



CITY COUNCIL
City of McLendon-Chisholm, Texas
Special Work Session Meeting Minutes
July 13, 2017

The City Council of the City of McLendon-Chisholm convened in Special Work Session on Tuesday, July 13, 2017, at City Hall, 1371 West FM 550, McLendon-Chisholm, Texas, with the following members present:

Robert Steinhagen	Mayor
Adrienne Balkum	Council Member
James Herren	Council Member
Wayne Orchard	Mayor Pro Tem
Sim Woodham	Council Member
Scott Turnbull	Council Member

Staff Present:	David Butler	City Administrator
	Lisa Palomba	City Secretary

1. Mayor Steinhagen called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

2. Council Member Balkum delivered the Invocation. Recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance to the United States and Texas flags followed the Invocation.

Mayor Steinhagen welcomed those attending the meeting and those viewing the meeting online via Facebook Live. Mayor Steinhagen then reviewed Council Meeting Guidelines including Rules of Decorum.

3. Steinhagen noted discussion regarding the upcoming Citizen Survey will be added to the July 18, 2017 City Council Agenda as today's meeting will only include defining question topics and drafting preliminary questions. Steinhagen explained the purpose and importance of conducting a citizen survey and the approximate timing of mail outs. Steinhagen remarked about the Council's desire to be responsive and representative of citizen wants as the City moves into budget season; some questions will be related to budget items; importance of asking questions and listening to the people; moving in the direction the citizens want and noted there are costs associated with conducting the survey but it will be costlier if the City is unsure of citizen wants. Orchard stated that things change from year to year and new residents should be encouraged to voice their opinions. Woodham remarked that new transplants to McLendon-Chisholm should describe the type of city they believe McLendon-Chisholm should become eventually and stressed controlled growth. Herren made similar remarks regarding wanting to represent constituents and the need for citizen input.

Steinhagen indicated the City would gather McLendon-Chisholm property owner names and addresses received from the Rockwall County Appraisal District and the Rockwall County Elections Voter Registration list. Steinhagen commented the survey could track responses by gender, where citizens lived prior to moving to McLendon-Chisholm and that developers may also participate in the survey. Steinhagen also remarked that facts and sufficient background information related to questions will be provided. Identifiers for fire districts were included briefly in discussion; the 2017-2018 FY Budget will be adopted September 26 and there will be 10-15 open ended questions on the survey.

Possible question topics were discussed among members including: McLendon-Chisholm Volunteer Fire Department (MCVFD) funding amounts, monthly, quarterly or annual funding options; reasons why people move to McLendon-Chisholm and possible answer choices; agreement with vision and mission of the City along with adding vision and mission statements and examples of accomplishments; preference to move from minimum 1.5 acre lot size to 1 acre minimum lot size; types of businesses citizens would like to have such as a grocery store; the possibility of a grocery stores in neighboring cities and the idea of a centralized business district.

Further discussion was held regarding funding for MCVFD including asking a question on the survey related to citizen interests in giving a tax-deductible donation to MCVFD and potential fund-raising efforts for MCVFD. It was noted that support organizations such as a ladies auxiliary or friends of the library type groups may accept donations and give to organizations such as a fire department.

MCVFD Lt. Herman Larkin, 8 Greenhollow, addressed Council regarding donations and allowable tax deductions as a 501(c)(4) organization. Larkin noted that the MCVFD exists exclusively for a public purpose and therefore donations to the MCVFD are tax deductible. Larkin further commented regarding salaried and volunteer personnel; handling of receipts related to donations and indicated MCVFD provides a letter in return for a donation. Larkin volunteered to work on survey efforts; described the use of donations and remarked that survey questions should be succinct and understandable. Steinhagen remarked about needing the number of rooftops served in the fire district. Further, Steinhagen explained that tonight Council is only creating a rough draft of survey questions and remarked that the questions will be refined over the next few meetings. Steinhagen further commented that current County funding for the MCVFD is derived from County sales tax. Steinhagen and Larkin discussed the level of response from MCVFD; how response has changed over time; premium fire service is provided and that the MCVFD handles simultaneous calls during storms or other busy times.

Herren called a Point of Order noting that conversation was off track. Steinhagen concurred.

