

Minutes
Hurst City Council
Work Session
Friday, July 31, 2020

On the 31st day of July 2020, at 2:00 p.m., the City Council of the City of Hurst, Texas, convened in Work Session at City Hall, 1505 Precinct Line Road, Hurst, Texas, by telephone conference to advance the public health goal of limiting face-to-face meetings to slow the spread of the Coronavirus (COVID-19) with the following members present:

Henry Wilson	)	Mayor
Jon McKenzie	)	Mayor Pro Tem
David Booe	)	Councilmembers
Larry Kitchens)	
Cathy Thompson)	
Bill McLendon)	
Cindy Shepard)	
Clay Caruthers	)	City Manager
Matthew Boyle	)	Assistant City Attorney
Rita Frick	)	City Secretary
Clayton Fulton	)	Assistant City Manager
Malaika Marion Farmer	)	Assistant City Manager
Michelle Lazo	)	Executive Director of Planning and Development
Greg Dickens	)	Executive Director of Public Works
Kyle Gordon	)	Executive Director of Community Services
Matia Messemer	)	Executive Director of Human Resources
Steve Bowden	)	Executive Director of Economic Development
David Palla	)	Fire Chief
Steve Niekamp	)	Police Chief
Sunny Patel	)	Information Technology Director

With the following Councilmembers absent: none, constituting a quorum, at which time, the following business was transacted:

CALL TO ORDER - The meeting was called to order at 2:00 p.m.

1. Update and discussion of state and local reopening and operational plans due to COVID-19 including public safety operational update

City Manager Clay Caruthers provided Council an overview of discussions for today's work session and tomorrow's special meeting of the Council. He stated staff will provide an operational update and code related discussions for Council's policy guidance. Mr. Caruthers reviewed the COVID-19 impact to the work force and stated the social distancing, masks and other measures taken to keep employees safe is working. He stated part of the discussion today is fall event cancelations. Council discussed the possible postponement of the Senior Banquet to spring; a smaller Christmas Tree Lighting event; and cancellation of the Fall Festival and other events.

Police Chief Steve Niekamp provided an overview of the police departments policing activities and programs to connect to the community. In response to the recent request for a cite and release resolution, Chief Niekamp related the police department is already practicing the procedures as outlined by the speaker. He stated they do not arrest for marijuana unless necessary, have a mental health program to help people in crisis, and are trying to maintain a low jail population. He stated the report writing would not be a cost savings as suggested by the speaker and that the annual report numbers referred to were not just marijuana, they also include heroin and prescription drugs. Chief Niekamp reviewed arrest and citation information relating to marijuana. After Council discussion, Mayor Wilson requested Chief Niekamp call the speaker and provide statistical information. Chief Niekamp also provided Council an update on current police reform issues and reiterated that Hurst is already a model for mental health training and that what some cities are discussing on national basis, is already in place. He reviewed operational procedures regarding use of force and stated their reports go back over 30 years. He reviewed CLEA standards and Hurst accreditation, which helps make sure policies are up-to-date. Council discussed the importance of support and appreciation by the community for the police department and the community policing philosophy.

Fire Chief David Palla provided an overview of the fire department's emergency management activity during the pandemic noting the partnership between the police and fire department to ensure proper health care. He noted that in recent months everyone's operations have changed and that even before COVID-19 cases were reported, Hurst was prepared. He noted that even Ebola has never disappeared and that at one time Hurst had houses staged by the Tarrant County Public Health department to accept patients if necessary. Chief Palla stated even at that time, they really didn't have to start the process, they changed the questions being asked. He stated Hurst had stocked PPE before COVID-19 and was really ahead of the game. He noted the mental toll on the fire personnel and their families, employee testing and the fact that there will be more cases. He stated now, with additional data, employees seem more comfortable. Chief noted the rapidly changing information, misinformation, impact to employees, and developing policies and instead of writing and re-writing policies based on bad information, Hurst is basically following TEDEM guidelines. Chief reviewed Hurst COVID-19 cases, recoveries, deaths and demographics.

