

**SPECIAL MEETING OF THE CANTON CITY COUNCIL
12 NOON, JULY 30, 2021**

Canton City Hall
201 N. Buffalo, Canton, Texas 75103

MINUTES

The Canton City Council met at the above-named date and time in the Canton City Hall. Members present were Mayor Lou Ann Everett and Councilmembers Blake Fowler, Jim Fuller, Chase Melton, Randon Sumner and Nathan Moore.

Also present were City Manager Lonny Cluck, City Secretary Debra Johnson, Finance Director Teri Pruitt and Director of Operations Peter Lamont

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER AND DECLARE A QUORUM PRESENT – Mayor Everett called the meeting to order and declared a quorum present at 12:00 p.m.

WORK SESSION

2. WORK SESSION ON PROPOSED BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEAR 2021-2022
 - A. TAX RATE
 - B. WATER / WASTEWATER RATES
 - C. GARBAGE RATES
 - D. PAYROLL
 - E. FIRST MONDAY
 - F. FEE SCHEDULE
 - G. CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS (INCLUDING WATER AND WASTEWATER PLANTS)
 - H. FINANCING / LOANS
 - I. CITY EXPENDITURES ON NON-CITY RELATED ENTITIES (INCLUDING BUT NOT LIMITED TO VAN ZANDT COUNTY VETERANS MEMORIAL; SENIOR CITIZENS BUILDING; SOCCER ASSOCIATION; CYRA BALL PARK; POHL PROPERTY; CANTON TRAILRIDERS; BLACKWELL HOUSES; VAN ZANDT COUNTY LIBRARY; MEALS ON WHEELS)

VAN ZANDT COUNTY LIBRARY
COUNTY COMMISSIONER TIM WEST

Mr. Cluck said Council was trying to get an understanding of what was happening with the agreement on the Library. The City had participated in building the library and furnished the land. Johnny Mallory, a former city manager, had said the City would not be spending any money on the library. Over time, the City has taken over maintenance of the building. Mr. West said the agreement did not indicate who was to do maintenance on the building. Councilmember Moore stated it was important to them to understand all the obligations of the City. Commissioner West said the original contract stated the County would enter into an agreement with the City and Friends of the Library about operating costs of the library at a later date.

Mr. Cluck said the City wanted to talk with the County Commissioners about who was going to do what as far as the Library was concerned. Councilmember Moore said staff should work with the County to come up with an agreement. Commissioner West agreed.

Mr. Cluck said the City's manpower and expenses had gone up drastically since they took over the library. If the City were to continue as they were, they would have to hire more manpower. Commissioner West asked to set up a meeting to discuss the matter.

VAN ZANDT COUNTY VETERANS MEMORIAL
DAN MAUCIERI / CARY HILLIARD

Mr. Maucieri stated the City had generously provided the Memorial with \$500 per month for a number of years. It was coded as monthly maintenance. This was the only money that the Memorial could count on as a regular donation. Nobody else provided them with any income stream. Mr. Maucieri provided Council with a breakdown of costs. The City and CEDC helped them purchase the building. They rented out four of the suites. Since purchasing the building, the Memorial had operated at a deficiency of \$715 per month because of taxes and insurance. He hoped they would do better in the coming years.

Mr. Maucieri said the Memorial lost a lot of plans during the snow storm. They were always having minor things come up. They had to raise \$1465 every month to meet their expenses.

Mr. Maucieri said no other cities contributed to the Memorial. The County paid for electricity at the Plaza only. He has been given \$1000 from the County for the last three years for expenses.

Mr. Maucieri said they had not requested any contributions from CEDC.

Cary Hilliard said the money was given by Council in the beginning to help the Memorial pay their water bill. They quit watering the grass and had not had high water bills this year due to the rain. The bill exceeded \$500 a month for half of the year.

Mr. Hilliard said the City of Wills Point gave them \$1200 once. So did the City of Grand Saline.

Councilmember Moore said he was not in favor of open-ended obligations on the citizens of Canton on behalf of the Library and Memorial. There needed to be agreements which came back to the Council each year.

Mr. Maucieri said all the officers were currently rented. They allow the Veterans Service Officer to occupy one office. They receive no money for that space. They hope to get \$200 a month for another office. They would be renegotiating rent with the other renters next year.

Councilmember Moore said the City would draft an agreement to document the agreement the City's future responsibilities for the Memorial.

J. CYRA BALLPARK
BRIAN ABBOTT

Mr. Cluck said several years ago the City came up with an informal agreement regarding maintenance of the ballpark. The City's obligation had grown from it was originally. They started out maintaining five or six weeks out of the year to having select ball tournaments several times a year. Mr. Abbott had presented a list of items he would like to see happen that would take an estimated \$1.5 million to complete. He needed guidance from Council on whether or not that was the path they wanted to take before developing a plan to move forward. The First Monday crew has been doing more work off the First Monday grounds than on. They would probably need three more employees, more equipment and more vehicles to handle the extra work. It was not legal for the City to donate to an organization so they could earn revenue. Mr. Abbott said CYRA did field preparation and maintenance. They maintained the side fences of the ballfields. They mowed on occasion. They add conditioner to the dirt.