Discussion was held among Council Members regarding attempts to calculate the amount of tax money that goes toward paying the MCVFD and determining if citizens are aware of how MCVFD is funded and the inequity of McLendon-Chisholm citizens paying more for fire protection services as compared to citizens living outside of the city

limits. Larkin commented on the hours the fire station is staffed and the proposed Sunday staffing. Discussion was held regarding why daytime hours of Monday through Saturday are staffed and why the station is not staffed at night instead. Larkin explained volunteers work out of the area; when staff is paid they must stay in the fire district; and great communication among fire personnel to ensure there is coverage when needed.

Kenny Griffith, 238 Pheasant Hill Lane, addressed Council and remarked that current fire department funding and tax related questions are loaded.

Discussion among Council Members continued regarding options for surplus of property tax revenue such as paying down debt early or lowering of the tax rate.

Mayor Steinhagen called for a recess at 8:37 p.m.

Mayor Steinhagen reconvened the meeting at 8:54 p.m.

Balkum suggested asking if citizens would like a monthly City newsletter and if so, what format. Other related items discussed included HOA contributions to a City newsletter; email blasts regarding events such as festivals, fireworks, new ordinances, etc.; asking citizens if they use Facebook, have viewed the City Facebook page or viewed a live broadcast. Balkum suggested that citizens be directed back to the City's website or Facebook page at the end of the survey. Other items discussed regarding the survey included finding a way to hold City boards accountable to established City policies. A Code of Ethics was discussed and the idea of requiring employees, vendors, contractors or anyone representing the City to abide by a set of acceptable standards was discussed. Standards may apply in person, through social media or other modes of communications.

Other questions considered for the survey include designating a City newspaper and asking citizens their current local news source. It was noted that some areas of McLendon-Chisholm receive the Herald Banner at no charge while others are not receiving the paper at all. Sonoma Verde is one community not receiving the Herald Banner. City Administrator Butler will make inquiries regarding paper delivery for Sonoma Verde. Other discussion included asking citizen if they use various types of news outlets or social media networks such as Nextdoor, Facebook, Rockwall County News, the Herald Banner or Blue-Ribbon News.

Council Member Balkum discussed a desire to host community planning workshops. The idea of asking about a senior center was discussed briefly.

Beverly Stibbens, 279 Partridge Drive, was recognized by Mayor Steinhagen and remarked that Sonoma Verde plans include space for an assisted living facility.

Other survey topics considered included: asking citizens if they would attend a free concert or similar event if offered; interest in homeowner septic systems maintenance training class; and preference for a centralized or decentralized business district along

State Highway 205. Stibbens was recognized and remarked the City already has a centralized business district located at State Highway 205 and FM 550. Council Member Balkum remarked that some people are confused regarding the intentions of the City Hall grounds and future plans around the building. The idea of having a city center around City Hall was briefly discussed.

Extensive discussion was held regarding how to word questions regarding citizen preference for a centralized or decentralized business district. Discussion was also held regarding use of last year's questions related to type of retail desired as well as preferred types of dining establishments.

Questions regarding fiscal attitudes toward carrying debt, lowering of the tax rate and appropriate amount of funds to keep in reserve were discussed. Selling City Hall was also mentioned. Turnbull suggested not using the term surplus in any budget related questions as reference to a surplus of funds might be misunderstood.

Herman Larkin remarked that TxDOT may eventually purchase MCVFD grounds for highway widening. Land for a fire station may be needed in the future and Larkin encouraged the Council to not be short sided.

Steinhagen emphasized no tax rate increase for 2017-2018 FY and any surplus as mentioned would come from increases in property value or new property added to the tax rolls. Steinhagen remarked that any questions may be brought forward for consideration and encouraged citizen involvement in development of the survey. Steinhagen further described methodology of the survey.

Mayor Steinhagen noted the alarms sounding in the background were the pagers of volunteer fire personnel. Firefighters in attendance left the building at 10:21 p.m. as they were paged out to an incident.

4. Budget Preparations. No detailed discussion was held regarding Fiscal Year 2017-2018 Operating and Utility Budget.


5. Council directed staff to schedule a discussion item regarding the survey on the July 18, 2017 Council Special Work Session Agenda and to include budget discussion on the Agenda but secondary to the survey.


6. Council Member Turnbull moved to adjourn the meeting. Council Member Balkum seconded the motion. **The motion to adjourn was approved by unanimous consent and the meeting adjourned at 9:30 p.m.**

APPROVED:


Robert Steinhagen, Mayor

ATTEST:


Lisa Palomba, City Secretary



The seal is circular with a double-line border. The outer ring contains the text "CITY OF McLENDON-CHISHOLM" at the top and "TEXAS" at the bottom. The inner circle contains the text "CORPORATE SEAL" in the center.