City Manager Caruthers stated the City put a lot of effort, energy and budget dollars into maintaining the Hurst Way. He noted the connection of staff that has been lost due to COVID-19 and his belief we are at our best when we do connect. He stated Executive Director of Human Resource Matia Messemer will provide insight to the current workforce situation and their resiliency. Ms. Messemer briefed Council on the need to reengage the employees and culture in a purposeful way. She noted Hurst's culture is based on the Code of Ideals and the Hurst Way decision model, which is financial sustainability, passion for delivery in public service and customer service. She stated the model guide is provided by the Mayor and Council and that staff takes it to heart and is intentional in planning based on Council's Strategic Plan. She reviewed the leadership and innovation component priorities and how it enhances customer service. Ms. Messemer noted that COVID-19 provided an opportunity to see innovation and customer service come together and reviewed the numerous actions taken by departments during the pandemic to meet the commitment of Hurst's culture. She stated that although the professional training budget is reduced, there

are still resources for culture and leadership development. Mayor Wilson noted an organization emulates its CEO and Hurst's culture is because of the Executive Team and City Manager and that makes Council's job much easier. He expressed his appreciation for how well the Council works together.

Mayor Wilson recessed the meeting at 3:18 p.m. and reconvened at 3:28 p.m.

2. Discussion of possible amendments to the Code of Ordinances regarding zoning regulations, special event permits and massage parlors

City Manager Caruthers stated this item is for policy discussions regarding outdoor events, noting many administrative decisions are being made during COVID-19. He stated during the review of codes, staff discovered language related to carnival activity that requires examination and consideration. He stated Assistant City Manager Malaika Marion Farmer and Executive Director of Planning and Development will provide background information for Council to discuss what types of ordinance updates to bring for future consideration.

Ms. Lazo reviewed current temporary outdoor sales regulations and proposed amendments including zoning districts, removal of acreage, additional permits and length of permit, merchandise to be sold and removal of tent restrictions. She stated the proposed amendments will allow additional allowances for the smaller businesses. In response to Councilmember's questions, Ms. Lazo stated food trucks and entertainment would be allowed. Mayor Wilson suggested Ms. Lazo move forward with drafting an ordinance. Ms. Lazo reviewed possible amendments to Chapter 12 of the Code, relating to flea markets, secondhand or junk dealers and carnivals and circuses. She reviewed possible avenues for Farmers Market by replacing the flea market section in the Code of Ordinances with a new ordinance which would a blanket permit for one year, establish operating hours, parking requirements, signage, site plan, and health regulations. Mayor Wilson requested Council provide any suggestions regarding farmers markets and zoning so staff may incorporate for future consideration. Staff noted carnivals are currently only allowed in the Town Hall zoning designation and would not be allowed in the proposed outdoor sales event or farmers market proposals. Ms. Marion stated the mall could still have events that include items sold in the mall. Councilmember Booe noted his agreement to getting more traffic to the mall to create more shopping. Ms. Lazo also briefed Council on proposed massage parlor regulations noting the City currently has several reputable operators, but also have a number coming in that are not as reputable. She stated one clean up item in an existing ordinance does not allow massage parlors and recommends adding a definition and a possible SUP process. After Council discussion, staff stated additional information will be provided at a future meeting for further discussion.

City Secretary Rita Frick updated Council on policy issues previously discussed including a legal review of the Code of Ordinances and Charter. Also reviewed were several Code updates already accomplished and additional policy discussion areas for Council in the future. City Manager Caruthers requested Council advise staff if there are other items they wished to address and Councilmember Shepard indicated an interest in discussing chicken regulations.

Assistant City Attorney Matthew Boyle left at 3:45 pm.

