

MINUTES 8-9-05
RANSOM CANYON CITY COUNCIL MEETING
AUGUST 9, 2005
MINUTES

This meeting of the Ransom Canyon City Council was called to order at 7:00 PM, Tuesday, AUGUST 9, 2005. Mayor Robert Englund called for a moment of silence. Council members present: Earl Starks, David Peterson, Dick Hulslander and Donna Clarke. Ron Cox was absent per previous notice.

2.) OATH OF OFFICE: Mayor Englund administered the Oath of Office to new Municipal Judge Gary Bellair.

The Mayor changed the order of the published agenda.

Agenda Item 11.E.) Request for Variance to 6' fence height. 5 Aztec Lane. This item was considered at last council meeting but no action was taken at that time. Jack Chapman asked the council to consider that the fence was needed for privacy between neighbors on Aztec and Coyote circle, and needed to be 8 feet high due to the topographical fall of the yards at that location. The neighbors had submitted letters agreeing to the fence height. David Peterson made a motion to approve the variance. Dick Hulslander seconded the motion. Earl Starks abstained from voting due to a conflict of interest. He works for Jack Chapman. The three remaining councilmen all voted aye and the measure passed.

3.) MINUTES: All published minutes were approved as a body on a motion from Dick Hulslander, second from Donna Clarke. All approved.

4.) FINANCIAL REPORT: Donna Clarke commented on the large budget balances that may be left in the building inspection and water purchase category. Earl Starks moved to approve the Financials and the Claims and Demands. Dick Hulslander seconded the motion, and voted aye. Motion passed.

FINANCIAL REPORT: Interest adjustment by Citizens Bank. Citizens was calculating earned interest based on a fixed 1.5%, rather than a variable rate with a 1.5% floor. The error was discovered because Citizens bid for the coming year was almost identical to the bid last year, and the interest that was stated was 3.5%. After some questions, it was agreed that Citizens would pay the earned interest. The amounts calculated have been submitted to the auditor for his review. The money has been deposited into the accounts, \$6454.64 into the I & S account and \$3439.63 into the general fund account. David Peterson asked to revisit the depository account decision at next months council meeting. Dick Hulslander agreed to put this item on next month's agenda.

5.A.)Certified Tax Roll: The Lubbock County Chief Appraiser certified Ransom Canyon's tax roll on July 25, 2005. The roll is certified at \$88,248,724.

Melissa Verett, the unit's licensed Tax Assessor, Certified the following rates and values.

5.B Tax Collections are certified at 100%.

5.C Effective Tax rates and rollback calculations

- Last year's taxable value was \$85,538,920.
 - Last year's tax rate was .62
 - Last year's taxes were \$530,341.
 - This year's taxable value is \$88,248,724.
 - This is an increase in value of \$2,709,804.
 - This year's effective tax rate is .60829.
 - The effective tax rate is the rate that would raise the same amount of money as last year.
 - This year's Notice and Hearing tax rate is .60829.
 - If a rate higher than .60829 is proposed, 2 Hearings must be held, two ¼ page ads must be published. Ransom Canyon notices are published in the Slatonite.
 - This information must also be published on the city's web site.
-
- The rollback rate is .64814.
 - The Maintenance and Operation rate is .48045.
 - The 2005 M&O rate is $.48045 * 1.08 = .51889$.
 - The Debt Rate is .12925.
 - The Debt Payment for next year is \$114,060.

Donna Clarke moved to accept all published rates and calculations. Dick Hulslander seconded the motion, all approved.

Agenda Item 6. BUDGET HEARING:

Mayor Englund reviewed the high points of the proposed budget. He explained the revenue increases were shared between tax and water revenues. The mosquito spray revenue will be higher next year due to a plan to pass through the expense of purchasing fogging equipment this year. Each resident will be charged a monthly fee of \$3.00 for spraying. There was some discussion about the water rates. Users will be charged a higher rate for usages over 14,000 gallons per month.

6.B. RECORD VOTE: David Peterson proposed to adopt a tax rate of .63. Dick Hulslander seconded the motion. For the record vote, all council members voted aye.

Because this rate is higher than the Notice and Hearing rate of .60829, Tax Hearings must be held and newspaper ads must be published. The Hearings were set for Tuesday, September 6, and Friday, September 9. These hearings will be held at 7:00 PM, at the Ransom Canyon Fire Station, 1 Ridge Road, in Ransom Canyon.

Due to the large crowd and visitors that were present, Mayor Englund changed the agenda to address some items prior to the scheduled break.

Item 11)A. Proposal from Goodwin Powell. Mr. Powell addressed the council about the new inverted water rates. This will mean a \$40 rate increase for him, considering the water that he uses to water his additional lot, known as Powell's Point. He asked the council if they would consider an exception in this case. The council explained that the 15,000 gallons was arrived at as a water conservation figure, with the expectation that one person per household would normally consume 5,000 gallons per month. Three is an average number per household. Mr. Powell also asked the council to consider taking his extra lot on as a city park. No action was taken on this agenda item. Watering tips will be published in the next newsletter, as part of an overall education effort to help citizens reduce their consumption.

