

Town of Ransom Canyon
City Council Meeting April 13, 2004
Minutes

This meeting of the Ransom Canyon City Council was called to order by Mayor Robert Englund at 7:00 P.M., Tuesday evening, April 13, 2004. The full council was present: Alderman Leon Whetzel, David Peterson, Inez Speed, Dick Hulslander and Mayor Pro-tem Glen Robertson. Department heads and Attorney John Sims were also present. Guests Jimmy McDaniel and Jason Swofford from Hugo Reed were present. The Mayor called for a moment of silent meditation.

Glen Robertson moved to approve minutes of the March 9, 2004 meeting, and also the March 25 work session. Dick Hulslander seconded the motion, all approved.

Dick Hulslander moved to approve the Financial Report and the Claims and Demands. David Peterson seconded the motion and all approved.

Melissa Verett delivered a report on the status of the installation of Incode's Invision General Ledger, Accounts Payable, Check Writing, Utility System, and Check Reconciliation. Everything is installed and is operational except the new Utility System, which is scheduled to go live May 17 – 28. The GL install was an intense week of training in March. To be certain of the resulting reports, dual accounting systems are being run for awhile. Melissa reported that in the training session, it was discovered that Incode has a program called Cash Collections that would combine the deposit system from two posting sessions to only one posting. The water utility system receivables already post immediately to the GL, but each deposit always has non-utility system entries on it, and these must be entered as separate deposits now. It will create a headache during the bank reconciliation process.

Melissa explained that the council had approved 20K for the Invision program this year, and the Cash Collection program would cost \$2500. However, we saved at least that much money on installation expense because we only spent one week instead of the estimated four weeks. So Melissa asked the council to purchase the Cash Collection program with the understanding that the expense would not be more than the amount of money first allocated to the project. Dick Hulslander moved to authorize the purchase, Glen Robertson seconded, all approved. David Peterson asked why this was not foreseen in the initial request for the software purchase. Melissa explained that she had asked for the bare minimum of many programs that are offered by Incode, and that she just had not thought that deposits would become a problem due to dual entries into the GL.

The new city receptionist is Carolyn Brannon. She is working part-time in the mornings. She lives in Ransom Canyon, her husband is Rick Brannon and she has two teen-age boys in Roosevelt School.

The Group Health insurance news from TML is not good. We can expect a 15 – 18% increase in insurance next year. Our group loss ratio is 114%. 85% is considered the limit before pool resources start supplementing the group.

Clyde Fields from Atmos was present to answer questions about the rate increase agreement that was reached between Atmos and the small cities steering committee that Ransom Canyon had joined in order to negotiate the rate increase request last fall. The increase that was agreed on is 41%, which is about a \$1.23 customer increase per month. This is a much better rate than Ransom Canyon would have received had they gone on their own. Clyde said that Atmos had an average 10.5% return on their equity investment. Glen Robertson moved to adopt the Ordinance which would approve the rate increase agreement with Atmos. Inez Speed seconded the motion, all approved. Ordinance # 200 passed.

Agenda Item 5) Cell Phone Contract Report from David Peterson. David explained that for the city's six cell phones, (2 police, 1 fire, 3 operation), the city has four different contracts, all payable at different times, with different rates and plans. Chief Wayne Rawls had researched the program and recommended one new contract with Cingular. In two years our present phone technology will be dated in the expected industry changes. The new rate plan will pool 3750 anytime minutes. Operations will have 500 mobile to mobile minutes each. Police will have 5000 mobile to mobile minutes each. The police will have 5000 night and weekend minutes. Overage charges drop from .38 per minute to .25 per minute. The savings will be \$44.17 per month or \$530.04 annually. The council moved to change to one contract when the old contract runs out. The city has been hit with a billing glitch in the cingular system on one police phone, and the bill was \$650. This bill is in dispute, the glitch is caused by all of the new GSM billing procedures. David also proposed that a cell phone use policy should be drafted. David proposed to change to the proposed billing system now, but not to renew any contract. Glen commented that he hated to note that the council would not do something in the future, and the operations policy manual could cover a new policy for cell phone use to cover when and who would be authorized to sign such a contract on the city's behalf. David said he would amend his motion, Glen seconded, and all approved the motion to change the cell phone contract now to the program that was proposed by Wayne Rawls.

