

MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE CITY COUNCIL

On the 17th day of September 2024, the City Council of Taft, Texas, convened for a regular meeting at 230 Green Avenue, Taft, Texas, Taft City Hall at 6:30 P.M.

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

There being a quorum, Mayor Pro-tem Keeney called the meeting to order at 6:30 P.M.

2. CALL ROLL AND ESTABLISH A QUORUM IS PRESENT

Councilman Molina	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> present	<input type="checkbox"/> absent
Councilman Garza	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> present	<input type="checkbox"/> absent
Mayor Pro-tem Keeney	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> present	<input type="checkbox"/> absent
Councilman Rodriguez	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> present	<input type="checkbox"/> absent
Mayor Vasquez	<input type="checkbox"/> present	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> absent

Others Present: Ryan Smith, Andrea Gomez, Thomas Gwosdz, others present listed on sign in sheet.

3. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE AND TEXAS PLEDGE

Councilman Garza led the Pledge of Allegiance and the Pledge to the Texas Flag.

4. PRAYER

Councilman Rodriguez led the prayer.

5. CITIZEN COMMENTS

Discussion by Glen Searcy on Taxes

Discussion by Gloria Zapata on the Water Bills and phones at city hall

6. Public Hearing on the Proposed Budget for Fiscal Year 2024-2025

Public Hearing was opened at 6:38PM and Closed at 7:02PM

Denise Hitt stated that the budget was not balanced correctly, Mrs. McKinney a property owner asks about multiple aspects of the budget. Mrs. Hitt stated that the 5.8 Million loan was partially toward the dis-annexed/Taft Southwest and that they should still be paying toward the I&S tax.

7. Public Hearing regarding the City of Taft’s Proposed Property Tax Rate of \$0.898434 for the 2024 Tax Year. \$0.54234 on each \$100.00 valuation of property for the purpose of maintenance and operation and a tax of \$0.356094 on each \$100 valuation of property for the purpose of principal and interest on bonds and certificates of obligation (Debt services).

Public hearing was opened at 7:02pm and Closed at 7:20pm

Mrs. McKinney requested that taxes not be raised. City Manager Smith discussed that all cities surrounding Taft are also looking to increase rates based off discussions with the Tax Assessor Collector. He also stated that we can’t compare to other cities as we are all in different circumstances and that the I&S was the biggest increase. Mrs. Hitt asked what the average increase would mean for a tax payer in Taft. City Manager Smith pulled up the posting from the newspaper on the computer with the average increase per household listed. Mr. Searcy asked where the 3.5 million went.

8. Consent Agenda

This section shall provide for items that require action by the Council, but where little or no discussion is anticipated. By a single motion, second and affirmation majority vote. Items under this section are approved without further discussion or action.

Code Enforcement – Report of Enforcement Activities

Mr. Martin – 71 code enforcement cases, 7 liens, 7 vol. cleanups. City Wide Clean up event. Alderman Molina asked about brush on sidewalks and if that’s a code enforcement job.

9. Discuss, consider and necessary action in regards to Ordinance 240901, an ordinance making appropriations for the Support of the City of Taft, Texas for Fiscal Year Beginning October 1, 2024, and Ending September 30, 2025; Adopting the Annual Budget of the City of Taft, Texas for the 2024-2025 Fiscal Funding Year Budget; Funding Municipal Purposes; Authorizing Expenditures; Providing for a Repealing Clause; a Severability Clause; and Providing for an Effective Date.

Alderman Molina: Why is the budget first? City Attorney: state as per law the budget goes first

Councilman Rodriguez motioned to adopt Ordinance 240901, the motion was seconded.

The following Votes were polled:

Councilman Molina	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> for	<input type="checkbox"/> against	<input type="checkbox"/> abstain	<input type="checkbox"/> absent
Councilman Garza	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> for	<input type="checkbox"/> against	<input type="checkbox"/> abstain	<input type="checkbox"/> absent
Mayor Pro-tem Keeney	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> for	<input type="checkbox"/> against	<input type="checkbox"/> abstain	<input type="checkbox"/> absent
Councilman Rodriguez	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> for	<input type="checkbox"/> against	<input type="checkbox"/> abstain	<input type="checkbox"/> absent
Mayor Vasquez	<input type="checkbox"/> for	<input type="checkbox"/> against	<input type="checkbox"/> abstain	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> absent

10. Discuss, consider and necessary action to ratify the property tax increase reflected in the budget as required by Section 102.007 of the Texas Local Government Code.

Discussion was made over the tax rate and what services have been cut.

Councilman Garza motioned to ratify the property tax increase, the motion was seconded.

