

**PALM VALLEY CITY COUNCIL
MINUTES
SPECIAL MEETING
September 15, 2021**

The City Council of the City of Palm Valley met in a Special Meeting on the 15th day of September 2021 at 6:00 p.m. at 1313 N. Stuart Place Road, Palm Valley, Texas. Council members attended in person. (ZOOM videoconferencing was available for the public).

Council members present
Mayor George Rivera
Councilman Michael Galvan
Councilman Jerry Wade
Councilwoman Lisa Taylor
Councilwoman Cynthia Thompson

VIA ZOOM:
Councilman Eric Hoff

Staff present (in person):
Sylvia R. Trevino, City Secretary
Jose Rivera, Support Services Aide

1. **CALL TO ORDER** - The meeting was called to order by Mayor Rivera.
2. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE** - The Pledge of Allegiance followed led by Mayor Rivera.
3. **LEGISLATIVE PRAYER** – Provided by Councilwoman Thompson.
4. **PROCLAMATION – ‘CONSTITUTION WEEK’** – Mayor Rivera read the proclamation and presented it to Dawn Johnson and Taffy Herridge.
5. **PUBLIC COMMENTS** – None
6. **MINUTES FOR APPROVAL – SPECIAL MEETING OF AUGUST 17, 2021, AND SPECIAL MEETING OF AUGUST 31, 2021**

There being no corrections to the minutes as presented, Councilwoman Taylor made a motion to approve both sets of minutes.

Councilman Wade seconded the motion.

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

7. **PUBLIC HEARING HELD TO HEAR COMMENTS FOR OR AGAINST THE PROPOSED TAX RATE OF \$0.515463/\$100 VALUATION FOR 2021**

Mayor Rivera declared the public hearing open at approximately 6:08 p.m.

Mayor Rivera explained that the tax rate remains the same as last year.

Annette Baker questioned the tax statement she received from the County that reflects a line item for Palm Valley Utility District as a taxing entity and asked if Palm Valley has a utility district. Mayor Rivera replied that the utility district no longer exists.

Ms. Baker also questioned the drainage fee on the utility bill. Mayor Rivera explained this is a drainage fee imposed to pay for drainage projects.

Mayor Rivera reiterated that there is no increase in the tax rate although taxable value of properties in Palm Valley increased by 2.46%

Ms. Baker asked if the tax rate is voted on each year. Mayor Rivera replied yes, the City Council holds a budget workshop each year to set the tax rate to assure there is enough money to provide the services to the citizens of Palm Valley.

Ms. Baker asked if the City could, on behalf of the citizens, contact the Appraisal District to reassess the properties in Palm Valley. Mayor Rivera explained that the City cannot do that, however, the individual property owners can appeal their own property values.

Councilwoman Taylor affirmed that the Council votes on the tax rate annually.

There being no further comments, Mayor Rivera declared the public hearing closed at approximately 6:20 p.m.

8. ORDINANCE ADOPTED SETTING THE TAX RATE OF \$0.515463/\$100 VALUATION

Councilman Hoff made a motion to adopt the ordinance.

Councilwoman Taylor seconded the motion.

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

9. PUBLIC HEARING HELD TO HEAR COMMENTS FOR OR AGAINST THE PROPOSED BUDGET FOR THE CITY OF PALM VALLEY FOR FISCAL YEAR 2021-22

Mayor Rivera declared the public hearing open at approximately 6:21 p.m.

Mayor Rivera went over the budget highlights. He commented that the projected revenue is 4.58% higher because of the new valuations.

Mayor Rivera noted that the City's General Fund has a projected revenue total in the amount of \$905,000; total projected expenses of \$879,200 with an anticipated surplus of \$25,800 (2.9%)

The Water Operating account has a projected revenue of \$753,221 with anticipated expenses of \$752,321. The estimated surplus is \$900.

The City capital projects are:

Police - \$40,000 for a new police vehicle

Public Works - \$42,000 (1 new pickup / 1 new riding mower

Administration - \$25,000 (parking lot maintenance @ City Hall)

There being no further comments, Mayor Rivera declared the public hearing closed at approximately 6:26 p.m.

