



The City of West University Place

A Neighborhood City

CITY COUNCIL

Susan Sample, Mayor
John Montgomery, Mayor Pro Tem
John P. Barnes, Councilmember
Melanie Bell, Councilmember
Shannon Carroll, Councilmember

STAFF

David J. Beach, City Manager
Scott Bounds, Olson and Olson, City Attorney
Thelma Gilliam, City Secretary

CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

The City Council of the City of West University Place, Texas, met in a regular meeting on **Monday, November 8**, at **6:30 p.m.**, in the Municipal Building at 3800 University Boulevard, for the purpose of considering the agenda of items listed. The meeting was held in person, but the public was also able attend via Zoom.

Agenda was as follows:

1. Call Regular Meeting to Order

Mayor Sample called the regular meeting to order at 6:32 p.m. In attendance were Mayor Pro Tem Montgomery, and Councilmembers Barnes, Bell, and Carroll.

Staff in attendance were City Manager Beach, City Secretary Gilliam, Public Works Director Barrera, Fire Chief Taylor, Fire Captain Drake, Assistant to the City Manager Thompson, HR Director Urban, and Police Chief Walker.

Richard Weatherly and Jared Barber, with Freese and Nichols, were also present.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

Councilmember Carroll led the Pledge of Allegiance.

At approximately 6:35 p.m., Council recessed its meeting to convene a meeting of the West University Place Employee Benefits Trust (EBT), for which a separate agenda was posted.

After the EBT meeting, Council resumed the City Council meeting at approximately 6:37 p.m.

3. Public Comments

This is an opportunity for citizens to speak to the Council relating to agenda and non-agenda items. Speakers are required to register in advance and must limit their presentations to three minutes each.

Alida Drewes, 6112 Fordham, spoke about the need for a dog run or dog park in West U.

4. Appointment of a Fire Chief

Matters related to the appointment of a Fire Chief. *Recommended Action: Approve the City Manager's appointment of a Fire Chief. **Mr. Dave Beach, City Manager***

City Manager Beach presented and said with the retirement of Fire Chief Taylor, effective January 3, 2022, he has selected Captain Jennifer Drake of the Fire Department to serve as the City's next Fire Chief. He said she is has served the City since 2004 and is well qualified and that, per the City's Charter, he is requesting Council's approval of the appointment.

Councilmember Barnes moved to approve the recommendation to appoint Captain Drake as Fire Chief, effective January 4, 2022. Councilmember Bell seconded the motion. **MOTION PASSED.**

Ayes: Sample, Montgomery, Barnes, Bell, Carroll
Noes: None
Absent: None

5. Resolution Approving the 2022 Fee Schedule

Matters related to a resolution adopting the City's 2022 Fee Schedule. *Recommended Action: Approve resolution adopting the City's 2022 Fee Schedule.* **Mr. Will Thompson, Assistant to the City Manager**

Assistant to the City Manager Thompson presented and said the fee schedule sets the user fees, which are those fees charged for services or benefits provided to individuals, rather than the community at large. Mr. Thompson said Council tabled adoption of the fee schedule at its meeting of October 11, 2021, with direction for staff to bring it back before Council with an explanation of why certain fees were increased.

Mr. Thompson highlighted staff's recommended fee increases/changes:

- **Building and Standards Commission and Zoning Board of Adjustments**
 - Offsets the cost of processing appeals for variances/exceptions from the City's Code of Ordinances. Depending on the nature of an application, typical staff time can average 5 hours (review, meeting, public notification).

- **Parks & Recreation**
 - 24 total changes
 - 16 new fees to offer previously unavailable facilities for rental (Non-resident rate is 1.5 times that of residents)
 - 6 changes to decrease or eliminate fees
 - All recommended adjustments reviewed and recommended by Parks Board's Fees Subcommittee
 - Based on benchmarking and cost recovery (Pre-COVID, department typically recovers approximately 40% of operating budget)

- **Ambulance Service Proposed Changes**
 - Recommended by City's medical billing provider and staff
 - Based on benchmarking, market costs, and insurance reimbursement

- **Garbage Service**
 - Funds curbside solid waste, recycling, green waste collection services and street sweeping
 - Reviewed annually to minimize year-to-year impacts for residents

- **Community Development**
 - Proposed changes bring fees to slightly above market average based on benchmarking
 - User fees cover the cost of providing individual services Community Development Division – Permitting, Forestry, Inspections, Code Enforcement, etc.

