

**PALM VALLEY CITY COUNCIL  
MINUTES  
REGULAR MEETING  
AUGUST 15, 2017**

The City Council of the City of Palm Valley met in a Regular Meeting on the 15<sup>th</sup> day of August 2017 at 6:00 p.m. at 1313 N. Stuart Place Road, Palm Valley, Texas. The meeting was attended by the following persons:

Mayor            George Rivera

Councilmembers: John Widger, Debe Wright, Cynthia Thompson, Paul Powers  
Absent: Julie Martin

City Attorney: Jason Mann  
City Secretary – Sylvia R. Trevino

Staff: Chief A. R. Garcia  
Rosendo Flores, Waterworks Supervisor

- 1) CALL TO ORDER**
- 2) PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE** – Led by Mayor Rivera.
- 3) PUBLIC COMMENTS - None**
- 4) MINUTES FOR APPROVAL – REGULAR MEETING OF JULY 18, 2017**

Mayor Rivera clarified his statement on Page 5 regarding the ponds. Correction will be made to add: ***“.....it would be best to revisit the project after we hear back from the Drainage District.”***

Councilman Powers made a motion to approve the minutes with the noted correction.

Councilwoman Wright seconded the motion.

Mayor Rivera took the votes and the motion carried unanimously by those present.

**5) DISCUSSION AND ACTION TAKEN TO PROPOSE A DESIRED TAX RATE OF \$0.481118 PER \$100 VALUATION; RECORD VOTE TAKEN AND TWO PUBLIC HEARINGS SCHEDULED FOR AUGUST 15, 2017 @ 6:00 P.M. AND AUGUST 29, 2017 @ 6:00 P.M.**

Mayor Rivera commented that the important word to remember is 'propose'. The proposed increase is by the allowable roll back rate.

Councilman Widger explained the proposed rate is 8% over the effective tax rate and will generate about \$45,000 in revenue----\$11,000 of which the City would have gotten anyway at the current rate.

Mayor Rivera added that this is the maximum rate the City can impose without going to an election. The last tax increase was in 2014.

Councilwoman Thompson commented that the City is pretty transparent and merits the increase necessary to do needed projects and allows the City to be prepared financially for such projects.

Councilwoman Thompson made a motion that the property tax rate be increased by adoption of a proposed tax rate of \$0.481118/\$100 valuation which is effectively an 8 percent (8%) increase in the tax rate.

Councilman Powers seconded the motion.

Mayor Rivera took the votes and the motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: Thompson, Powers, Wright, Widger

Nay: None

The motion carried unanimously by those present.

**6) PUBLIC HEARING HELD TO SEEK COMMENTS FOR OR AGAINST THE PROPOSED TAX RATE OF \$0.481118 PER \$100 VALUATION**

Mayor Rivera declared the public hearing open.

Charles Ramsey, a local resident, commented that he is not opposed to the tax increase but he is opposed to the Parks and Recreation budget being doubled or even tripled when there are other more pressing issues.

There being no further comments, Mayor Rivera declared the public hearing closed.

**7) ACTION TAKEN TO CHANGE THE COUNCIL MEETING DATE OF SEPTEMBER 19, 2017 TO SEPTEMBER 5, 2017 TO COMPLY WITH THE REQUIRED DEADLINES FOR ADOPTION OF THE TAX RATE AND THE PROPOSED BUDGET**

Councilman Widger made the motion to change the date accordingly.

Councilwoman Thompson seconded the motion.

Mayor Rivera took the votes and the motion carried unanimously by those present.

**8) DESIGNATION OF CITY RESERVES FOR SPECIFIC PURPOSES / FUTURE CAPITAL PROJECTS TABLED**

Mayor Rivera commented that he wanted to know of a legal way to set such funds aside to declare for specific projects. This fund would consist of the additional revenue from the increase in the sales tax, the tax increase, and surplus funds.

Councilman Widger explained the 5-year budget for both the City and Water Departments. He stated that \$150,000 is already designated as an emergency reserve on the City side. Fiscal year end 2016 produced a surplus of \$100,000 so there is about \$275,000 to work with. On the water side there is \$130,000 already allocated as an emergency reserve with about \$390,000 unassigned. On the City side, the streets would be a priority project for the reserves.