10. ORDINANCE ADOPTED ADOPTING THE BUDGET FOR THE CITY OF PALM VALLEY FOR FISCAL YEAR 2021-22.

Councilwoman Thompson made a motion to adopt the ordinance.

Councilman Galvan seconded the motion.

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

11. EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES AND AMBULANCE TRANSPORT CONTRACT BETWEEN THE CITY OF PALM VALLEY AND SOUTH TEXAS EMERGENCY CARE FOUNDATION, INC. FOR OCTOBER 2021 THROUGH SEPTEMBER 2026 RENEWED

Bill Aston, Executive Director of EMS, was present via ZOOM and commented that the contract remains the same as in the previous one. The only change is the renewal date.

Also present was Joe Jones, the City's representative on the Board of Directors of EMS.

Mr. Aston went over the call stats / runs in Palm Valley stating that there were 112 calls to Palm Valley last year.

Councilwoman Taylor asked Mr. Aston, with the current situation being what it is, where are the patients being transported to?

Mr. Aston replied they are still being taken to hospitals. The downside to that is that the hospitals are short staffed. There is also a shortage of EMTs and paramedics. However, EMS is fully staffed although it is rough.

Councilman Galvan made a motion to renew the contract with STECF, Inc.

Councilwoman Taylor seconded the motion.

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

12. RESOLUTION APPOINTING A NOMINEE TO SERVE AND TO HOLD POSITION NUMBER NINE ON THE CAMERON APPRAISAL DISTRICT BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Mayor Rivera questioned how the current nominee, Rick Morado, represents the City. How does the City express its concerns over property values? He does not know anything about Mr. Morado and how does he even get to meet with him.

Councilwoman Taylor stated that the Board is an autonomous committee and Mr. Morado is supposed to be neutral. He represents the City and not the citizens. Councilwoman Taylor offered to look further into this.

Councilman Wade made a motion to approve the resolution nominating Mr. Morado.

Councilman Galvan seconded the motion.

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

Aye: Wade, Galvan, Hoff

Nay: None

Abstained: Thompson, Taylor

13. FIRE SERVICES CONTRACT BETWEEN THE CITY OF HARLINGEN FIRE DEPARTMENT AND THE CITY OF PALM VALLEY APPROVED

Councilwoman Taylor asked how many calls were made last year. The response was that usually there is only about 2-3 calls and sometimes those are 'false alarms'.

Mayor Rivera commented that the City has no choice but to pay the amount which is based on the City's valuation at \$.10. This is set by state law.

Councilman Hoff commented for the record that the City is paying ¼ million dollars on approximately three calls a year.

Councilman Wade made a motion to approve the contract.

Councilman Galvan seconded the motion.

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

14. CONSENT AGENDA:

- A. Police Monthly Report – August 2021**
- B. Municipal Court Report – August 2021**
- C. Monthly Investment Report – August 2021**
- D. Monthly Financial Report – August 2021**
- E. Monthly Check Listing – August 2021**
- F. Council/staff liaison reports**

Mayor Rivera informed the Council that it is necessary to raise the fire service fee for the multi-family units. Currently, they are being charged the same as single family. The commercial units are OK.

Mayor Rivera added that the City received over \$300,000 in American Rescue Plan/Coronavirus Local Fiscal Recovery Funds. At this time, the City has received

\$153,627.79 for this year and the rest will be allocated next year. Recommendations on how to use these funds will be on the October agenda.

Councilwoman Taylor asked about Halloween and is there a plan. Chief Garcia replied that it will be the same as in previous years. Certain streets will be closed, and he will have as many officers on duty as are necessary. Any restrictions will be discussed as an agenda item in October.

Regarding the purchase of new vehicles, instructions were given to the Directors to start selling the existing ones.

Councilman Wade made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda.

Councilwoman Thompson 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 6:53 p.m. upon a motion by Councilman Hoff and a second by Councilwoman Thompson.

A blue ink handwritten signature, appearing to be "George Rivera", is written over a horizontal line.

George Rivera, Mayor

Attest:

A black ink handwritten signature, appearing to be "Sylvia R. Trevino", is written over a horizontal line.

Sylvia R. Trevino, City Secretary