There is no election contest, so the city council cancelled the election that was ordered for May 15. This action taken on a motion from Inez Speed, second from David Peterson, all approved.

The Building Review Committee approved an 8foot privacy fence on Parklane. They approved a new spec house built by Jesko that is on Parklane. They approved a preliminary plat presented by Jason Sharkey for Horseshoe Hill. They asked for a resubmission of a retaining wall structural design for a garage on Foothill Drive. They recommended that the council adopt a new ordinance requiring only a 40 year warranty for roofs.

Glen Robertson moved to go to a 40 year warranty shingle requirement on the roofs. Inez Speed seconded the motion, all approved.

The building committee recommended that the council rescind the requirement for a dual mode smoke detector because such a machine is not available, and smoke detector requirements are covered in the International Building Code anyway. Leon Whetzel moved to adopt this ordinance to rescind Ordinance 89. Dick Hulslander seconded the motion, all approved.

Jason Sharkey requested a landscaping permit to start construction on Horseshoe Hill prior to next month's submission of a formal request to plat this property. His plans passed the Building Review Committee. He will be moving dirt to the inside of the Hill to prevent dirt from falling over the outside edge. He plans a retainer fence on all outside edges above the house on East Lake Shore Drive. He needs to cut the interior of the edges on the top of the hill in order to examine the soil to decide where and how to build his house. After plans are submitted for his house he will take the last 5-6 feet off of the top of the hill where the house will go. The engineer for this project has prepared documentation for storm water control measures and they do not plan to disturb the outside of the hill. The final survey has not been done yet; otherwise all documents would have been readied for submission to the council for final plat approval. The engineer on this project is Bobby Beale and the dirt contractor is Joe Marts. Robert Smith is the surveyor. Leon Whetzel moved to issue him a landscape permit prior to final plat approval, Glen Robertson seconded to motion. Leon Whetzel, David Peterson, Dick Hulslander and Glen Robertson voted aye. Inez Speed voted nay. Motion passed.

The council discussed the drought contingency plan yet again. Ches Carthel, the City of Lubbock Chief Engineer, wrote us a letter containing Lubbock's new drought contingency plan. We were supposed to follow suit with some fairly severe measures. The City of Lubbock did not adopt this plan, however, in the meantime. They announced that they will probably stick to a graduated water use rate increase. So the council asked the city attorney to review our contract with them to answer if we would be expected to do what Lubbock does. David Peterson reviewed the proposed Lubbock ordinance and he had this to report about the changes. Lubbock went from four categories to three. They added regulations about hours for watering, and they increased rates for high water users. Ransom Canyon is considered to be one wholesale user. The council took no action on this item. They chose to table the issue until Lubbock actually took action, noting that they have discussed the issue for three straight months, and that they have done all they could do to notify and educate the citizens of Ransom Canyon to use water wisely.

Jimmy McDaniel reported that Allen Doggett had made a list of the things that the old sewer plant needed. He still needed to check it over. There was a lengthy conversation about new permitting limits from the TCEQ. The BOD and TSS limits were lowered, and the capacities of the combined plants were used as a requirement, which is different than the old permit requirement of 175,000 gpd limit. The new limit is the 175 plus the new plant 225, for a total of 410,000. Harold said our actual flow these days is 144,000 gpd. The two plants have been permitted together. He questioned if we must rebuild the old plant at this time. John Sims will look at the contract.

Harold explained that the use of fresh water at the plant had a direct effect on the chlorinator and that they have had no trouble with this equipment since they went on a fresh water routine. He was of the opinion that using recycled water from the outflow in order to reuse in the plant would not be a good thing, in spite of the expense of the cost of fresh water at the plant.

