
ROCKWALL CITY COUNCIL SPECIAL MEETING

BUDGET WORK SESSION

Tuesday, August 20, 2024 - 5:00 PM

City Hall Council Chambers - 385 S. Goliad St., Rockwall, TX 75087

I. Call Public Meeting to Order

Mayor Johannesen called the public meeting to order at 5:00 p.m. Present were Mayor Trace Johannesen, Mayor Pro Tem Clarence Jorif and Councilmembers Sedric Thomas, Mark Moeller, Anna Campbell, Dennis Lewis and Tim McCallum. Also present were City Manager Mary Smith, Assistant City Manager Joey Boyd, the city secretary, and departmental directors.

II. Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance - Councilmember Campbell

Councilmember Campbell delivered the invocation and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

III. Open Forum

Mayor Johannesen asked if anyone would like to come forth and speak at this time. There being no one indicating such, he then closed Open Forum.

IV. Work Session

1. Hold work session to discuss and consider the proposed City of Rockwall budget for the upcoming 2025 fiscal year.

City Manager (also serves as Finance Director), Mary Smith began the discussion, indicating that sales tax has been rocky this year, and – considering the economy and other factors – this was the most difficult budget proposal she has ever prepared in her tenure here at the City of Rockwall. She went on to share that, although Council will not be asked to consider any tax increase this year, this is something Council should begin thinking about.

Mrs. Smith briefed Council on the high points of the budget proposal. Thereafter, she indicated she is happy to go over the remainder of the budget proposal in more detail, based on whatever the Council desires she do.

Councilmember Lewis commented that he understands the budget is very, very lean, and he does understand why. He shared that he is not sure the city can continue to sustain its operations and needs while also staying at the current tax rate. He pointed out things like having noticed that some proposed police officer positions are not going to be able to be funded in this upcoming budget year.

Councilmember Thomas seemed to overall agree that he believes the city may need to discuss the possibility of increasing the tax rate the year after this particular (upcoming fiscal year) one.

Councilmember Campbell suggested that perhaps the city could focus a lot of effort on promoting and encouraging retail opportunities to try and encourage additional sales tax (such as at destination stores like Costco and the home improvement stores). Mrs. Smith pointed out that Forney is getting a Costco soon, and Royse City is getting a Home Depot. So, those new stores will have an impact on those store locations within our city, and sales tax related implications will likely be felt.

Councilmember Campbell offered brief, positive comments about the very small increase reflected in the budget proposal relative to the city's Youth Advisory Council (YAC) program. She thanked City Secretary, Kristy Teague, for her work with those students, indicating the program is going well and the students are engaged and enthusiastic about learning about local government.

Councilmember McCallum asked and received brief clarification about the city's debt service obligations. He went on to comment on the importance of the Rockwall Economic Development Corporation (REDC) and how the REDC's strategic plan and other efforts will be pivotal to attempts to keep our citizens' tax rates low and alleviate their personal tax burden as much as possible.

Councilmember McCallum went on to indicate he would like Mrs. Smith to go over brief high points relative to each departmental budget and each section within the budget proposal book / document. Mrs. Smith proceeded to do so, along with periodic input provided from the various departmental directors.

Following the discussion regarding the overview of each section of the proposed budget, Mrs. Smith shared that a public hearing will take place regarding the proposed budget and tax rate on Tues., Sept. 3 with a final adoption taking place on Sept.

V. Adjournment

Mayor Johannesen adjourned the meeting at 6:18 p.m.

PASSED AND APPROVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF ROCKWALL, TEXAS ON THIS 3rd
DAY OF SEPTEMBER, 2024.

ATTEST:


KRISTY TEAGUE, CITY SECRETARY




TRACE JOHANNESSEN, MAYOR