Mr. Abbott said his main concerns were the field conditions in general; there was no established parking, except for one lot; and the light poles were in poor condition. One fell over onto the fields. Mr. Abbott stated they were at maximum capacity. They hosted select teams to get chalk and gas that they did not get from the City. Their regular season for the Recreational League was from March to mid-June. The select games were held once or twice a month throughout the year. The select teams came from all over.

Mr. Abbott said his group did not handle the registration fee. They only did the concessions for the select teams. The organization got the registration fee and split it in half with his group.

Mr. Abbott said they put trash in the bins for the City to pick up.

Mr. Cluck said they were having a tournament this weekend. It was First Monday and put a strain on staff to have to mow there and take care of the First Monday grounds. It put them in an impossible spot. There was not enough equipment or manpower to handle that.

Mr. Cluck said to hook the property up to the City sewer lines would probably cost \$10 million.

Mr. Cluck agreed the City did not do a good job of keeping the area mowed because they did not have the manpower.

Councilmember Moore said it sounded as though the original agreement was from March to June and has moved into a twelve-month obligation. Mr. Cluck said there needed to be a new agreement so he determine the budget for the City's obligations.

Mr. Cluck said there were talks about a group putting in a new ballpark. He did not want to spend the money to make major improvements to this park if it was no longer

going to be used. Councilmember Moore said ultimately the citizens of Canton were funding this and he wanted to be sure the taxpayer money was well spent. He requested staff meet with the CYRA representatives to work out an agreement.

Mr. Abbott said they held approximately twelve select tournaments per year. They were also discussing whether or not to start a fall league.

SENIOR CITIZENS

JOYCE JACOBSON / IRLENE CLEMENTS

Ms. Jacobson said the seniors met every Tuesday. They played games, had fellowship and had a meal together. The City maintained the building and paid the utilities. She said they were pretty happy with how things were currently.

Mr. Cluck said the City gave the group \$200 per month. Ms. Jacobson said that money was used to provide the meat for their potluck meal.

Ms. Jacobson said only 26 people came at this time due to COVID. She did say some of the locks in the kitchen cabinets were hard to open. Mr. Cluck said Brent Stewart monitored the maintenance of the building. Vickie Hall rented it out.

Ms. Johnson said the City charged a \$100 deposit plus \$20 per hour for use of the building for various groups.

QUILTERS GUILD

TREASURER

The Treasurer said they paid the City \$600 per year for use of the building one day a month. They were given a \$600 credit for this year because they could not use the building during COVID last year. They had about sixty members. He was concerned the City was going to raise their rent. They did a lot of quilts for charity. He said the quilt show was their main fundraiser. They now paid \$1950 for the quilt show. Their membership fee was \$25. Most of the members were seniors. They tried to teach the art of quilting. The quilt show was held at the Civic Center.

Mr. Cluck said the City gave them a discounted rate in the beginning. This year, the Quilt Guild paid the full amount for the Civic Center with the discounted rate for senior citizens.

The Treasurer said they received about \$1,000 in membership dues each year.

Councilmember Moore said they needed to update and document the agreements. Mr. Cluck said they had always worked with the group on their show. The details needed to be documented in case of staff changes on either party.

Ms. Jacobson said she understood the Senior Citizens had built the building. Mr. Cluck said the building was originally built from a grant. Ms. Jacobson said the Senior Citizens had used the money from the parking lot to pay for the building.

MEALS ON WHEELS

GARY PLASTER

Mr. Plaster said the City gave Meals on Wheels \$50 per month but he did not know why. He said they prepared approximately 500 meals per week for about 100 people.

Mr. Cluck said the Meals on Wheels area was tied onto the Senior Citizens building. The City furnished electricity and water.

Mr. Plaster said there were two paid employees and about twenty volunteers. They served all the way to Mabank.

BLACKWELL HOUSE
DONNA RAKESTRAW

Donna Rakestraw said she had been overseeing the Blackwell House about ten years. The Blackwell House was rented for showers, family reunions, etc. The Museum Board also held an open house there once a year. The City of Canton provides the utilities and maintenance of the house and grounds. The Museum Board also had the bell collection and war memorabilia on display at the Plaza Theater. The rental money they collected went into their budget.

Ms. Rakestraw said the only issues they had with the building at this time were some floor boards on the porch which needed to be replaced. The flower beds are kept up by the Master Gardeners. The City maintain the lawn. The Museum Board paid for the repair of the irrigation system this year. She said they tried not to ask the City for money if they could cover the expense. She felt they were keeping the history of Canton alive.

Ms. Rakestraw suggested that, in the future, if the City accepted any more property or buildings that they request the donor also set up an endowment fund to cover future maintenance.