Harold asked if he could spend 7,000 to put a bed of rock over the dirt at the sewer plant location. He's trying to get away from landscaped grass or trees. Cory Needham started working full time with the city two weeks ago and he's off to school in Abilene May 4,5,6.

Jimmy McDaniel presented Hugo Reed's study on the Water Tower, the piping system and the water distribution needs for Ransom Canyon. He had a nice Power Point presentation and he reviewed and recapped the scenarios that the council had studied in the work session that was held on the 25th. The council discussed the proposals at great length, including planning for future build-out capacity and provisions. Numbers of lots that could eventually hold a home were numbered and in the build-out, two large undeveloped tracts of land were estimated. Glen Robertson commented that if the developed homes were inside the city limits, the city would be expected to provide water pressure. There was some discussion about the need for another water tower if the south rim should develop, and Leon Whetzel commented that he did not think an elevated storage system at the city hall location under consideration could ever be expected to adequately provide water pressure for homes on the South Lake Shore rim.

There was a good deal of discussion about the possibility that what the city does or does not do in this regard would affect the ISO rating. Wayne said the fire department had expected to call for a special inspection from the ISO after the current improvements had been made, but that we were not scheduled for regular inspection for another ten years. In the end the council decided to build one big 300,000 gallon (or 350,000 tank depending on purchasing economics) elevated storage tank to replace the existing ground storage tanks. They also recommended a 5-8 year plan to replace the water lines, upgrading them and increasing their line capacity. Glen Robertson believed that this could be achieved within a 7-10 year period without a tax increase and without another bond issue.

Glen Robertson suggested plan 3.2A, and don't plan for any build-out until a developer actually presented plans.

Leon Whetzel said to forget the ISO speculation. The city was under TCEQ orders to build the elevated storage, not less than 300,000, and he recommended that the council should not add water house pumps for growth that has not occurred yet. The city could add the pumps when it happens.

The final instruction to Jimmy McDaniel was voiced by Glen Robertson to build a replacement 300,000 to 350,000 tank depending on the cost differential. Add the pump capacity when it is needed, eventually, but not next week, and plan for line upgrade. Jimmy will proceed with that scenario.

Harold wanted rocks at the sewer plant. Glen and Leon liked the idea, but Robert wanted to look at the budget amendment to find \$7,000.

Police Chief Wayne Rawls attended school and is current on his chief requirements. Ransom has had incidents of vandalism of bird baths and statues. Some car windows and windows at the shopping center have been broken with bullets or paint gun pellets. Boat permits are in.

The Cops Fast Grant denied us a grant this year. Wayne asked the council to hire the third officer anyway. With a June start date, the expected expense would be around \$8500 this budget year.

Much debate and discussion followed. The council wants to see the budget amendment numbers. These will be ready for the May city council meeting. There was much discussion, but there was no motion to hire the officer.

Wayne Rawls gave the fire report because Rand McPherson was sick. The pancake breakfast is Saturday the 17th.

The Easter Egg hunt at the Library was lots of fun and Miss Kim had lots of photos on a display board. The library is a winner. Everyone loves the library.

The POA report was given by Dick Hulslander, husband of board member Carol Hulslander. The POA held their annual meeting and new officers are: President Candace Fletcher, Vice President Carol Hulslander, Secretary Helen Musiak, and members Linda Jarvis, Lynn Opheim, Marlow Summitt and Andy Wilson. Heidi Wilson is the Pool Manager. The POA has reassessed their building plans and they have appointed a building committee to decide on a large steel building with garage doors that can be opened in order to make a large community gathering place. The garage sale is May 1.

In open forum Mayor Englund commented that the ECHO April Fool article about the sewer plant created a stir of phone calls at city hall. He commented that the ECHO is a POA publication.

The hour was late and Inez Speed moved to adjourn. Glen Robertson seconded the motion and all agreed. Meeting adjourned.

Melissa Verett
City Administrator