

## REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING – December 11, 2017

The City Council of the City of La Grange met in Regular Session on Monday, December 11, 2017 in the City Hall Council Chambers at 155 E. Colorado St. with the following members present: Mayor Janet Moerbe, Councilmember Bonnie Busch, Councilmember Deborah Bradley, Mayor Pro tem John J. Cernosek, Councilman John Eilert, 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 Lisa Oltmann. Visitors: Andy Behlen, Leonard Leffler and others.

Mayor Moerbe called the meeting to order. Pastor Marcia Kiefer of Shared Lutheran Ministries gave the invocation.

The first item, discuss 2018 City Officer's Election was presented to council. This item was for information purposes only to note dates for the 2018 city officers election as relates to filing and voting.

The next item was to discuss and or consider appointments to Main Street Board. The Main Street Board is requesting that Ms. Bobbie Nash, Ms. Janae Littrell and Ms. Jackie Daniels be appointed to the Main Street Board for a 2 year term beginning in January. **MOTION** Councilmember Weishuhn, **SECOND** Councilman Taylor that this request be approved. Motion Carried.

The next item was to discuss and or consider a request from Fayette County Habitat to waive permit fees. A request was received from Fayette County Habitat for Humanity to waive the permit fees and connection charges associated with the construction of the three Habitat for Humanity homes planned for La Grange. We have estimated that the total cost of permit and connection charges to be \$1,185 per home for a total of \$3,555. The permit fees and connection charges for the previous Habitat for Humanity homes which have been constructed since 2007 had been waived. Leonard Leffler addressed the council on behalf of Habitat for Humanity, he expressed thanks and appreciation for all that the council does in the community. Habitat for Humanity believes that the next three homes might be built simultaneously. They have received a donation for a home to be built for a flood victim. **MOTION** Councilman Eilert, **SECOND** Councilman Taylor to waive the permit fees and connection charges for these three homes. Motion Carried.

The next item was to discuss and or consider a resolution suspending proposed rate increase by CenterPoint Energy Entex. Staff is bringing back for council consideration the resolution to suspend the proposed CenterPoint Energy Entex proposed rate increase. Under the Texas Gas Utility Regulatory Act, ENTEX is required to file with the City of La Grange a "Statement of Intent" at least thirty-five days prior to any rate changes. No action is required by the city to permit the proposed rate to go into effect. If the council believes that the proposed rate is not appropriate, we may request a hearing to consider the rate change and suspend the rate increase for a period of 90 days. Staff recommends that council suspend the current rate increase at this time to allow for additional time to review the proposed rate increase. We will have an opportunity over the next few months to decide if we want to participate with other cities on filing a formal protest to the proposed rates. **MOTION** Councilmember Weishuhn, **SECOND** Councilmember Zbranek to approve the resolution. Motion carried. **Attachment #1**

The next item was to discuss and or consider approval of November 2017 minutes. **MOTION** Councilman Janca, **SECOND** Councilmember Zbranek to approve the minutes. Motion carried.

The next item was to discuss and or consider allocation of Tourism Grant Funds.

Councilmember Zbranek reported that the Tourism Grant Committee met earlier and reviewed two applications for funding. The Bugle Boy submitted a request in the amount of \$10,000 for operating support and the committee recommends funding of this request. The second request was from The Best Little Cowboy Gathering in Texas in the amount of \$10,000 for marketing and the committee recommends funding this in the amount of \$7,500. **MOTION** Councilmember Zbranek, **SECOND** Councilmember Weishuhn to approve the requests as recommended by the committee. Motion carried.

The next item was the Active Project Report. City Manager Raborn noted that Plans have been submitted to TCEQ for review and approval for aeration to remove the Trihalomethanes. TCEQ has 60 days to review the plans. City Crews will be replacing the water line on Brown Street from W. Milam to Lower Line. A formal award letter and contract have been received for the CDBG 2017 grant. The plans for the improvements at the Randolph Recreation Center which includes parking and a water park are in the design phase. This will be brought back to council. City staff has met with Mr. Cutright and staff to review the initial options for the expansion and remodel of city hall. The next meeting has been scheduled for early January. Water service has been partially restored to Country Way Village. The service lines in the park belong to the park owner and they are in the process of repairing leaks. The Private Property Debris Removal Project has been approved by FEMA. Staff is now working on bid documents to allow for the pickup of debris from private property. The project will not include the demolition of structures. Documentation has been submitted to FEMA for reimbursement for debris removal and overtime. Work on the supporting documentation for non-insurance covered utility damages continues. The initial insurance payment for property damaged by the storm has been received. Staff has also submitted additional documentation regarding utility damages that required invoices for reimbursement. The reclaiming work on Walnut Street will not be done as anticipated as H & C Construction shuts down for the last two weeks in December.

#### City Manager Update

The Sales Tax report was reviewed, it was noted that this is down slightly. The Utility Usage Reports were reviewed and they are also down for this time period. Schmeckenfest was held last Thursday and it was well attended even with the inclement weather which included snow.

Breakfast with Santa was held at the Randolph Recreation Center this past Saturday. There were over 120 photos taken with Santa and over 300 in attendance.

In regards to the recent Letter to the Editor which related to the "Streithoff" house, the city has been working with the owners over the past year and half. There have been two Board of Adjustments meetings to work with the owner of the property and the owner was given additional time to have this taken care of matter. The owner has recently contact the building inspector and indicated that they are working to sell the house to someone who will dismantle and move the structure. Following the letter to the editor, someone also contacted the inspector regarding repairing the house in place, this information was forwarded to the owner. The zoning for this area was done in 1971. Suggested dates for depositions as related to the current lawsuit were submitted to their council, dates included this week. The earliest date their council is available is January 24<sup>th</sup>.

City Manager Raborn and Mayor Moerbe met with the Deputy Chief of Mission of the Czech Republic. The Deputy Chief also met with the Long Term Recovery Team and they had the opportunity to show him the work they have been able to accomplish with the funds donated by the Czech Republic to the recovery effort. City Manager Raborn has also received information that our Sister City Frenštát pod Radhoštěm will possibly also make a financial donation which would then go to the Good Shepherd Fund.

#### City Council Committee Reports

The Library will hold their Open House/Christmas Party on Wednesday with a variety of activities including carolers and Santa. The Library also received a national award from the Library Journal based on their services. There were 7,400 judged entries for this award and out of these there were 264 awards given in the United States. There were eleven awards given in the State of Texas and one of those was our library.

The Beautification Committee awarded Yard of the Month to the Dippel family at 180 S. Lynnwood.

Chief of Police Update

As a result of a grant opportunity, six vests have been ordered for the department. Office Mickelson had an accident with a deer which caused minor damage to a vehicle. This past weekend there were two separate arrests made for drug.

At 6:40pm a **MOTION** was made by Councilmember Weishuhn, with a **SECOND** by Councilmember Zbranek that the meeting be adjourned. Motion carried.

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Lisa Oltmann, City Secretary

These Minutes Approved by City Council on:

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Janet Moerbe, Mayor