

**RICHLAND HILLS CITY COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING
AUGUST 14, 2023
MINUTES**

Roll Call:

Council present

Edward Lopez, Mayor
G.W. Estep, Mayor Pro Tem
Travis Malone, Place 2
Theresa Bledsoe, Place 3
Javier Alvarez, Place 4
Roland Goveas, Place 6

Council absent

Douglas Knowlton, Place 1

Staff present

Candice Edmondson, City Manager
Lindsay Rawlinson, City Secretary
James Donovan, City Attorney

CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION – 6:30 PM

- 1. Executive Session:** Pursuant to the Open Meetings Act, Chapter 551, Texas Government Code, Sections 551.071, 551.072, 551.073, 551.074, 551.076, 551.087, 418.183(f) and 418.106(d) & (e). Executive Session may be held, under these exceptions, at any time during the meeting that a need arises for the City Council to seek advice from the City Attorney as to the posted subject matter of this City Council meeting.

None.

2. FY 2023 Budget Overview: General Fund and Utility Fund

City Manager Candice Edmondson presented an overview of the General Fund FY 2024 proposed budget and stated that staff utilized the recent citizens survey and strategic planning sessions to focus budget priorities for FY 2024. She advised that the proposed budget is based on an ad valorem tax rate of \$0.522689, which is a three percent reduction from FY 2023, and includes a proposed three percent pay increase for civilian personnel and a one STEP (three percent) pay increase for public safety personnel. The General Fund is the largest and most flexible fund with an expected revenue of \$9,966,558 million in FY 2024 and funds the majority of city operations and services and comes from sales tax, ad valorem tax, franchise tax, service charges, licenses and permits, and miscellaneous other revenues.

Ms. Edmondson provided a breakdown of General Fund expenditures by department including funding two upcoming elections and funding grant research and writing services.

She advised that expected expenditures in the General Fund will be \$9,863,955 and the projected ending fund balance will be \$2,656,106.

Next, City Manager Edmondson presented the proposed Utility Fund FY 2024 proposed budget. The Utility Fund is an Enterprise Fund with an expected revenue of \$914,400 in FY 2024 and receives revenue from water and wastewater sales. She advised that the expected expenditures in the Utility Fund will be \$946,810 and the projected ending fund balance will be \$624,743.

3. Discuss items listed on tonight's City Council agenda. No action will be taken and each item will be considered during the Regular Session.

Mayor Lopez adjourned the work session at 6:48 p.m.

REGULAR SESSION – Mayor Lopez Called to Order – Time 7:00 p.m.

INVOCATION AND PLEDGES OF ALLEGIANCE – Mayor Lopez

PRESENTATIONS

1A. Life Saving Award Presentation

Mayor Lopez and Police Chief Kimberly Sylvester presented a Life Saving Award to Officer Jake Johnson for an incident involving a shooting victim on January 14, 2023.

1B. Badge Pinning for Firefighter/EMT Paul Richards

Fire Chief Russell Shelley introduced Firefighter/EMT Paul Richards and provided a brief background.

City Secretary Lindsay Rawlinson administered the Oath of Office to Firefighter/EMT Paul Richards.

1C. Citizen Appearances/Public Comments

Joyce Fiaccone, 3800 Labadie, Richland Hills, expressed interest in holding a public forum for members of the community to discuss the Parks Department budget. Additionally, she mentioned that some of the City's boards and commissions that meet infrequently and the minutes of those meetings are not approved until the next meeting.

Linda Williams, 150 Westpark Way, Suite 130, Euless, advised that she is an Economic Development Specialist with the US Small Business Administration and the SBA is celebrating its 70th anniversary in 2023.

Mayor Lopez presented Ms. Williams with a proclamation declaring August 2023 as US Small Business Administration Month in Richland Hills.

CONSENT AGENDA

- 2A. Approved minutes from the July 24, 2023 City Council Regular Meeting**
- 2B. Approved Ordinance 1477-23, repealing Division 2, “Curfew” of Article II, “Minors” of Chapter 58, “Offenses and Miscellaneous Provisions” of the Code of Ordinances of the City of Richland Hills, Texas**
- 2C. Approved electronic sign request for the Richland Hills Baptist Church located at 6852 Baker Boulevard**
- 2D. Approved Ordinance 1478-23, amending Section 91-100 “Screening and Fencing” of Chapter 91, Article I “Screening and Fencing Ordinance” of the Richland Hills City Code to include regulations for fencing in areas adjacent to city designated parks and city facilities**

Motion: Motion was made by Councilmember Malone and seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Estep to approve the consent agenda.

Motion carried by a vote of 6-0.