Agenda item 11.B. Jeff and Cathy Havely addressed the council to complain about the fence that has been constructed by Mark Lawson as part of his home development for his house that is located at 1 Elm Drive. The Havely's said their home was for sale, but they have not had a buyer due to the unsightly appearance of the property. They also said the site was a health hazard as it harbored mice, rats, snakes, skunks and scorpions. They also noted that the fence violated the permitted 6 feet in height. They believed that the structure was in violation of the city's codes, the Deed Restrictions. They have contacted Mr. Lawson, but have not had satisfactory response from him. They contacted the city, but did not believe they have had satisfactory response. They sent letters threatening lawsuit to all city council members and city staff. They submitted photos of the site. They experienced lowering of their home value by the appraisal district. They believed the project devalued the neighborhood. They claimed rebar was sticking out of the fence in places. They said the gate was made out of trailer siding. They said there are mounds of trash in the form of scrap lumber, mattresses, building debris, etc.

The fence is chicken wire sprayed with gunite, or a stucco material. The Havely's home has been for sale for two years, and the fence has always been an issue. The Havelys believe they have lost \$30,000 in value on the sale of their home. At the average Ransom Canyon home value of \$76 per square foot, the house should be valued at \$120,000. They have a first home buyer contract for \$92,000.

Mayor Englund commented that the council would take their requests under advisement. Due to the lawsuit comments, they could not discuss the matter with him.

Item 11.C. Mr. Robert Alexander asked the council to override the building inspector's ruling that a new metal roof could not be put directly over an old wood shingle roof unless material was installed to prevent the creation of a combustible space. The council concluded that the building inspector's reading of the code was correct and did not overrule this conclusion. Billy Williams, who is a member of the Building Review Committee, said the committee would concur with the council on this issue. There was no motion to allow any variance.

Item 11. D. Billy Williams told the council that he has seen several homes that have had new roofs installed, where the vent pipes have not been put back in place. This is creating a hazardous condition for homeowners who are unaware of the possible danger of carbon

monoxide poisoning due to an unvented HVAC system or water heater. Mayor Englund said a notice will go out in the next newsletter.

Item 8.) EXECUTIVE SESSION: The council then retired to executive session. They reconvened into open meeting, and took no action as a result of any discussion held in executive session.

The council adjourned and took a ten minute BREAK.

Item 7. HEALTH INSURANCE:

Mary Brown gathered and garnered much information in the process of bidding this city expense item. Two groups responded with many proposals for the city to consider. The Scioli Group was represented by Becky Stephens. Steve Sybert also was present. Mary Brown and Dick Hulslander had chosen the best examples of many choices and Mary put them on a spreadsheet for comparison purposes.

The council considered the individual and family rates which ran from low to high. There was only one choice that was beyond the city's budget. There were several choices that had 500 deductibles, and there were some more affordable choices with 1000 deductible. TML proposals had a new gimmick to save money that eliminated the automatic office visit co-pay. The city could pay more and buy back that feature. The costs for rx co-pays and other Office Visit co-pays were similar. The big differences were in individual premiums and family premiums. The new companies had individual histories from which to draw to prepare their bids.

Steve Sybert and Becky Stephens both presented their companies, and said they would serve as a patient advocate in the event of troublesome claims or out of network claims troubles. There was some discussion about patient Health Savings Accounts.

TML claims history for one Ransom employee has been good. TML claims history for another employee has been awful.

The council did not make a decision to award this contract. They decided to have a second meeting on August 16 to discuss the matter.

Item 10.) The Building Control Committee met three times since the last council meeting. They met on issues about a driveway with a double curb cut, set backs for an odd shaped lot, and a room addition for a home on Canyon View Drive.

Item 12. City Roof Replacement Bids. The city engineer recommended awarding this bid to Forster Construction, who is low bidder on the project. The repairs to City Hall should be done before the roof is put on. Earl Starks moved to accept Forster Construction as the low bidder. Dick Hulslander seconded the motion. All approved.

13.A) OPERATIONS REPORT: Harold Needham stated that most of his items had already been covered. He asked if he could start taking applications for the new

employee. The council said he should review the job description for this employee, in order to decide if some water licensing would be a job requirement.

The mosquito sprayer is in, is in service, and is working well. Harold and his crew are working late, late hours to spray at night when the wind is down and the mosquitoes are out.

13.B.) FIRE DEPARTMENT REPORT: Rand McPherson reported no fire calls, 1 medical call. The department took the fire truck to one of the Library Summer Reading Club days. A great time was had by all.

The LaFrance is back in service. The # 6 discharge was broken, so they plugged it, leaving them with five discharges. The volunteer fire dept has agreed to help the POA and the Chapel with an Oktoberfest event dinner this fall.

The department is also planning on a community health project this fall where residents would list their health conditions and all prescription drugs. This list will be posted on the refrigerator for the EMS staff to gather quickly in case of emergency.

13.C) POLICE: Chief Wayne Rawls reported that the new police car was in service. The old Crown Vic had been sold to a private individual. The new truck is patrolling late nights. The badge design on the door is new.

Fifteen out of eighty lot owners have not mowed their lots, so the city is contracting to have them mowed. The city will bill the lot owners, secured by a lien. Letters will go out again in about two weeks. School starts Monday, and Wayne commented that the two weeks after school starts are usually the busiest times of the year for police activity.

13.D.)LIBRARY: Librarian Kim Copeland delivered a written report about an extremely busy and crowded summer reading club.

ADJOURN: With nothing to discuss in open forum, Earl Starks moved to adjourn. David Peterson and Dick Hulslander both seconded the motion. All voted aye and the meeting adjourned.

Melissa Verett
City Administrator