

**MINUTES
CITY OF AMES
304 MARTIN DR. – AMES, TEXAS
REGULAR CITY COUNCIL MEETING
JANUARY 09, 2024
6:00 p.m.**

The City Council for the City of Ames, Texas met in a regular meeting in council chambers at the Ames City Hall at 6:00 p.m. Mayor Barbara Domain called the meeting to order at that time. Councilman Eddie White led the prayer, and the Pledge of Allegiance was recited. Mayor Domain conducted the roll call, at that time the members of the City Council who were present were: Mayor Barbara Domain, Michael Trahan, Elizabeth (Liz) Hardy, Eddie White, Alfred Freeman Jr., and Audrey Harrison.

CITIZEN APPREARANCE

Mayor Domain thanked the citizens for being present, asked them to silence their phones, and if any of the citizens would like to take three (3) minutes to speak to the council. A list of attending citizens is attached.

Darlene Wickliff was present, and she addressed her concern with the sewer/trash bills required to be in the landlord's name. Mayor Domain explained that we came to this decision due to the large amount of debt that we could not collect due to renters moving out and leaving large balances.

Nikki Varner was present, and she requested to have the information for the Juneteenth Parade posted on the website. Mayor Domain asked her to come and sit down with her to discuss the updated guidelines and requirements from the Texas Department of Transportation as they relate to parades.

CLOSED SESSION MEETING:

At 6:10 PM, the closed session meeting began. After a brief session, a motion was made to end the closed session at 6:28 PM. Motion was made. All were in favor. Passed unanimously.

Motion made by: Councilwoman Elizabeth "Liz" Hardy

Seconded by: Councilwoman Audrey Harrison

All in favor: 5 Opposed: 0 Abstained: 0

REGULAR AGENDA ITEMS:

1. SPI PRESENTATION TO CITY COUNCIL:

Steve Morgan and Philip Jacobs were the representatives from SPI. They provided handouts for the council members to follow along with their presentation. The presentation consisted of an explanation of the process of the smoke testing and inspections and to explain the results of the testing and inspection. Mr. Jacobs explained in detail all aspects of the report and also explained

to the council members how to read the results of the report to make it easier. According to Mr. Jacobs, the report has been completed and they will provide as many copies as we need within a couple of weeks. After the inspections, SPI came up with 10 Separate Projects. There are 8 main line leaks, 108 manholes with intrusion and infiltration. Project 10 is service line repairs which are the lines between the cleanouts. There were 19 of those found during the inspection. Philip also explained that there are roughly 160 manholes, and they were able to locate most of them. The few that they could not locate will be found later if needed during the survey. Philip continued to provide in-depth information about how to read every section of the report so that we would be able to go and find the leaks if needed. Mayor Domain asked a question to better understand which direction we would need to travel from the location marked on the report to locate the leak? It was explained that if the lines are running north and south then the leaks would be to the east and west and if the lines are running east and west, the leaks would be to the north and south. Philip explained that the private service cleanouts will not be included in the report because the maintenance department is taking care of those issues. The total amount of sanitary sewer in Ames is 53,200 feet. 40,440 feet of that is gravity sewer and 12,760 feet of course main that is running mainly to Liberty. There are a total of 166 manhole and 6 lift stations. There is a total of 204 leaks that were found during this testing and inspection of the sewer system. 72% of the leaks are private leaks which consists of the cleanouts and 28% of the leaks are municipal leaks which will be addressed in the project list. Councilman Trahan asked if there were any municipal leaks detected in the Baker Subdivision. There is at least one defect in the Baker Subdivision. Philip explained that the documents that they passed out for review were just to help them follow along during the presentation. He stated that the main report will provide a more descriptive breakdown of all the projects. Mayor Domain asked about the manhole rehabilitation and Councilwoman Hardy asked about the separation of the concrete from the manhole walls. Mr. Steve Morgan took the lead in explaining these processes. During the rehabilitation of the manholes, if the rings need to be replaced, they will be, the manhole covers will be sprayed with the protective spray liner, and if there is any separation of the concrete from the manhole walls, all of that will be repaired and then rehabilitated. Councilwoman Hardy asked about the timeframe on how long the seal material lasts. Mr. Morgan stated that most of the products have a long life, but it also depends on the manufacturer of the product. He did state that the specifications that they will require are that the material should have a multi-year life expectancy. He also stated that it should be within a 10 – 20 year range. Philip explained that our next step, once the report is accepted and approved by the city, would be to design. This would include the topographic survey and the plan production for us to review, or for SPI to do more investigation. We would then review and approve the design. al. Once that is completed, it would be bidding. Bidding takes about two months, including advertising. Setting up the contractor and preconstruction. The projected time for the construction of the entire project is one (1) year. It could be sooner than that, but SPI is projecting a year total for construction. Councilwoman Hardy asked if it would be a year before you start the construction? Philip explained that based on the information that he had, it would be about 8 months before we start and then a year once construction starts. The mayor and the council members expressed their concern about the timeline due to the issues with the sewer system being an emergency issue for the city. Councilman Trahan asked if they were replacing