After Mr. Thompson's presentation, Mayor Pro Tem Montgomery said he wants to be sure that the City is not ambiguously assigning fees and asked Mr. Thompson if he feels that the assigned fees to replace HVAC systems and other fees like them are appropriate. Mr. Thompson said, yes, he feels they are appropriate, otherwise those costs would be incurred by the community at-large.

Councilmember Bell said she recently had to have her water heater replaced and found that the process of the inspection is valuable and necessary for the safety of the community and it helps with keeping the home and property values at the place residents want them.

Councilmember Barnes moved to approve the fee schedule. Councilmember Bell seconded the motion. **MOTION PASSED.**

Ayes: Sample, Montgomery, Barnes, Bell, Carroll
Noes: None
Absent: None

6. Consent Agenda

All Consent Agenda items listed are considered to be routine by the City Council and will be enacted by one motion. There will be no separate discussion of these items unless a Council member requests in which event the item will be removed from the Consent Agenda and considered in its normal sequence on the agenda.

A. City Council Meeting Minutes

Approve City Council Minutes of October 25, 2021. *Recommended Action: Approve City Council Minutes of October 25, 2021. Ms. Thelma Gilliam, City Secretary*

B. Update to 2022 Employee Medical Rates

Matters related to the 2022 employee medical rates. *Recommended Action: Approve update to 2022 Employee medical rates. Mr. James Urban, Human Resources Director*

Councilmember Bell moved to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. Councilmember Barnes seconded the motion. **MOTION PASSED.**

Ayes: Sample, Montgomery, Barnes, Bell, Carroll
Noes: None
Absent: None

7. Water Resiliency and Future Service Levels

Matters related to water resiliency and future service levels. *Recommended Action: Discuss and provide feedback and direction. Mr. Gerardo Barrera, Public Works Director*

Public Works Director Barrera presented and stated that staff is not seeking a decision from Council tonight. He said this presentation is for informational purposes only and staff would come back to Council for action at a future meeting. Mr. Barrera said the resiliency study, conducted by Frees and Nichols, is important because it helps plan for the future of the water distribution system.

Mr. Barrera then introduced Richard Weatherly with Frees and Nichols who presented an overview of the water system assessment. The overview focused on:

- Field Testing
- Water Distribution system model development
- System analyses

After outlining the overview, Mr. Weatherly reviewed the recommended improvements in the following categories:

- Facilities

- Bellaire Elevated Storage Tank Replacement
 - Conduct siting study to see where it goes (if same location, needs proper planning to make that happen)
- New Water Plant
 - Conduct siting study for third water plant
- Milton Water Plan Rehab and Improvements
 - Conduct full rehab
 - Replace (2) ground storage tanks
 - Replace (4) booster pumps and motors with VFDs
- Wakeforest Water Plant Rehab and Improvements
 - Conduct full rehab
 - Install flush valve on surface water interconnect
 - Install generator and transfer switch
 - Replace (2) booster pumps and motors with VFDs
 - Upsize 12-inch distribution line to 16-inches.
- Water Lines
 - Replacement and upsizing of cast iron water lines is highest priority
 - Coordinate renewal recommendations with planned street and drainage improvements

Mr. Weatherly pointed out that one of the reasons for the recommendation to add a third plant is because the City would have to rely heavily on the City of Houston for water if one of the existing plants is out of service.

Councilmember Bell asked why would the City not want to pull more water from the City Houston rather than build a \$16.5 million third water plant. She said she is concerned the City will potentially spend a lot of money on something that may or may not happen for resiliency and asked if there are other alternatives better for the taxpayers.

As an answer to part of Councilmember Bell's question, Mr. Barber stated that even if the City could take more water from Houston if a plant is out of service, the City would still need to be able to get the water into the City's system and out to the residents. He said a third water plant would give the City the ability to do that.

