

Walnut Grove City Council
Work Session - Budget
Via teleconference
Thursday, May 28, 2020
4:30 P.M.

Present: Mayor Mark Moore, Linda Pilgrim, and Stephanie Moncrief

Also Present: City Clerk Tangee Puckett, City Attorney Mike Malcom & Jess e Couch

I. INVOCATION

Attorney Mike Malcom gave the invocation.

II. CALL TO ORDER

Meeting called to order by Mayor Mark Moore at 4:30 p.m.

III. AGENDA APPROVAL

Councilmember Stephanie Moncrief made a motion to approve the agenda as presented. Councilmember Linda Pilgrim seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

IV. BUDGET DISCUSSION

Mayor Mark Moore noted when running for Mayor, he promised the citizens a tax decrease. And that is what he is working on. Looking at providing every citizen in Walnut Grove sanitation services instead of cutting the mill rate. This would be a saving of \$200 per household. Mayor Moore shared the proposed budget. We have \$50,000 for road repair and \$10,000 for employee health insurance. Councilmember Stephanie Moncrief asked who would be eligible for the health insurance. Mayor Mark Moore stated any employee of the City of Walnut Grove. But that doesn't mean if the Mayor and Council wanted to participate, they couldn't. They could be part of the pool and pay their own portion at 100%. Unable to increase the library fund at this time. As you know they were cut by 14%. Each councilmember, including the Mayor and staff will have \$2,500 for training each year, this includes mileage and per diem. IT services were increased to \$10,500. Looking at cutting this expense in the future. \$10,000 for the park to resurface the tennis and basketball court and have the funds to convert the roundabout to a cul-de-sac in Emerald Cove.

Mayor Mark Moore asked the council if they had any questions. Councilmember Stephanie Moncrief asked what mill rate the Mayor was proposing? Mayor Moore explained leaving the mill rate the same at this time and paying the sanitation fees for all citizens of Walnut Grove to give them a saving of \$200 per year, per household.

Mayor Mark Moore noted he increased the Code Enforcement salary to \$22,000 which would allow him to 10 hours per week. (After doing the math, this line item is over \$10,000 and can be moved).

Councilmember Stephanie Moncrief asked if we would have any other budget work sessions, Mayor Mark Moore responded, no, we will have the public hearings next and this was only a proposed budget at this time. He also noted we could move funds from General Fund to finance future projects if needed. Balancing our income verses our expense. At this time, we have a balanced budget.

Councilmember Stephanie Moncrief asked about employee raises and asked what the process was. Mayor Mark Moore noted he factored in a 3%-5% cost of living increase for each employee after a being employed for a year. She also asked what the process was for Mayor and council raises. Mayor Mark Moore explained if a pay increase was voted on during your term, you would not be eligible for the raise unless you run for another term. At this time Councilmember Linda Pilgrim is at \$60 a month, whereas Councilmember Stephanie Moncrief is at \$100 a month.

Councilmember Stephanie Moncrief asked if there were funds for groups, such as school groups who ask for donations. Mayor Mark Moore noted under community/employee event there is \$2,500 we could use for this.

Mayor Mark Moore noted there was an increase in accounting to \$35,000, legal to \$35,000 and leaving engineering at \$55,000.

Councilmember Stephanie Moncrief asked when the proposed budget would be available to the public. Mayor Mark Moore noted it would be available for review tomorrow and we will hold several meetings before the budget is approved. We will hold a public hearing on June 11th at 6:30pm, June 18th at 7:00pm and June 25th at 7pm.

Councilmember Stephanie Moncrief asked if the Mayor was open to questions from the citizens, he answered yes.

Mayor Mark Moore noted even though we still show this budget, we still have expenses to pay, such as repaving Magnolia Springs and repaving and patching Emerald Cove, with an expense around \$400,000. Not sure if they will both get completed this year. We will need to review estimates on installing speed humps on Walnut Grove Parkway and the resurfacing of the tennis/basketball courts.

Councilmember Stephanie Moncrief stated considering the pandemic and the situation we are in; she feels like the City is being conservative and trying to save the citizens of Walnut Grove the most we can. She asked the Mayor if he would revisit the millage rate cuts in the near future, he explained yes.

V. Adjourn

Motion made by Councilmember Linda Pilgrim to adjourn at 5:10 p.m. Councilmember Stephanie Moncrief seconded. The vote was unanimous.

Approved by Mayor and Council this _____ day of June 2020.

Mayor Steven Mark Moore

Tangee B. Puckett, City Clerk