

**CITY OF SULPHUR SPRINGS, TEXAS
REGULAR MEETING OF THE
CITY COUNCIL
January 7, 2025
7:00 p.m.**

The following council members and staff were present:

Mayor Harold Nash Sr.
Mayor Pro Tem Oscar Aguilar
Councilman Jay W. Julian
Councilman Tommy Harrison
Councilman Gary Spraggins
Councilman Tyler Law
Councilman John A. Sellers

Absent: None

Staff: Marc Maxwell, City Manager
Natalie Burling, City Secretary
Nate Smith, City Attorney
Tory Niewiadomski, Director of Community Development/Asst City Manager
Lesa Smith, Finance Director/Assistant City Manager
Kelly Wiser, SSPD
David James, SS Fire Chief
Bryan Craig, Director of Public Works

RECONVENE

Mayor Nash called to order the regular meeting of the Sulphur Springs City Council at 7:00 p.m.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE UNITED STATES FLAG, TEXAS FLAG,
AND INVOCATION**

Mayor Nash led in the pledge of allegiance to the United States Flag and the Pledge and the Texas Flag, and the invocation was led by Councilman Spraggins.

PRESENTATIONS, PROCLAMATIONS, AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

None.

MANAGER'S REPORT INCLUDES A STATUS REPORT OF CAPITAL

IMPROVEMENTS, MUNICIPAL OPERATIONS, ACCIDENTS AND CLAIMS FOR THE MONTH, AND A REVIEW OF EXPENDITURES AND REVENUES

Manager Maxwell presented the staff report.

CLAIMS – We had 2 major workers’ compensation claims in December when two employees were involved in a motor vehicle accident at S.H. 19 and Houston Street. Both employees sustained multiple injuries. Neither employee has returned to work.

We had one liability claim arising from the above-mentioned accident for property damage and for medical.

ALABAMA STREET – The Capital Construction Division installed water and sewer mains from Como to Morris. We will now pause this project to install water and sewer mains at Thermo. After that we will return to Alabama for the Como to Jefferson segment.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN – I expect to sign the contract with Kimley Horn this month and then schedule a kick-off meeting.

MIRACLE LEAGUE FIELD – Kimley Horn is doing a bit of redesign on the parking. We are going to construct head-in parking on the street.

THERMO ROAD – This \$4.4 million project is partially funded by a \$2.4 million grant from the Economic Development Administration (EDA). The project is 70% complete. Today TXDOT opened bids to connect the road to F.M. 1870.



COLEMAN BALLFIELD LIGHT UPGRADE – We received a \$250,000 grant from the State Energy Conservation Office (SECO) to upgrade the lights to LED. We are still waiting for the executed contract from SECO. SECO indicated that they would sign the contract in December. That did not happen.

MIDFIELD APRON – This concrete pavement/drainage improvement is approximately 50% complete. All the concrete is poured for phase 1. Soon the contractor will begin Phase 2. This project includes drainage improvements as well as repaving the midfield apron in concrete. Total project cost is \$5.28 million, of which 90% is funded by a grant through TXDOT.

WASTEWATER CHLORINE CONTACT CHAMBER – Hayter Engineering is presently designing the new chlorine contact chamber.

This \$2.2 million project will repurpose a former (abandoned) sand filter turning it into a chlorine contact chamber. Chlorine contact time is a bottleneck at the wastewater treatment plant (WWTP). The WWTP has a rated capacity of 5.4 MGD. Staff believes we can increase the capacity to 10 MGD when the project is completed. The increase will require TCEQ approval, but staff thinks it is feasible. The project is being funded from the Enterprise Fund balance.

STREET IMPROVEMENT PLAN (SIP) – The 2024 Street Improvement Plan (SIP) is complete. Staff is compiling a list of projects for the 2025 SIP, but it is not ready to publish yet.

REVENUES AND EXPENDITURES – Finance Director Lesa Smith will present the monthly report of revenues and expenditures.

Elsewhere around the city, employees:

- Decorated downtown for Christmas.
- Hosted 6 events downtown.
- Assisted with 65 activities for seniors.
- Rented the Grays building 18 times.
- Made several repairs to Kids Kingdom.
- Responded to 201 fire/rescue calls including 1 structure fire and 8 other fires.
- Performed preventative maintenance on 76 fire hydrants.
- Performed 65 fire inspections.
- Conducted 52 building inspections, 21 electrical inspections, 12 plumbing inspections, and 4 mechanical inspections.
- Issued 28 building permits and 31 trade permits.
- Repaired 252 potholes.
- Cleaned out storm catch basins 8 times.
- Responded to 182 animal control calls while achieving a 100% adoption rate.
- Made 1 felony arrest in the Special Crimes Unit.
- Responded to 25 accidents, recorded 33 offences, made 32 arrests, and issued 494 citations in the Patrol Division.
- Assisted the Lions club with the Christmas parade.
- Pressure washed both “Welcome to Sulphur Springs” signs.
- Checked out 2,975 items from the library plus 970 eBooks.
- Sold 1,708 gallons of AvGas and 4,976 gallons of JetA
- Accommodated 1,511 takeoffs/landings at the airport.

- Hauled 186 tons of sludge to the landfill.
- Treater wastewater effluent to a total suspended solids reading of 0.30 mg/L.
- Repaired 17 water main breaks.
- Replaced 10 water meters.
- Unstopped 22 sewer mains.
- Repaired 1 sewer main.
- Washed 79,000 feet of sewer main.
- Flushed 40 dead-end water mains.

