

## CITY COUNCIL MEETING

October 14, 2003

### Minutes

The City Council of the Town of Ransom Canyon met in open session at 7:00 P.M. October 14, 2003. All council members were present: Mayor Robert Englund, Mayor Pro-tem Glen Robertson, and Aldermen Dick Hulslander, David Peterson, Inez Speed, and Leon Whetzel, The Mayor called for a moment of silence.

Minutes of the September meeting were approved on a motion from Dick Hulslander and second from Glen Robertson. All voted aye except David Peterson, who abstained because he was absent from the September meeting.

The Financial Report was approved on a motion from Leon Whetzel and second from Dick Hulslander. All approved.

The council discussed the Texas Municipal League insurance bill, which was \$4,000 higher than was budgeted. Melissa Verett explained that the error was hers, that she should have made one more phone call to TML. In the rerate summary, coverage was increased for the new sewer plant. Other new capital purchase property was included. In addition, Ransom Canyon was charged an experience factor of a 10% increase due to last year's loss experience. Even though TML announced no increases this year, this did not apply to entities with loss experience or changes in coverage. Melissa offered to forego the planned software programming purchases in order to meet budget. Mrs. Speed commented that Melissa should have made that last phone call, but the council did not cut the program entirely. They did suggest that the purchase be delayed a few months until the city had more experience with the new fiscal year.

S&P issued an update on the city's bond rating, and the rating stayed at BBB+. Leon Whetzel commented that when this rating was initially issued, we had hoped for a AAA, but our total dependence on residential tax was not in our favor. Glen Robertson also commented that commercial business drives higher property values and would impact the bond rating. Dick Hulslander commented that to our advantage, the property tax base revenue stream is predictable.

The council delayed any action on the TML Provision for Retiree Insurance until a work session.

The council voted to suspend the rate increase from ATMOS Energy until the rate increase could be negotiated by committee. This vote was unanimous to suspend, on a motion from Dick Hulslander, second from Inez Speed.

Work session on the policy manual was set for Thursday, October 23rd at 7:00 P.M.

Leon Whetzel reported for the building control committee. They examined a request for an opaque brick wall in the zero lot line of a garden home. The Restrictive Covenants call

for no windows in zero lot line walls. The committee took no exception to the request for an opaque brick masonry inset. The council rendered an advisory opinion that a glass block wall is not a window. A second set of plans on Sioux Trail was examined, and the houseplan is fundamentally sound, but there were some details about the placement on the lot and the short retaining walls that could be reviewed when plans were resubmitted. There was a third set of plans that involved the change of a roof line from gable to hip. No exception was taken. Leon also advised the council of changes in the energy code and in storm water runoff requirements that might now involve individual home construction. Harold and Melissa will follow up to see if there are new regulations that the city should apply to our permit requirements.

Jimmy McDaniel from Hugo Reed submitted an engineering update via e-mail. They propose using the elevated waters storage for the upper canyon, and the ground water storage for the lower canyon. The wastewater plant may be ready in 60 days. The booster pump noise problem caused delays. Also, design plans to clean out the digester were discussed by Allen Doggett with the council. Allen suggested a sloped digester floor would be easier to clean out. The digester in the old plant needs repair, and this is a good time to do this. This is part of the repair to the old plant, and funding is provided in the CIP. Glen Robertson moved to do the work at this time, Dick Hulslander seconded the motion. All approved.

The council discussed participating in a street-seal coating program that combines several cities in one group bid for service. The program bids for uncoated white rock. The council agreed that the coated rock program was worth the added expense, and presented a far superior road surface. There was no motion to participate in the joint program, and Harold will notify our city engineers to proceed with the city bid procedure.

The Mayor advised the council that the Cops Fast grant did not fund a policeman for this year. He had asked the council to consider hiring a part-time policeman since some monies were allocated for police staffing. Chief Rawls had changed his request for a part time officer, explaining that he was willing to wait for any officer at all until the next round of grants. Glen Robertson commented that Wayne was willing to continue to run short-staffed in order to take advantage of this potential \$75,000 money. Grant rules stipulate that they will not pay to take a part-time officer to full time status. If Wayne were to hire someone part-time, he'd have to fire them in order to hire a full time officer, and he did not want to hire someone under that cloud. Glen commented that the need for the officer is still there, but the current officers are willing to take the workload one more year.

David Peterson asked if we were not hiring a third officer, why are we purchasing a third police car. Mayor Englund said that he had authorized Wayne to make some purchases for equipment for the third car. Glen asked Wayne about the condition of the two and Wayne reported that the '97 Crown Victoria had 69,000 miles and needed tires. The '99 Explorer had 35,000 miles and was in good shape. He planned to give the new car to James and park the Crown Victoria. The council discussed this purchase and each councilman commented that they would prefer to focus on June and the next round of

grants, and wait for the third policeman rather than purchase a new vehicle at this time. There was some discussion about returning items that had been ordered. Although the vehicle had not been ordered, a custom radar system probably could not be returned.

The council discussed purchasing and the procedures and department head spending limit considerations. This issue and purchase order procedures will be discussed at the October 23 work session under Operating Policy Manual.

Rand McPherson reported no fires, and no medical calls. Rescue One is in the paint shop. The LaFrance had a starter repaired, along with some routine maintenance.

Wayne attended a HazMat conference and was charged with defining the three top hazards in town, and stating what the city was doing to prevent or mitigate disaster.

Kim Copeland reported that the library activity has slowed, but the A/R reading lists are out and readers are beginning to come in to get their books. The council said it was okay to put a notice in the City News about the Christmas card project.

No action was taken in open forum.

Motion to adjourn came from Inez Speed, second from Glen Robertson, all approved.

Melissa Verett  
City Administrator