the current design of the sewer system. Philip stated that right now they are projecting that SPI would need to replace the entire line; however, in some cases they might just be able to point repair. In this case, they would use any extra money that was allotted to replace the entire line elsewhere in the project. Mr. Morgan explained that SPI will have another time after engineering, and they will come back to us with the recommendations for the final design. There SPI will have a couple of times that they will come back and talk to the council before they go any further. He also explained that in about 6 months the bidding process will begin. They will get contractors lined up and then they will present to the council their recommendations for the contractor for the project. Councilwoman Hardy expressed again that this project is important and if we could move up the timeline it would be appreciated. Mr. Morgan explained that they are ahead of schedule at this point, and they would like to maintain that going forward because he knows that the city is ready to get some improvements done. Councilman Trahan asked if the additional 6 months still included in the original quoted cost. Mr. Morgan explained that we are already under contract for everything so there will not be additional cost. This concluded the presentation from SPI.

*** At this time, Mayor Doman realized that we had not yet approved the minutes and had to go back to consider and approve them.*

➤ **APPROVAL OF MINUTES FOR NOVEMBER 13, 2023 REGULAR MEETING AND NOVEMBER 27, 2023 SPECIAL CALLED MEETING**

The council took a few minutes to look over the minutes. There was no discussion. Motion was made. All were in favor. Passed unanimously.

Motion made by: Councilwoman Elizabeth “Liz” Hardy

Seconded by: Councilman Eddie White

All in favor: 5 Opposed: 0 Abstained: 0

2. CONSIDER AND IF APPROPRIATE, TAKE ACTION TO APPROVE ORDINANCE NO. 2024-001. AN ORDINANCE REGULATING MANUFACTURED HOMES, MOBILE HOMES, MANUFACTURED HOME PARKS, RECREATIONAL VEHICLES, AND RECREATIONAL VEHICLE PARKS WITHIN THE CITY OF AMES; PROVIDING FOR CRIMINAL PENALTIES FOR VIOLATIONS; AND PROVIDING THAT THIS ORDINANCE BE PUBLISHED IN THE OFFICIAL NEWSPAPER OF THE CITY OF AMES, TEXAS.

The council took a few minutes to look over the ordinance. Councilman Trahan asked what page the 10-year requirement was on? Mayor Domain stated that it was on page 4 in the top paragraph. Councilwoman Harrison asked if the 10-year requirement was the only change that was made to the ordinance. Marivious stated that most of the changes were just about updating the years, cleaning up the language, and ensuring that before people go and place a home on property that you come to the city to get a permit and permission before doing so. Also, in subsection B, instead of putting in the Ames Woods Subdivision as part of the language initially, he just added it to the following streets. Councilman Trahan asked about the 800 square foot ordinance that the city

already has in place. Mayor Domain stated that ordinance is for tiny homes. She also explained the process of what happens when someone comes into the office for a permit. All paperwork is requested detailing the lot size, if they are building a home or getting a mobile home. Once we have all the paperwork outlining the specifications of what they are doing, we let them know at that time if they are in compliance with the city ordinances or not. There was no further discussion. Motion was made. All were in favor. Passed unanimously.

Motion made by: Councilman Michael Trahan
Seconded by: Councilman Eddie White
All in favor: 5 Opposed: 0 Abstained: 0

3. CONSIDER AND IF APPROPRIATE, TAKE ACTION TO APPROVE ORDINANCE NO. 2024-002. AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF AMES, TEXAS, ESTABLISHING AN APPLICATION AND FEE FOR SEWER TAPS; PROVIDING FOR PENALTIES AND VIOLATIONS; PROVIDING FOR A SEVERANCE CLAUSE; AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE

The council took a few minutes to look over the ordinance. There was no discussion. Motion was made. All were in favor. Passed unanimously.

Motion made by: Councilman Michael Trahan
Seconded by: Councilwoman Audrey Harrison
All in favor: 5 Opposed: 0 Abstained: 0

4. DISCUSS AND TAKE ACTION TO APPROVE ORDER CALLING FOR MAY 4, 2024, ELECTION.

There was no discussion. Motion was made. All were in favor. Passed unanimously.