Mayor Rivera added that doing only the seal coat project will buy the City some time but could not do an entire overlay of the streets. The seal coat could buy about five years but there are other issues coming and he wants the reserve to stay intact for future needed projects.

On the Water side, there is a nice surplus which could be increased for two or three priorities----the water pressure issue being a priority. Mayor Rivera explained that the City has sufficient funds for everyday operations and the designated reserves would be for 'big' items.

Councilman Widger made a motion to table this item until the August 29<sup>th</sup> meeting to allow legal counsel to do some further research on the designation of reserves.

Councilwoman Thompson seconded the motion.

Mayor Rivera took the votes and the motion carried unanimously by those present.

**9) BUDGET ADJUSTMENT FOR 2016-17 APPROVED TO ALLOCATE \$6,304.00 FOR REPAIRS MADE TO THE POND LOCATED ON THE HARLINGEN GOLF COURSE ADJACENT TO THE SEWER PLANT**

Mayor Rivera explained that this was to reimburse the Country Club for an emergency repair of which we knew we had an obligation to do.

Councilman Powers made a motion to approve the budget adjustment.

Councilwoman Wright seconded the motion.

Mayor Rivera took the votes and the motion carried unanimously by those present.

**10) BUDGET ADJUSTMENT FOR 2016-17 APPROVED TO ALLOCATE \$13,000 FOR THE REPLACEMENT OF A NEW AIR CON SYSTEM FOR CITY HALL**

Councilwoman Thompson made a motion to approve the budget adjustment.

Councilman Powers seconded the motion.

Mayor Rivera took the votes and the motion carried unanimously by those present.

**11) CONSENT AGENDA:**

- A. Police Monthly Report – July 2017**
- B. Municipal Court Monthly Report – July 2017**
- C. Monthly Check Listing – July 2017**
- D. Monthly Financial Report (budget) – July 2017**
- E. Investment Report – July 2017**
- F. Council/staff liaison reports**

Chief Garcia reported that Reserve Officer McDowell is no longer on the police force and he is trying to recruit new reserves to fill her spot.

He followed with the training he attended and the training taken by the officers. Chief Garcia also went over the various arrests that were made during the month. He reported that he confiscated a vehicle and sits in the back of City Hall. The driver was in possession of drugs. He has filed the forfeiture with the District Attorney's office already.

Luis Gonzalez, a local resident, reported on vacant properties and made reference to the one on 300 Palm Valley East that has a busted sliding door. He asked if the police are doing surveillance on these properties.

Chief Garcia replied that the officers do checks only on the properties where the owners are out of town but not those that are vacant or are for sale.

Councilwoman Thompson asked if this is standard procedure not to patrol those residences. Chief Garcia replied not necessarily---the officers only check on those that are occupied but whose owners are out of town. It should be up to the owners and realtors to take care of those homes.

Councilwoman Thompson felt that the City has a responsibility to its citizens if there is a potential of vandalism or suspicious activity going on.

Councilman Widger asked that the Chief come up with some kind of plan to do surveillance on those homes that are for sale and are vacant---come up with a process.

**Council/staff liaison reports.**

Mayor Rivera asked that the Council members start thinking of recommended appointees to the Board of Adjustments and Appeals to fill the vacancy left by Dick Faxon.

Additionally, Mayor Rivera asked that the Council start thinking about recourses if property owners do not install their backflow preventers.

He reported on a meeting held with Governor Abbott in Austin and several Mayors from the Valley including him. They addressed various legislative changes coming up. Mayor Rivera stated that he had addressed Governor

Abbott and expressed his concern over any restrictions imposed on cities, especially small cities, would be devastating.

Councilwoman Thompson made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda.

Councilman Powers seconded the motion.

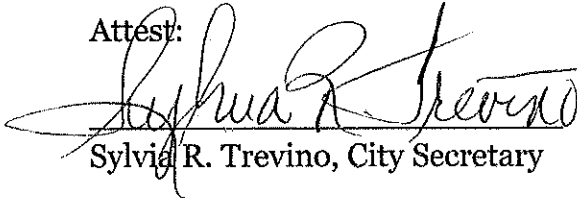
Mayor Rivera took the votes and the motion carried unanimously by those present.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 6:48 p.m. upon a motion by Councilwoman Wright and a second by Councilwoman Thompson.



George Rivera, Mayor

Attest:



Sylvia R. Trevino, City Secretary