The following Votes were polled:

Councilman Molina	<input type="checkbox"/> for	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> against	<input type="checkbox"/> abstain	<input type="checkbox"/> absent
Councilman Garza	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> for	<input type="checkbox"/> against	<input type="checkbox"/> abstain	<input type="checkbox"/> absent
Mayor Pro-tem Keeney	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> for	<input type="checkbox"/> against	<input type="checkbox"/> abstain	<input type="checkbox"/> absent
Councilman Rodriguez	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> for	<input type="checkbox"/> against	<input type="checkbox"/> abstain	<input type="checkbox"/> absent
Mayor Vasquez	<input type="checkbox"/> for	<input type="checkbox"/> against	<input type="checkbox"/> abstain	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> absent

11. Discuss, consider and necessary action in regards to Ordinance 240902, an Ordinance of the City of Taft, Texas Levying Property Taxes for the use and support of the Municipal Government of the City of Taft, Texas for the 2024-2025 Fiscal Year; Providing for a Repealing Clause; Severability Clause; and Providing an Effective Date.

Councilman Keeney moved that the property tax rate be increased by and adoption of a Tax rate of \$0.898434 which is effectively a 38.22% increase in the tax rate, the motion was seconded.

The following Votes were polled:

Councilman Molina	<input type="checkbox"/> for	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> against	<input type="checkbox"/> abstain	<input type="checkbox"/> absent
Councilman Garza	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> for	<input type="checkbox"/> against	<input type="checkbox"/> abstain	<input type="checkbox"/> absent
Mayor Pro-tem Keeney	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> for	<input type="checkbox"/> against	<input type="checkbox"/> abstain	<input type="checkbox"/> absent
Councilman Rodriguez	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> for	<input type="checkbox"/> against	<input type="checkbox"/> abstain	<input type="checkbox"/> absent
Mayor Vasquez	<input type="checkbox"/> for	<input type="checkbox"/> against	<input type="checkbox"/> abstain	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> absent

12. Discuss, consider and necessary action in regards to establishing a date and time for Taft's Annual Halloween on Green and approving a road closure for the same from Kirkpatrick St. to Hoover St.

Date: Oct 31st Thursday from 6pm-8pm

Councilman Rodriguez motioned to approve the date and time listed above, the motion was seconded.

The following Votes were polled:

Councilman Molina	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> for	<input type="checkbox"/> against	<input type="checkbox"/> abstain	<input type="checkbox"/> absent
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Councilman Garza	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> for	<input type="checkbox"/> against	<input type="checkbox"/> abstain	<input type="checkbox"/> absent
Mayor Pro-tem Keeney	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> for	<input type="checkbox"/> against	<input type="checkbox"/> abstain	<input type="checkbox"/> absent
Councilman Rodriguez	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> for	<input type="checkbox"/> against	<input type="checkbox"/> abstain	<input type="checkbox"/> absent
Mayor Vasquez	<input type="checkbox"/> for	<input type="checkbox"/> against	<input type="checkbox"/> abstain	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> absent

13. Discuss, consider and necessary action in regards to Resolution 240903 to award a contract with Trailer and Associates for administrative services pertaining to the application and implementation, if awarded, of the City’s 2025-2026 Texas Department of Agriculture TxCDBG grant and authorizing the execution of a contract.

Discussion on the CDBG grant and possible plans for meters and how residents would be able to view the meter data themselves online.

Councilman Rodriguez motioned to adopt resolution 240903, the motion was seconded.

The following Votes were polled:

Councilman Molina	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> for	<input type="checkbox"/> against	<input type="checkbox"/> abstain	<input type="checkbox"/> absent
Councilman Garza	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> for	<input type="checkbox"/> against	<input type="checkbox"/> abstain	<input type="checkbox"/> absent
Mayor Pro-tem Keeney	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> for	<input type="checkbox"/> against	<input type="checkbox"/> abstain	<input type="checkbox"/> absent
Councilman Rodriguez	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> for	<input type="checkbox"/> against	<input type="checkbox"/> abstain	<input type="checkbox"/> absent
Mayor Vasquez	<input type="checkbox"/> for	<input type="checkbox"/> against	<input type="checkbox"/> abstain	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> absent

14. Discuss, consider and necessary action in regards to rescheduling the city council meeting scheduled for Tuesday October 1st as to not conflict with National Night Out.

City Manager Smith gave options to move or cancel meeting, council discussed cancelation with special meeting if needed.

Councilman Garza motioned to cancel the October 1 Regular Council meeting, the motion was seconded.