Finance Director/ Assistant City Manager Smith presented the monthly report of revenues and expenditures.

DISCUSSION/ACTION ON CONSENT AGENDA

City Secretary Burling presented the staff report. Consider for approval the City Council Regular meeting minutes of 12/03/2024; City Council Special Meeting Minutes of 12/12/2024; City Council Special meeting minutes of 12/19/2024; Planning and Zoning meeting minutes of 11/18/2024; Downtown Revitalization Board meeting of 11/26/2024; and Zoning Board of Adjustment meeting minutes of 04/16/2024; Economic Development Corporation meeting minutes of 12/16/2024; and a 380 for 355 North League Street.

Councilman Aguilar made a motion to approve the consent agenda as presented. Councilman Sellers seconded and the vote was unanimous.

The motion carried.

DISCUSSION/ACTION ON PUBLIC HEARING AND SECOND AND FINAL READING OF ORDINANCE NO. 2872 AMENDING THE SANITATION RATE ORDINANCE SETTING NEW SANITATION RATES

Finance Director/Assistant City Manager Smith presented the staff report. Sanitation rates were not changed in September so that more accurate rates could be set based on the actual CPI-W that rates will increase at. The landfill and collection contracts are based on the CPI-W for September and October and vary in their method of calculation. The CPI-W for October came in at a 2.4% increase over October 2023. The rolling 12-month CPI-W average increase for October 2023-September 2024 came in at 2.7%. Staff is proposing a 2.58% increase in rates using the weighted average increase for the contracts. The landfill charges comprise around 40% of sanitation expenses with a proposed increase in rates of 2.4% and the collection contract comprises around 60% of the cost with a proposed increase of 2.7%. Using the weighted average of the two contracts, it results in a total 2.58% increase. Councilman Spraggins made a motion to improve the ordinance as presented. Councilman Law seconded and the vote was unanimous.

The motion carried.

DISCUSSION/ACTION ON RESOLUTION NO. 1458 APPROVING GRANT APPLICATION FEMA SAFER GRANT (STAFFING OF ADEQUATE FIRE & EMERGENCY RESPONSE)

Chief James presented the staff report. The FEMA SAFER Grant is projected to provide 100% base salary & benefit coverage for three years with the City of Sulphur Springs incurring the cost of salaries & benefits beginning the fourth year. Currently Sulphur Springs Fire Department staffing levels are unable to meet the 2 in 2 out standard on all incidents. The department utilizes part-time personnel in the vacancy of full-time personnel to maintain the 6 personnel minimum staffing level. This program is a failing program, costing an excessive amount in overtime. The additional 3 personnel this grant could provide would abolish the part time program providing 1 personnel to each shift. The SAFER Grant will be highly beneficial to the taxpayers of Sulphur Springs, Texas through the anticipated savings of personnel cost for three additional personnel (*one per shift*) for the Sulphur Springs Fire Department. The City of Sulphur Springs Fire Department is requesting \$790,506.909 to covering three years of salaries for three personnel from the FEMA SAFER Grant. After completion of the third year of the grant, the City of Sulphur Springs will incur the salaries & benefits for these positions. Savings from the current part time program and current overtime cost associated with the part time program will offset the financial cost to the City of Sulphur Springs. Manager Maxwell explained that the firefighters have seven shifts and two stations and have a 2 in and 2 out rule on scene. Between vacation and sick time we accrue quite a bit of overtime. The grant will help keep these costs at bay and mentioned that this is the time to start building personnel because of the coming industry growth in the Thermo mine area. Councilman Sellers made a motion to approve the grant application as presented. Councilman Law seconded and the vote was unanimous.

The motion carried.

DISCUSSION/ACTION ON BIDS AND AWARD OF CONTRACT FOR SUPPLY OF THERMO WATER PHASE 1 MATERIALS

Director of Public Works Craig presented the staff report. Staff placed bid notices in the News Telegram. Emails were also sent to inform prospective bidders. Bids were opened on December 19th. Bid Tabulation is attached. Materials in the bid tabulation are for the installation of Phase 1 of a new water line for the Thermo Property. Award contract for Thermo Water Phase 1 Materials to APSCO Supply as the lowest qualified bidder. The financial impact is \$1,365,375.57. These water materials along with their installation will be funded by the 2024 Certificates of Obligation. The City borrowed \$9,000,000 in August for phase 1 water and sewer projects as adopted in the TIRZ#2 plan. Councilman Spraggins made a motion to approve the award of contract to APSCO Supply as presented. Councilman Law seconded and the vote was unanimous.

The motion carried.

DISCUSSION ON STATUS OF 380 HOUSING INFILL PROGRAM

Director of Community Development/Assistant City Manager Niewiadomski presented the staff report. In August of 2020, the city implemented the Housing Infill Program. It started with 2 projects in 2020 and has steadily increased from year to year. As of December 2023, City Council has approved 105 projects with 92 contracts being executed. To date, 63 projects have been completed and 18 are under construction. Niewiadomski presented a PowerPoint presentation that explained the program in detail. There was no action taken on this item.

DISCUSSION/ACTION ON EXECUTIVE SESSION ITEM, IF ANY

Councilman Law made a motion to authorize the City Manager to engage in legal action discussed in executive session during consultation with attorney. Councilman Spraggins seconded and the vote was unanimous.

The motion carried.

VISITORS AND PUBLIC FORUM

None.

ADJOURN

With all business complete the meeting was adjourned at 7:25 p.m.