3. Discussion and update of property tax roll and preliminary Fiscal Year 2020-2021 budget

City Manager Clay Caruthers noted substantial changes in the budget process this year and believes everything has been done in good faith to follow and prescribe to the new state laws. He stated tomorrow will be action items for Council to consider, but today is for information and discussion. Mr. Caruthers reviewed the property taxes July Certified Value Summary and stated the purpose of the top section is to provide a general understanding of the certified rolls and discounts provided to tax payers. He stated there was a \$44 million or .98% market value gain with a net taxable value gain of 1.14% or \$39 million in growth. He stated the northeast Tarrant County areas had around 1.2% growth and noted the legislative appraisal cap of 10%. Mr. Caruthers also noted the amount of revenue that exceeded the 10% appraisal cap is \$605,000, which is 1.7 cents. Also reviewed were exemptions totaling \$5.3 million with an estimated protest loss of \$640,000, senior/disabled freeze of \$1.3 million or 3.8 cents. He stated these exemptions are 30% of the value leaving the tax levy approximately 70% of the market value.

Mr. Caruthers reviewed the tax rates for consideration including the current tax rate, no new revenue rate, voter approval rates at 3.5% and 8% and a preliminary balanced budget rate with reserve allocations. He explained the tax rate changes passed by the legislature with Senate Bill 2. Also reviewed was new language regarding the voter approval rate capability of 8% if a disaster occurs, which he included for Council consideration. Mr. Caruthers stated staff is recommending a budget balanced with a rate of .613582 combined with \$500,000 in savings, which he calls the 3 + 1 plan made up of 3% reductions and 1% reserve. He explained if Council stays with this year's current rate there will be a need for another \$580,000. If the no new revenue rate is adopted, then \$250,000 will be needed. If Council goes to the voter approval rate, it will add \$400,000 additional revenue, so only \$100,000 would be needed from savings. He explained if the disaster resolution is adopted, the voter approval rate could go to 8% and add an additional \$1.1 million revenue. Mr. Caruthers reviewed various pressures on the tax rate including revenue loss in sales tax adding 3.2 cents in the 4B Fund, 3.3 cents to support the anti-crime fund, so 6.5 cents loss due to economic conditions. He noted the senior and disabled freeze accounts for 7 tenths of a penny and the fire equipment replacement at 2.5 tenths of a penny. Also reviewed were the decreases in the budget of 3.14%, 1.4369 cents allocation of reserves and growth in values providing 1.0629 cents. He stated he hoped to present a flat tax rate, but with the pressures noted, and flat property values this is the proposal to provide acceptable services to the citizenry.

Mayor Wilson stated that Clay, Clayton and finance department staff have been diligently working on the budget for months and considering every option. He stated staff could provide additional information regarding the 8% disaster resolution tomorrow and he wants Council to have an overview and tax rate knowledge before tomorrow's meeting. In response to Councilmember questions, Mr. Caruthers stated staff did not include fee decisions in the budget, except the Tennis Center, which was done mid-year. Assistant City Manager Clayton Fulton advised Council of the budget public hearing to be published in the newspaper on Sunday to meet hearing guidelines. City Manager Caruthers noted in past years the public hearings would be in August and September, but due to the legislative

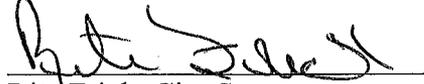
changes, Council will have the hearing and consider adopting on August 12. Mr. Fulton also advised of the new SB2 requirement for appraisal districts to create a website, for people to see their value and proposed taxes, which will go live tomorrow. Mr. Caruthers advised of some possible confusion due to timing of the populated information on the site. He stated tomorrow, staff will ask Council for a vote for the proposed tax rate for publication. He reiterated that this is not the vote on the tax rate, which will be at the public hearing.

4. Informational Items – Items of community interest and review of City Council calendar of meetings. No items were discussed.

ADJOURNMENT – The meeting was adjourned at 4:14 p.m.

APPROVED this the 11th day of August 2020.

ATTEST:



Rita Frick, City Secretary

APPROVED:



Henry Wilson, Mayor