The following Votes were polled:

Councilman Molina	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> for	<input type="checkbox"/> against	<input type="checkbox"/> abstain	<input type="checkbox"/> absent
Councilman Garza	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> for	<input type="checkbox"/> against	<input type="checkbox"/> abstain	<input type="checkbox"/> absent
Mayor Pro-tem Keeney	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> for	<input type="checkbox"/> against	<input type="checkbox"/> abstain	<input type="checkbox"/> absent
Councilman Rodriguez	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> for	<input type="checkbox"/> against	<input type="checkbox"/> abstain	<input type="checkbox"/> absent
Mayor Vasquez	<input type="checkbox"/> for	<input type="checkbox"/> against	<input type="checkbox"/> abstain	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> absent

15. Discuss, consider and necessary action in regards to the P&Z committee’s request to enter into a consulting contract with Jennifer Lopez.

Discussion to table till later date

Councilman Molina motioned to table item 15, the motion was seconded.

The following Votes were polled:

Councilman Molina	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> for	<input type="checkbox"/> against	<input type="checkbox"/> abstain	<input type="checkbox"/> absent
Councilman Garza	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> for	<input type="checkbox"/> against	<input type="checkbox"/> abstain	<input type="checkbox"/> absent
Mayor Pro-tem Keeney	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> for	<input type="checkbox"/> against	<input type="checkbox"/> abstain	<input type="checkbox"/> absent
Councilman Rodriguez	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> for	<input type="checkbox"/> against	<input type="checkbox"/> abstain	<input type="checkbox"/> absent
Mayor Vasquez	<input type="checkbox"/> for	<input type="checkbox"/> against	<input type="checkbox"/> abstain	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> absent

16. Discuss, consider and necessary action in regards to assigning responsibility for billing of public works labor in reference to code enforcement violations.

PD does not have billing software, keep it somewhere in City Hall.

No Action was taken

17. Discuss, consider and necessary action in regards to approving the 2024-2025 FY holiday schedule.

Alderman Keeney went over the proposed holiday schedule

Councilman Garza motioned to Accept the proposed Holiday Dates, the motion was seconded.

The following Votes were polled:

Councilman Molina	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> for	<input type="checkbox"/> against	<input type="checkbox"/> abstain	<input type="checkbox"/> absent
Councilman Garza	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> for	<input type="checkbox"/> against	<input type="checkbox"/> abstain	<input type="checkbox"/> absent
Mayor Pro-tem Keeney	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> for	<input type="checkbox"/> against	<input type="checkbox"/> abstain	<input type="checkbox"/> absent
Councilman Rodriguez	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> for	<input type="checkbox"/> against	<input type="checkbox"/> abstain	<input type="checkbox"/> absent
Mayor Vasquez	<input type="checkbox"/> for	<input type="checkbox"/> against	<input type="checkbox"/> abstain	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> absent

18. Discuss, consider and necessary action to approve Administrator access for Ryan Smith to the Prosperity Bank Treasury System and to the Business Credit Card Account.

Discussion on giving access to the City Manager to View all transaction and banking info

Councilman Garza motioned to approve access to Ryan Smith to be an administrator on the Prosperity Bank Treasury Center and Business Credit Card Account., the motion was seconded.

The following Votes were polled:

Councilman Molina	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> for	<input type="checkbox"/> against	<input type="checkbox"/> abstain	<input type="checkbox"/> absent
Councilman Garza	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> for	<input type="checkbox"/> against	<input type="checkbox"/> abstain	<input type="checkbox"/> absent
Mayor Pro-tem Keeney	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> for	<input type="checkbox"/> against	<input type="checkbox"/> abstain	<input type="checkbox"/> absent
Councilman Rodriguez	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> for	<input type="checkbox"/> against	<input type="checkbox"/> abstain	<input type="checkbox"/> absent
Mayor Vasquez	<input type="checkbox"/> for	<input type="checkbox"/> against	<input type="checkbox"/> abstain	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> absent

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

6. CLOSED SESSION: City Council will meet in Closed session pursuant to the provisions of Chapter 551 of the Texas Government Code, in accordance with the authority contained in:

- *Section 551.074 (Personnel Matters)* To deliberate the appointment, employment, evaluation, reassignment of duties, discipline or dismissal of a public officer or employee or to hear a complaint or charge against officer or employee

CITY SECRETARY– Andrea Gomez

- Texas Government Code § 551.071, consultation with attorney on matter involving pending or contemplated litigation or other matter in which the duty of the attorney to the governmental body under the Texas Disciplinary Rules of Professional Conduct of the State Bar of Texas clearly conflicts with the Texas Open Meetings Act. Thomas A. Gwosdz, City Attorney

Councilman Rodriguez motioned to move into Executive Session, the motion was seconded.

