise Fund and the La Grange Economic Development Corporation Budget. **Motion** Councilmember Weishuhn, **Second** Mayor Pro tem Cernosek to approve this Ordinance on First Reading. A roll call vote was taken: Councilmember Busch for, Mayor Pro tem Cernosek for, Councilmember Dockery absent, Councilmember Gonzalez for, Councilmember Janca for, Councilmember Taylor for, Councilmember Weishuhn for, Councilmember Zbranek for. Motion carried 7-0.

Discuss and or Consider First Reading of an Ordinance amending Chapter 13, Code of Ordinances, City of La Grange, Texas, as Recodified by amending article 13.02 section 13.02.031 subsection (1)(a) establishing and fixing the charges and fees for water service furnished to residential locations within the city based on water usage and/or conservation and subsection (2)(a) establishing and fixing the charges and fees for water service furnished to commercial locations within the city based on water usage and/or conservation authorizing the city to collect same and providing for an effective date. Staff is proposing to increase the base residential water rate from \$27.45 to \$27.84 per month. The change is based on CPI (Consumer Price Index) adjustment of one point four percent (1.4%). The volumetric rate for residential water service will increase four cents per thousand gallons based on the volume of water used. With the proposed rate modification we are still below the average rates for cities our size in the State of Texas according to the annual TML water survey. The average bill for cities our size with a monthly consumption of 5,000 gallons is \$42.10 compared to \$34.92 in La Grange. We also compare favorably with cities our size with a monthly water consumption of 10,000 gallons, \$65.80 compared to \$46.72 in La Grange. **Motion** Mayor Pro tem Cernosek, **Second** Councilmember Janca to approve this Ordinance on First Reading. A roll call vote was taken: Councilmember Busch for, Mayor Pro tem Cernosek for, Councilmember Dockery absent, Councilmember Gonzalez for, Councilmember Janca for, Councilmember Taylor for, Councilmember Weishuhn for, Councilmember Zbranek for. Motion carried 7-0.

Discuss and or Consider First Reading of an Ordinance amending Chapter 13, Code of Ordinances, City of La Grange, Texas, as Recodified on , by amending article 13.03 section 13.03.001 subsection (a) establishing and fixing the charges and fee for the sewer service furnished to certain residential locations; by amending chapter 13, article 13.03., section 13.03.001 (a)(1)(b) by amending the rate for the use of standard fixtures in a single dwelling; and by amending chapter 13, article 13.03, section 13.03.001 (a)(3)(b), by amending the rate for the use of water in excess of 3,000 gallons to commercial locations and authorizing the city to collect same and providing for an effective date. Staff is proposing to increase the base residential waste water rate from \$12.46 to \$12.63 per month. The volumetric rate for residential waste water service will increase three cents per thousand. The current rate charged our commercial customers for waste water service is a base rate of \$13.03 for the first 3,000 gallons of water usage and a \$2.14 fee per thousand gallons of water in excess of three thousand gallons per month. The proposal is to increase the base rate to \$13.21 and to increase the volumetric rate from the current \$2.14 to \$2.17 per thousand gallons in excess of the 3,000 gallon minimum. With the proposed rate modifications, La Grange is still below the average rates for cities our size in the State of Texas according to the annual TML waste water survey. The average bill for cities our size with an average

consumption of 5,000 gallons is \$32.71 compared to \$20.05 in La Grange. **Motion** Councilmember Zbranek, **Second** Councilmember Busch to approve this Ordinance on First Reading. A roll call vote was taken: Councilmember Busch for, Mayor Pro tem Cernosek for, Councilmember Dockery absent, Councilmember Gonzalez for, Councilmember Janca for, Councilmember Taylor for, Councilmember Weishuhn for, Councilmember Zbranek for. Motion carried 7-0.

Discuss and or Consider on First Reading an Ordinance amending Chapter 13, Code of Ordinances, City of La Grange, Texas, as Recodified on January 8, 2007, by amending article 13.04 section 13.04.031, subsection (1)(b) and (2)(b) establishing and fixing the charges and fees for electric service furnished to residential and master meter dwelling units; by amending article 13.04 section 13.04.031, subsections 3(c) establishing and fixing the charges and fees for electric service furnished to commercial locations, based on electric usage; authorizing the city to collect same; and providing for an effective date. As part of the budget process this year, staff is proposing to modify the electric customer charge. The base electric customer charge will increase from \$12.50 per month to \$13.50 per month. The rate change is needed to keep pace with inflation and due to the overall cost increases in providing this service. Staff is also reviewing the implementation of Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI) as part of the FY 2020-21 Budget. **Motion** Councilmember Weishuhn, **Second** Councilmember Gonzalez to approve this Ordinance on First Reading. A roll call vote was taken: Councilmember Busch for, Mayor Pro tem Cernosek for, Councilmember Dockery absent, Councilmember Gonzalez for, Councilmember Janca for, Councilmember Taylor for, Councilmember Weishuhn for, Councilmember Zbranek for. Motion carried 7-0.

Discuss and or Consider on First Reading an Ordinance amending Chapter 13, garbage and trash, Code of Ordinances, City of La Grange, Texas, as amended by amending chapter 13, section 13.05.014, charges for collections, by increasing the rates for residences utilizing garbage containers of a capacity of 96 gallons as set forth in subsection (1) of section 13.05.014; providing for an effective date of said amended Ordinance. Staff presented for council consideration a solid waste utility rate change that would go into effect with the November 1<sup>st</sup> bill. The rate change is in accordance with our Waste Management contract that we entered into in 2014. The base rate for residential service will increase by 3% in accordance with the contract. The base residential rate will increase from \$24.47 per month to \$25.20 per month. The senior citizen rate will increase from \$22.34 to \$23.14 per month. The additional cart charge will be increasing from \$7.18 to \$7.40 per month. This is the fifth increase in the residential rate in six years and the fourth increase in commercial rate in six years. Commercial rates were reduced as part of the new agreement and have increased by three percent in accordance with the contract. The current contract will expire in December of 2021. The rate includes solid waste collection once a week, curbside recycling every other week, quarterly bulk curbside waste collection, two free brush collections a year and two additional cleanup opportunities a year. Holidays include New Year's Day, Memorial Day, July 4<sup>th</sup>, Labor Day, Thanksgiving and Christmas. **Motion** Councilmember Janca, **Second** Councilmember Zbranek to approve this Ordinance on First Reading. A roll call vote was taken: Councilmember Busch for, Mayor Pro tem Cernosek for, Councilmember Dockery absent, Councilmember Gonzalez for, Councilmember Janca for, Councilmember Taylor for, Councilmember Weishuhn for, Councilmember Zbranek for. Motion carried 7-0.

#### Chief of Police Update

Chief of Police Gilbreath had nothing to report for this meeting.

#### City Manager Update

Sales Tax collections have stabilized. Next month, in September, collections will be down as last September was unusually high. This week is the three year anniversary of Hurricane Harvey. By LCRA measurements, we crested at 54.2 feet with today's current measurement at 4.1 feet for a point of reference.

Three years later the physical nature of our community is changing and will continue to change with lots of infrastructure improvements. TXDOT is beginning the survey process to widen Hwy 77 North from the bypass to the county line. This is a proposed 5 to 10 year plan. The new Hwy 71 bridge is still on TXDOT's letting schedule. La Grange is at a 56.7% response rate for the U.S. Census Bureau.

At 6:46 PM a **Motion** was made by Councilmember Weishuhn, with a **Second** by Councilmember Taylor that the meeting be adjourned. Motion carried.

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Janet Bayer, City Secretary  
These Minutes Approved by City Council on:

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Janet Moerbe, Mayor