

City Council
August 31, 2021

A special meeting of the Mayor and City Council of the City of Waxahachie, Texas was held in the Council Chamber at City Hall, 401 S. Rogers, Waxahachie, Texas, on Tuesday, August 31, 2021 at 6:00 p.m.

Council Members Present: Doug Barnes, Mayor, Council Member Place 2
Billie Wallace, Mayor Pro Tem, Council Member Place 4
David Hill, Council Member Place 1
Melissa Olson, Council Member Place 3
Travis Smith, Council Member Place 5

Others Present: Michael Scott, City Manager
Albert Lawrence, Deputy City Manager
Robert Brown, City Attorney
Amber Villarreal, City Secretary

1. Call to Order

Mayor Doug Barnes called the meeting to order.

2. Invocation

3. Pledge of Allegiance and Texas Pledge of Allegiance

Mayor Pro Tem Billie Wallace gave the invocation and led the Pledge of Allegiance and the Texas Pledge of Allegiance.

4. Public Comments

Paul Christenson, 100 Williams Street, Waxahachie, Texas, spoke in opposition of the proposed \$0.66 tax rate and the \$45 million-dollar debt through Certificates of Obligation. He requested using General Obligation bonds in the future so the citizens can vote.

Stacey Bailey, 105 Sunburst Drive, Waxahachie, Texas, requested Council to set, or get as close to, the no-new revenue tax rate to prevent taxing citizens out of their homes. She thanked Council Member Melissa Olson for requesting to lower the tax rate.

Alan Fox, 327 University, Waxahachie, Texas, explained property taxes comes with owning a home and people expect a return on their taxes. He noted the city has grown and so have the services the city provides. He thanked City Council and staff for their work and requested Council stay the course they are on.

Chris Wright, 808 West Marvin, Waxahachie, Texas, explained there are requirements for keeping certain fund balances and commended staff for their work during the budget process. He noted the current tax rate is the lowest from surrounding cities in our area.

Amy Hedtke, 106 Vanderbilt, Waxahachie, Texas, requested Council lower the tax rate explaining citizens need tax relief. She asked the City to align their budget with a lower tax rate.

5. Public Hearing on the proposed Tax Rate for fiscal year 2021-2022

Finance Director Chad Tustison reviewed the proposed tax rate at \$0.66000 per \$100 valuation, which is unchanged from the current rate. He explained the rate provides for additional funding for operating costs to keep pace with growth and to fund capital needs throughout the city. He explained \$0.48110 is for Operations and Maintenance (including Sims Library) and \$0.17890 is for Interest and Sinking. He noted the proposed rate exceeds the no-new-revenue rate of \$0.62588 but does not exceed the voter-approval tax rate of \$0.66050.

Mayor Barnes opened the Public Hearing on the proposed Tax Rate for fiscal year 2021-2022.

There being no others to speak for or against the Public Hearing on the proposed Tax Rate for fiscal year 2021-2022, Mayor Barnes closed the Public Hearing.

6. Public Hearing on the City of Waxahachie proposed Budget for fiscal year 2021-2022 and vote to set the date for adoption

Mr. Tustison presented the following FY 2022 proposed budget:

- General Fund \$52,737,125.00
- Water Fund \$15,755,704.00
- Waste Water Fund \$11,635,071.00
- Waxahachie Community Development Corporation Fund \$5,904,952.00
- Hotel/Motel Fund \$860,101.00

Mayor Barnes opened the Public Hearing on the City of Waxahachie proposed Budget for fiscal year 2021-2022.

There being no others to speak for or against the Public Hearing on the City of Waxahachie proposed Budget for fiscal year 2021-2022, Mayor Barnes closed the Public Hearing.

Action:

Mayor Pro Tem Billie Wallace moved to set the date for adoption of the City of Waxahachie Budget for fiscal year 2021-2022 to the City Council meeting of September 7, 2021. Mayor Doug Barnes seconded, All Ayes.

7. Comments by Mayor, City Council, City Attorney and City Manager

Council Member Travis Smith stated the pleas from citizens for a tax break are not going unheard. He explained the City needs to work towards moving closer to the no-new revenue rate to provide some relief to the citizens. He noted he is confident city staff is able to assist with reducing the tax rate, if that is the direction of the majority of Council. Council Member Smith noted he is confident with the proposed budget and commended staff for their work. He applauded the previous council for reducing the tax rate last year and he was disheartened that did not continue this year.

Council Member Melissa Olson stated she supports moving to the no-new revenue rate and does not believe it is too late to reduce the rate by at least 2-3 cents. She explained she does not have an issue with the proposed budget but would like to reduce the tax rate and use fund balance to balance the budget. Council Member Olson thanked the citizens in attendance.

Mayor Pro Tem Billie Wallace stated she is pleased the City Council reduced the tax rate by 2 cents last year. She understands there are many demands in our city that are important to all of us, including city services such as first responders, roads, and infrastructure. City Council and city leaders want to continue to keep residents in Waxahachie and afford each of us the best standard of living. She explained there are other entities in the equation that comprise property taxes. She stated as a council member she will always have the upmost concern for the citizens and the needs of the city. Mayor Pro Tem Wallace thanked staff for their work and thanked the citizens in attendance.

Council Member David Hill stated City Council has held meetings to discuss the budget and tax rate; however, no one had proposed lowering the tax rate until tonight's meeting. Council Member Hill clarified the city issued \$43 million in bonds recently and because of the city's good financial standing, \$36 million in bonds were purchased and \$6,400,000 were given to the city. He expressed his support for the current rate explaining there has been plenty of opportunity for Council to request lowering the rate.

Mayor Doug Barnes stated the tax rate is discussed in the budget process and no one likes to pay additional taxes but the city has grown and so has the need for services. He pledged to do what the City can to keep the tax rate and taxes as low as possible so long as the City can continue to provide the quality of life and services that citizens deserve.

8. Adjourn

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 6:32 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Amber Villarreal
City Secretary