Mr. Barber summarized the system analysis and key takeaways:

- Autonomy/Resiliency – Water Services
 - If Wakeforest WP is out of service, then water restrictions would be required and service could be interrupted
 - If Milton WP (most critical facility) is out of service, water service to residents would be interrupted, a boil water notice would likely be required
 - If Bellaire Elevated Storage Tank (EST) is out of services, then adequate storage for fire flow will not be available
- Autonomy/Resiliency – Regulatory
 - If Houston surface water supply is offline, West University does not have enough well capacity to meet TCEQ supply requirements (i.e. COH 96-Inch Water Line Break and Winter Storm Uri)
 - Without Milton Water Plant, the City would not meet TCEQ requirements for supply, pumping, and pressure
 - Water system pressures would fall below regulatory limits under any demand conditions if Bellaire EST or Wakeforest EST is taken offline
 - If desired service level is to be self-reliant, 3rd well would need to be considered

- Rehab/Useful Life Considerations
 - Bellaire Elevated Storage Tank – 86 years old
 - Milton Water Plant – 64 years old (most critical)
 - Do not require service interruptions for replacements
 - * Pumps
 - * Disinfection Equipment
 - * Most Electrical Equipment
 - Do require service interruptions for replacement
 - * Water Well
 - * GSTs
 - * Yard Piping
 - * Specific Values
 - Coating replaced in 2015
 - Process to recoat requires sandblasting to remove old coating
 - Previous rehab contracted noted that there was not enough metal left to sandblast again
 - Wakeforest Water Plant – 30 years old
 - Water lines are up to 80 years old
- Things to consider for Resiliency/Autonomy
 - Full System Improvements
 - Independent service disruptions from City of Houston (self-reliance)
 - Reduce likelihood of water facility failure
 - Add system redundancy
 - Maintain regulatory compliance
 - Plan for future water demands
 - No System Improvements
 - Subject to supply disruptions from the City of Houston
 - Infrastructure failure as facilities continue to age
 - Failure to maintain regulatory compliance
 - * Consequences may include interruptions to service or limitations on water usage, regulatory fines, health and safety

Mayor Pro Tem Montgomery asked if the City could discontinue irrigation water if there is a situation where the City had to restrict water. Mr. Barber responded that the City's water meters only measure water and are not able to restrict or control water for individual customers.

Mr. Barrera confirmed with Mayor Pro Tem Montgomery that the technology to restrict water for individual customers exists to which Mayor Pro Tem Montgomery stated that the City should explore that technology.

Councilmember Barnes asked if the proximity of the Bellaire Elevated Storage tank in respect to the townhomes in the area and the Southside Wastewater Treatment Plant effect what the City can and cannot do with respect to rehabbing that facility. Mr. Barber said they have reached out to TCEQ, but they will not provide a formal answer until plans are submitted, however, he feels that the City could submit a request to TCEQ asking for a variance based on the circumstances.

Councilmember Barnes asked if the City has the option to increase the capacity of the Bellaire Elevated Storage Tank at its current location. Mr. Barber said it is possible, but it would require land, easements, access and timing due to townhomes being constructed around it.

City Manager Beach reminded Council that staff is not looking for a decision tonight. He said this presentation is to get Council to thinking about things in terms of the Facilities Master Plan and site locations, which all comes into play with this.

Councilmember Bell asked if the Wakeforest Storage Tank was built as resiliency in some aspects for the Milton Wakeforest Storage Tank. Public Works Barrera said technically, yes, but not to full resiliency.

City Manager Beach noted that the City used to have a third water well at the southeast corner of Wesleyan and Bissonnet, but it shut down around 2005 or 2006; so, there is a location for a third well.

Mr. Weatherly discussed an implementation schedule. He said if Council decides to move forward with a new plant and rehab the current water tanks, the process would take approximately 12 years. The work would happen in the following phases:

- Phase 1 – Bellaire EST
- Phase 2 – New Water Plant
- Phase 3 – Water Line
- Phase 4 – Milton Rehab
- Phase 5 – Wakeforest Rehab

Mr. Weatherly said the key to everything is the Milton plant. He said it will need rehabbing probably within the next 6 years and so the City needs to get to a place where it can take it out of service without reduction in service. He said if the Milton plant is out of service during a summer season, the Wakeforest plant cannot supply water to the entire city, so the City would need to have at least Phase 1 through Phase 3 complete and then the City could have the redundancy to maintain all facilities without reduction in service.

8. Adjourn Meeting

With no other business before the Council, Councilmember Barnes moved to adjourn the regular meeting at approximately 7:46 p.m. Mayor Pro Tem Montgomery seconded the motion. **MOTION PASSED.**

Ayes: Sample, Montgomery, Barnes, Bell, Carroll
Noes: None
Absent: None

Audio of the meeting in its entirety is temporarily on the City's website. If the audio is no longer on the website, you can obtain a copy from the City Secretary's office.

Prepared by: Thelma A. Gilliam, TRMC, City Secretary

Council Approved: November 15, 2021