PUBLIC HEARINGS, MEETINGS, AND OTHER RELATED ITEMS

- 3A. Approved Ordinance 1476-23, a Specific Use Permit permitting “Outside Storage and Display (Incidental Use)” on certain property described as Block 4 Lot 15 Henry A L Subdivision, Richland Hills, Texas, otherwise known as 6821 Baker Boulevard, Richland Hills, Texas 76118 PUBLIC HEARING**

Assistant to the City Manager Logan Thatcher presented the item to the City Council and advised that applicant Joe Cortez with True North Data is seeking a Specific Use Permit (SUP) for his property at 6821 Baker Boulevard, Suite C. The requested SUP is to allow Mr. Cortez to park vehicles behind the building. There is currently an eight-foot vinyl fence with a gate on the property and the enclosed fence area is 3,280 square feet. All vehicles would be parked within the enclosed fence area. The Planning & Zoning Commission considered the item at their July 25, 2023 meeting and recommended approval of the Specific Use Permit by a vote of 4-0.

Discussion ensued regarding total number of vehicles allowed to be parked in the proposed space and future use of the property.

Applicant Joe Cortez, 6821 Baker Boulevard, Suite C, Richland Hills, in response to questions from the City Council advised that the space could hold no more than five vehicles and generally there are three to four vehicles parked there.

Mayor Lopez expressed a preference for a condition of the SUP to allow no more than five vehicles in the space.

Mayor Lopez opened the public hearing at 7:33 p.m. and asked to hear from any proponents of the case followed by opponents.

Joyce Fiaccone, 3800 Labadie, Richland Hills, expressed her support for the item and advised that the space is large enough for five vehicles and with a tall fence for privacy and screening.

Mayor Lopez closed the public hearing at 7:46 p.m.

Motion: Motion was made by Councilmember Bledsoe and seconded by Councilmember Goveas to approve Ordinance 1476-23, a Specific Use Permit to permit the use “Outside Storage, Incidental Use” at the property described as Block 4 Lot 15 Henry A L Subdivision, Richland Hills, Texas, otherwise known as 6821 Baker Boulevard, Richland Hills, Texas 76118 with the following condition: only vehicles permitted and no more than five vehicles allowed.

Motion carried by a vote of 6-0.

ORDINANCES & RESOLUTIONS AND OTHER RELATED ITEMS

4. None.

CONTRACTS, AGREEMENTS, BID AWARDS AND OTHER RELATED ITEMS

5. None.

OTHER ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION

6A. Approved and adopted the 2023 Certified Tax Roll (Fiscal Year 2024/Tax Year 2023)

City Manager Candice Edmondson presented the 2023 Certified Tax Roll to be levied October 1, 2023 (Fiscal Year 2024), in the amount of \$946,539,167. There are outstanding properties under protest with the Appraisal Review Board with an estimated minimum taxable value of \$39,961,353 and incomplete accounts with an estimated minimum taxable value of \$7,718,691 to be added to the certified total. These amounts equal a total of \$994,533,176 of projected assessed valuation and are the totals that are used to calculate the No-New-Revenue and Voter Approval tax rates. Included in the certified tax roll total is the TIF Zone (Baker Boulevard) incremental value of \$37,311,294.

A tax rate of \$0.522689 per \$100 valuation has been proposed by the governing body of the City of Richland Hills which represents a decrease of 3.0 percent over last fiscal year’s tax rate and is the tax rate that will be used to budget ad valorem tax revenue projections.

PROPOSED TAX RATE	\$ 0.522689 per \$100
NO-NEW-REVENUE TAX RATE	\$ 0.459704 per \$100
VOTER-APPROVAL TAX RATE	\$ 0.523902 per \$100

The no-new-revenue tax rate is the tax rate for the 2023 tax year that will raise the same amount of property tax revenue for the City of Richland Hills from the same properties in both the 2022 tax year and the 2023 tax year.

Motion: Motion was made by Mayor Pro Tem Estep and seconded by Councilmember Malone to approve and adopt the 2023 Certified Tax Roll (Fiscal Year 2024/Tax Year 2023).

Motion carried by a vote of 6-0.

6B. Set proposed tax rate for Fiscal Year 2024 and public hearing date for tax rate adoption

City Manager Candice Edmondson advised that the City of Richland Hills’ proposed tax rate for Fiscal Year 2024 is \$0.522689/\$100 which is lower than the current property tax rate of \$0.538885/\$100.

Tax Code 26.05(d), states: “The governing body of a taxing unit other than a school district may not adopt a tax rate that exceeds the lower of the Voter-Approval Tax Rate or the No-New-Revenue Tax Rate calculated as provided by this chapter until the governing body has held a public hearing on the proposed tax rate and has otherwise complied with Section 26.06 and Section 26.065.”

