



CITY COUNCIL WORKSHOP MINUTES
CITY OF ODESSA, TEXAS
JUNE 25, 2013

On July 25, 2013, the Odessa City Council met and held a workshop at 1:30 p.m., at City Hall, 3rd floor conference room, 411 W. 8th St., Odessa, Texas.

Members present: Mayor David Turner, Council members Roger McNeil, Dewey Bryant, Barbara Graff, Dean Combs, and Sandra Carrasco.

Others present: Richard Morton, City Manager; Larry Long, City Attorney; Norma Aguilar-Grimaldo, City Secretary; James Zentner, Assistant City Manager; Michael Marrero, Assistant City Manager.

A quorum being present, the following proceedings were held:

Mayor Turner convened the meeting to order. Motion was made by Council member Bryant and seconded by Council member Combs to move the workshop meeting to the 5th floor conference room. The meeting adjourned.

The meeting reconvened at 1:36 p.m. on the 5th floor conference room.

Mayor Turner stated that Council needed to discuss the future and growth of Odessa.

Staffing. Mr. Morton reported that the city had 135 vacant positions. The budget had 920 budgeted employees. The departments with the most vacancies were utilities police and dispatch. Marketing was made through postings, newspaper, website, association postings and TV. In 2007, a \$50,000 recruitment campaign was done. Mr. Morton reported that the utilities department offered incentives and would be related to an hourly rate. The compensation results would be comparative with the local market. With the population growth rate, the housing and employment issues would catch up. Workers were difficult to keep. Some contracting services were being utilized such as for water taps. Contracting services was a temporary fix and more expensive. He reported that cities were going to one time a week trash pick-up. Mr. Morton reported that the City does grow its own CDL workers. The city works with Odessa College with assisting in CDL drivers. Mr. Morton reported that, Republic Services, the landfill, has one scale at the landfill. All users use that one scale and the city trucks spend too much time in line. He offered that the City pay an employee and purchase an additional scale to assist. The Republic Services denied the offer. Council member Bryant commended staff for the work in running the city services.

Council member Graff stated that with the new homes added, the number of sanitation drivers needed to increase. Mr. Morton would request an additional three drivers and three trucks which equals to \$1 million for this proposed budget.

City trucks changing to natural gas was discussed. Mr. Zentner stated it would cost \$900,000 to change each truck to natural gas. The shop area would need expansion and new fueling methods would need to be addressed. On the bigger trucks, the side loader was not going to be available. Moving to a 300 gallon or roll-out a 90 gallon which would be tied to a pick-up day would be considered.

Council member Bryant suggested that the time machine expand its hours and force the construction sites to handle the litter and recycling better. He understands that the man power may be an issue. Mr. Marrero discussed that a standard location for a roll-off was being considered must it must be manned. Mayor Turner suggested that a yellow recycle dumpster could be required on the construction sites.

Mr. Morton would ask for four people to clean up the image of the city without impacting the rate or tax rate. There was a pilot program to clean up the entire alley from the limb crew. Code enforcement would monitor and issue notices. Two additional, code enforcement officers and a clerk would be requested plus the funds that didn't get funded by CDBG funds. An environmental officer would also be requested.

Mr. Marrero stated that the officers have software to assist in the enforcement of ordinances. PSA's and media outlets could be utilized but it would increase the budget of code enforcement. Council member Graff suggested running the tickets through the county and district courts. Mr. Long reported that with the Municipal Court of Record there were additional powers allowed. The fine is related to the charge and violators could be put in jail. The list of violators could be published.

Finance/Budget. Mr. Morton reviewed the 2013 preliminary values. Currently, the Council has allotted \$2 million per year for the streets. He discussed an option for debt issuance that will fund a list of Capital Improvement Projects (CIP) needs for \$52 million. The tax would support it even with a one cent drop in tax. Mr. Morton provided a list of street and drainage projects projected to 2018. Council member Bryant stated that the \$2 million a year would not make headway to address the streets. Better traffic control with signal communication needed improvement. The new debt would not have a tax impact. The next old debt to roll off was in water and sewer in 2015.

There was a short break from 2:47 p.m. – 2:57 p.m.

If the new debt option was chosen, the projects do not have to be listed but only identification of categories and amounts. Mr. Zentner gave an estimated tax rate. Mr. Morton recommended growing the investment into the community and issuing the new debt. New employees could be added with the same tax rate. The council members were in favor of issuing certificates of obligation.

Neighborhood Development. Council member Carrasco stated that more low income housing was needed. Mr. Marrero stated that it was possible to fund the infrastructure to affordable housing. Developers were looking for any assistance to build the affordable homes. Council member McNeil stated that the property values were down in south of Odessa. The trailers did not visually provide a nice image. Mr. Long stated that the mobile homes were allowed in the general residential zoning. Mr. McNeil stated that the zoning needed enforcement.

The Builders Association presented a proactive plan to the City several years ago on landscaping. Staff will review the plan to see if it meets the needs of the City.

Zoning. Adequate space was needed for housing. It was suggested to take out the mobile homes out of the zoning and grandfather the mobile homes. Council member Bryant stated that the growth depends on housing. He suggested if Grow Odessa could assist with the housing. The developers needed an incentive to build low income housing.

Industrial and Retail. New retail was needed south of Odessa. Mr. Long stated that the city doesn't tell the business where to locate. They have a formula on where they want their business. Council member Graff suggested giving incentives to the developer for certain areas.

Improve Image. Mayor Turner expressed concerns with the itinerant vendor ordinance. The cars, portable trailers and other goods being sold may not be in compliance with the ordinance. Mr. Long stated that the City must allow some vendors but the ordinance needed to be revamped. The fees were reflective on the goods sold. A location can be identified for those vendors. Mayor Turner asked that the cantaloupe and watermelon vendors be allowed to sell its produce. Council member Carrasco stated that the vendors should contribute to the community or not exist. Council member Graff favored having the one location available to those vendors. Mr. Long stated that the ordinance could set a higher standard and allows control.

Council member Bryant stated that the trailers and hot shot units needed to be addressed. Signage for the truck routes needed visibility improvement.

Mayor Turner appreciated the time taken to address the concerns of the City. There was no other business, the meeting adjourned at 4:02 p.m.

ATTEST:

APPROVED:

Norma Aguilar-Grimaldo, TRMC, CMC
City Secretary

David R. Turner
Mayor