Motion made by: Councilman Eddie White
Seconded by: Councilwoman Elizabeth "Liz" Hardy
All in favor: 5 Opposed: 0 Abstained: 0

5. CONSIDER AND IF APPROPRIATE, TAKE ACTION TO APPROVE HIRING 2 MAINTENANCE EMPLOYEES AT \$10.00 PER HOUR.

Mayor Domain explained that she would like to bring in two people to help Erwin. She prefers to keep a couple of the interns that we have through the workforce. We would get two people for which is more manpower that will contribute to addressing some of these leaks and manhole issues and take care of other things that need to be completed within the city. Need to be taken care of around the city. It would be an additional \$2 per hour increase from what is in the budget now; however, we will have 2 additional employees. Councilman Trahan asked if there were any other cost associate with hiring 2 employees An explanation of benefits was provided. Councilman Trahan asked if we would be posting the job? Mayor Domain explained that we were planning on keeping the interns that we have so we would not need to post the job. Councilwoman Harrison stated that if the interns are here now and doing the job already, it makes since to hire them on. Councilwoman Hardy asked Erwin if he was satisfied with the interns work ethic. Mr. Semien stated that they are hard workers, and they are eager to learn the things that he has had to teach them. Councilwoman Hardy stated that what she would like to see out of hiring the interns is to

get these leaks fixed so we can stop being charged the overages by the City of Liberty. Mayor Domain explained that there was work being done on the leaks and Erwin added more detail specific work that has been done. Motion was made. All were in favor. Passed unanimously.

Motion made by: Councilman Eddie White

Seconded by: Councilman Alfred Freeman

All in favor: 5 Opposed: 0 Abstained: 0

Marivious explained that anytime that you're looking to essentially move money around, that was already pre allocated for the budget the council will have to approve it. It is like if you wanted to hire, we have the authority to hire; however, we will need the money to finance the hire. At this time, we will need to have the council agree to the increase and then come back later to approve the increase to the budget. A closed session meeting is required for this item.

6. CONSIDER AND IF APPROPRIATE, TAKE ACTION TO APPROVE A STIPEND INCREASE FOR THE MAYOR.

Marivious explained that anytime that you're looking to essentially move money around, that was already pre allocated for the budget the council will have to approve it. It is like if you wanted to hire, we have the authority to hire; however, we will need the money to finance the hire. At this time, we will need to have the council agree to the increase and then come back later to approve the increase to the budget. A closed session meeting is required for this item.

CLOSED SESSION MEETING:

At 7:24 PM, the closed session meeting began. After a brief session, a motion was made to end the closed session at 7:46 PM. Motion was made. All were in favor. Passed unanimously.

Motion made by: Councilwoman Audrey Harrison

Seconded by: Councilman Michael Trahan

All in favor: 5 Opposed: 0 Abstained: 0

After the closed session, it was determined that line item #6 should be amended to read as follows:

6. CONSIDER AND IF APPROPRIATE, TAKE ACTION TO APPROVE A STIPEND INCREASE FOR THE MAYOR IN THE AMOUNT OF \$1,334.00.

There was no discussion. Motion was made. All were in favor. Passed unanimously.

Motion made by: Councilman Audrey Harrison

Seconded by: Councilwoman Elizabeth "Liz" Trahan

All in favor: 5 Opposed: Abstained:

MAYOR'S REPORT.

- Work has started on Donatto Street (30 day proposed completion date) The vendor has a little bit of an issue with where their equipment is parked over the weekend, so we are trying to help them find a new place to park the equipment.
- She is trying to seek out another sewer grant to assist with any additional work that we may have to do to the sewer lines ourselves.
- HGAC has given us free furniture. We will be getting desks, office chairs, computers, file cabinets, and tables.

- We will be setting up a meeting with Ms. Cindy Burchfield to help us with getting grants to assist with securing things for the city.

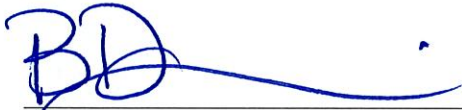
7. ADJOURNMENT.

With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 7:50 PM. Motion was made. All were in favor. Passed unanimously.

Motion made by: Councilman Michael Trahan

Seconded by: Councilwoman Elizabeth "Liz" Trahan

All in favor: 5 Opposed: Abstained:



Barbara Domain
Mayor



Wellona Godfrey
City Secretary