PROPOSED TAX RATE	\$ 0.522689 per \$100
NO-NEW-REVENUE TAX RATE	\$ 0.459704 per \$100
VOTER-APPROVAL TAX RATE	\$ 0.523902 per \$100

The No-New-Revenue Rate is 13.7 percent lower than the proposed tax rate of \$0.522689.

The proposed tax rate public hearing is set to be held on September 11, 2023.

Motion: Motion was made by Councilmember Goveas and seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Estep to set the proposed Fiscal Year 2024 property tax rate at \$0.522689/\$100, which is effectively a 13.7 percent increase in the tax rate and set the public hearing on the tax rate for September 11, 2023.

Motion carried by a vote of 6-0.

REPORTS & DISCUSSIONS

7A. Discuss proposed revisions to City Council Rules of Procedure

City Manager Candice Edmondson advised that following the recent Charter Amendment Election, revisions must be made to the City Council Rules of Procedure. City staff and the City Attorney have reviewed the current Rules and have made the following recommendations:

- Replaced “Robert’s Rules of Order” with “Parliamentary Procedure” throughout the document to allow for more flexibility in the conduct of Council business.
- Added paragraph 5.E. City Council Attendance which establishes procedures for addressing Council Member absences (*City Charter requirement*)
- Changed the agenda order in paragraph 6.A. Agenda to reflect current agenda order.
- Revised paragraph 6.B. Submitting Request for Agenda to state that the Mayor, a Council Member or the City Manager may request an item to be placed on the agenda. Also added language that a Council Member requesting an item on the agenda should have support from one other Council Member. This is consistent with Section 3.B. Special Meetings which states that special meetings may be called by any two members of City Council.
- Revised language in paragraph 7.B. Voting to reflect current voting procedures.
- Revised paragraph 8.B. Vote Required to reflect the majority vote for City Council is now four members (*City Charter requirement*).
- Added “to reconsider” to paragraph 10.B(1) Request for Reconsideration
- Deleted redundant language in paragraph 11.B(1) Prohibited Items.
- Deleted “Public Input” in paragraph 11.C.(1) Citizens Addressing Council because “Public Comment” is already included in the paragraph and that is what is listed on City Council agendas.
- Added the word “comment” to paragraph 11.F.

Per paragraph 2.C. Amendment of Rules, proposed amendments must be presented to City Council at a prior meeting before the rules can be adopted. Final revisions will be presented for adoption at the August 28, 2023 City Council meeting.

Discussion ensued regarding City Council absences.

COMMUNITY INTEREST ITEMS

8. Mayor Pro Tem Estep advised of several upcoming events:

- Tuesday, August 15, 2023, Mock Tales, Public Library, 6:00 p.m.;
- Thursday, August 31, 2023, Senior Synergy Expo, Amon G. Carter Jr. Exhibits Hall, 8:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.;

- Tuesday, September 12, 2023, Richland Hills Literary Club, Public Library, 6:30 p.m.;
- Thursday, September 14, 2023,
 - Senior Lunch Bunch and Bingo, The Link, 12:00 to 2:00 p.m.;
 - Tarrant County Food Pantry, The Link parking lot, 5:30 to 7:00 p.m.;
- Friday, September 15, 2023, Fiesta de Herencia, The Link Plaza, 6:00 to 9:00 p.m.;
- Every Thursday, Coffee Talk, Public Library, 10:00 to 11:30 a.m.; and
- Every Thursday, Evening Storytime, Public Library, 5:30 p.m.

Councilmember Malone advised that the first day of school for Birdville Independent School District (BISD) will be Wednesday, August 16, 2023, and encouraged everyone to be aware of increased traffic and children. Additionally, he will be speaking during Coffee Talk on Thursday, August 17, 2023.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

9. **Executive Session:** Pursuant to the Open Meetings Act, Chapter 551, Texas Government Code, Sec. 551.071, Sec. 551.072, Sec. 551.073, Sec. 551.074, Sec. 551.076, Sec. 551.087 and Sec. 418.0183 (f) and 418.106 (d) & (e) of the Texas Government Code (Texas Disaster Act).

None.

ADJOURNMENT

10. A motion was made by Mayor Pro Tem Estep and seconded by Councilmember Malone to adjourn.

Motion carried by a vote of 6-0.

There being no further business to come before the City Council, Mayor Lopez declared the meeting adjourned at 8:05 p.m.

ATTEST:

APPROVED:

Lindsay Rawlinson, City Secretary

Edward Lopez, Mayor