The following Votes were polled:

Councilman Molina	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> for	<input type="checkbox"/> against	<input type="checkbox"/> abstain	<input type="checkbox"/> absent
Councilman Garza	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> for	<input type="checkbox"/> against	<input type="checkbox"/> abstain	<input type="checkbox"/> absent
Mayor Pro-tem Keeney	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> for	<input type="checkbox"/> against	<input type="checkbox"/> abstain	<input type="checkbox"/> absent

Councilman Rodriguez for against abstain absent
Mayor Vasquez for against abstain absent

The motion carried.

The Council moved into Executive Session at 8:19 pm.

7. Open Session: The City Council will reconvene in Open Session at which time action on the matter(s) discussed in Closed Session may be considered.

- *Section 551.074* (Personnel Matters) To deliberate the appointment, employment, evaluation, reassignment of duties, discipline or dismissal of a public officer or employee or to hear a complaint or charge against officer or employee

CITY SECRETARY– Andrea Gomez

- Texas Government Code § 551.071, consultation with attorney on matter involving pending or contemplated litigation or other matter in which the duty of the attorney to the governmental body under the Texas Disciplinary Rules of Professional Conduct of the State Bar of Texas clearly conflicts with the Texas Open Meetings Act. Thomas A. Gwosdz, City Attorney

Councilman Garza motioned to move into Open Session, the motion was seconded.

The following Votes were polled:

Councilman Molina for against abstain absent
Councilman Garza for against abstain absent
Mayor Pro-tem Keeney for against abstain absent
Councilman Rodriguez for against abstain absent
Mayor Vasquez for against abstain absent

The motion carried.

The Council Reconvened Session at 7:31 pm.

Matters of Executive Session:

The Council announced:

- *Section 551.074* (Personnel Matters) To deliberate the appointment, employment, evaluation, reassignment of duties, discipline or dismissal of a public officer or employee or to hear a complaint or charge against officer or employee

CITY SECRETARY– Andrea Gomez

- Texas Government Code § 551.071, consultation with attorney on matter involving pending or contemplated litigation or other matter in which the duty of the attorney to the governmental body under the Texas Disciplinary Rules of Professional Conduct of the State Bar of Texas clearly conflicts with the Texas Open Meetings Act. Thomas A. Gwosdz, City Attorney

No action taken on either Item

21. COUNCIL AND STAFF COMMENTS: COMMENTS MAYBE MADE BY STAFF OR COUNCIL BUT NO ACTION WILL BE TAKEN

Discussion about National Night Out.

22. ITEMS TO CONSIDER FOR PLACEMENT ON FUTURE AGENDAS

Alderman Molina: Auditor and Frontier at the next meeting and representative from incode.

Alderman Rodriguez: Wants the contract with Frontier Waste and Incode

Alderman Garza: Check on Audit/ and calls at City Hall, possibly a voicemail that says we will call you back.

Alderman Keeney: Update on Collection station, Grants, memorial wall for vets.

23. ANNOUNCEMENTS OF COMMUNITY INTEREST AND/OR UPCOMING EVENTS

Alderman Garza: Flag pole

Oct 1st National Night Out

Oct 19th City Clean Up

Oct 31st Halloween on Green

24. ADJOURN – TIME 8:55P.M.

Councilman Rodriguez motioned to Adjourn, the motion was seconded.

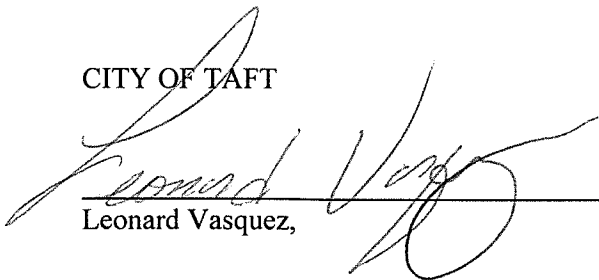
The following Votes were polled:

Councilman Molina	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> for	<input type="checkbox"/> against	<input type="checkbox"/> abstain	<input type="checkbox"/> absent
Councilman Garza	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> for	<input type="checkbox"/> against	<input type="checkbox"/> abstain	<input type="checkbox"/> absent
Mayor Pro-tem Keeney	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> for	<input type="checkbox"/> against	<input type="checkbox"/> abstain	<input type="checkbox"/> absent
Councilman Rodriguez	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> for	<input type="checkbox"/> against	<input type="checkbox"/> abstain	<input type="checkbox"/> absent
Mayor Vasquez	<input type="checkbox"/> for	<input type="checkbox"/> against	<input type="checkbox"/> abstain	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> absent

The motion carried.

Passed and Approved this 30th day of September, 20 24.

CITY OF TAFT


 Leonard Vasquez, Mayor

ATTEST:


 Ryan Smith City Manager