Ms. Rakestraw said they charged \$40 per day as a rental fee. They provided the house and paper goods. The building was rented three or four times a month.

SOCCER ASSOCIATION
JOSH COLLIN

Mr. Collin said the mowing was being done by the City. There were some spots which needed repair. He would like to have the field fenced off from the parking lot. They could use orange temporary fencing. Some areas needed to be sprayed for ants. Some areas had poison ivy.

Mr. Collins said there were lights on two of the fields. There were challenges with practices on the fields with no lights. He thought it would be great to have lights for all the fields, even if it was just temporary lighting.

Mr. Collins said the team benches were splintered and falling apart. There was also not adequate parking for visiting teams. There was no marked parking.

Mr. Collin said there were three buildings. He was not sure which ones were the Soccer Association's. The concession stand was rat infested and had mold. The bathrooms were maintained alright but sometimes the supplies were not restocked

right after tournaments. He would like to know who was responsible for the Office Building. The electricity was supplied by the City.

Mr. Cluck said the Soccer Association originally took care of the property and moved in the buildings. Then the City was asked to help with the mowing. The volunteer efforts waned. He knew the City was not doing everything up to the Association's expectations. Every one of these organizations were good organizations. He needed to have direction on what the City's participation should be.

Mr. Lamont said the City was required to do the pest control on the City property because it had to be done by a licensed individual.

Mr. Collin said they had a spring and fall season. He would like to have a summer camp and maybe a winter camp. They would like to have select teams in the future. He said soccer was the number one sport in the country for kids. He would like the season to run from February to May. Approximately 250 players participated last year. Have had up to 500. The ages were three to eighteen.

Mr. Collin said they did their own fields and bought their own nets. They paid for the children's soccer uniforms from registration fees.

CANTON TRAIL RIDERS

Mr. Cluck said he would like to get some documentation from the Trail Riders about their agreement for the water at the fairgrounds. Dr. Eberhart told him that the City ran water to the CYRA then down to FM 1255. They needed to cross the property and gave the Trail Riders discounted water at \$1 per month in exchange. The Fairgrounds Board had two water meters on the property and they paid those water bills monthly. There did not seem to be an agreement with the Council regarding this agreement.

Councilmember Moore said that was another reason we needed to clean up the situation. The agreements should come back every year to Council as budget items. Mr. Cluck said the City could not legally give away money.

PLAZA THEATER JULIE SEYMORE

Ms. Seymore said the CEDC took on administrative duties of the Main Street Program and were provided a building and electricity in exchange so the museum could be kept open. There was a Memorandum of Understanding with the Visitors Bureau. There was also an agreement with the CEDC to administer and manage the Visitors program. The CEDC was a component unit of the City.

POHL PROPERTY

Mr. Cluck explained the City paid \$600 per month to lease the property as well as the annual property taxes of approximately \$2000. The CEDC used the property for the Farmers Market. He did not think the City should be spending any money on upgrades to the property because it was being leased and there were only five years left on the lease.

Councilmember Moore requested this be put on as an agenda item to keep these matters from becoming obligations.

Mr. Cluck said the budget was a plan. He needed to know the direction Council wished to take in order to continue developing the budget. Councilmember Moore said the groups needed to step up and participate in maintaining some of these properties. Mr. Cluck said he just needed to know which direction to go as far as budgeting for some of the requests for improvements.

Mr. Cluck said the Parks staff was overextended. He wanted to split the Parks Department off from the First Monday Department. He was going to hire one more parks person.

Councilmember Sumner said the City should be able to cover the obligations they had. They needed to cover the mowing and weed-eating.

Mr. Cluck said he struggled with the select ball programs. If we took on that obligation, the City would have to dedicate more money and manpower.

Ms. Seymore said the parks and museums defined the community. They were necessary functions of the City. Mr. Cluck said if the City spent \$10,000 for an event, the event had to bring in approximately \$700,000 for the City to get that money back.

Councilmember Melton said he felt the agreements needed to be on paper. All the projects were good for the community. Mr. Cluck felt the agreements should be renegotiated every year.

Mr. Cluck said one additional employee would cost approximately \$40,000.

J. OTHER

EXECUTIVE SESSION

In accordance with the authority contained in the Texas Government Code, Chapter 551, including but not limited to, Sections 551.071, 551.072, 551.074 and 551.087. Council will convene in closed or executive session to discuss the following matters.

3. EXECUTIVE SESSION FOR CONSULTATION WITH ATTORNEY (Section 551.071)

RETURN TO OPEN SESSION

4. RECONVENE TO OPEN SESSION AND CONSIDER ACTION, IF ANY, ON ITEMS DISCUSSED IN EXECUTIVE SESSION
5. CONSIDER PROPOSAL TO ADOPT 2021 TAX RATE AND SCHEDULE PUBLIC HEARING

Mr. Cluck said he hoped to stay at the \$0.54 tax rate. The information had not yet been received from the Appraisal District.

6. ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDAS

7. ADJOURN – There being no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 2:23 p.m.