The City Council of the City of McLendon-Chisholm convened in Regular Session on Tuesday, March 12, 2019, at City Hall, 1371 West FM 550, McLendon-Chisholm, Texas, with the following members present:

Keith Short  Mayor
Adrienne Balkum  Council Member
Scott Turnbull  Mayor Pro Tem
Jim Bloom  Council Member (Absent)
James Herren  Council Member
Herman Larkin  Councilmember

Staff Present:  Lisa Palomba  City Administrator/City Secretary
               Michael Halla  City Attorney

1. Call to Order.

Mayor Short called the meeting to order at 6:35 p.m.

2. Council Member Herren delivered the Invocation and led the Pledge of Allegiance to the U.S. and Texas Flags.

3. Mayor Short announced the Rules of Decorum are in place and are to be observed throughout the meeting.

4. Citizen Comments

Jody Wright, 1513 Barrolo Dr., I would like to address Item 6.2 – Citizen Survey. I would like to express my opposition to this survey. I totally disagree with the necessity and the timing of this survey. I believe that this survey is being supported by Council Members Turnbull and Balkum only for their own political posturing. We do not have the financial means to complete another useless, non-transparent, and quite frankly, horribly written survey. Council, if you really want to know what the citizens think, hold an open forum where we can actually talk openly with one another. That’s free, 100%. In closing, as a citizen, I am, quite frankly, over the games, so I will show up. As a citizen, I will not be bullied with the stalking and videoing of my house. So, I will rise up. As a citizen, I will not turn a blind eye to your continued, utter disregard and complete disrespect for what your citizens are asking for. So, I will speak up and I will do everything I can to ensure that the two of you are not re-elected. So, I will speak up.
Lorna Kippnute, 31 Fireside. I think it is unbecoming of our city council when last night Mr. Turnbull slandered the reputation of the City accountant stating, and I quote, "I believe there has been the possibility of mistakes being hidden", with no evidence offered to support his claim. In fact, just two weeks ago the audit and budget were presented to the Council and no such allegations were made or line items questioned. The City Administrator recommended to the Council the extension of the current CPA contract for continuity purposes. This recommendation was ignored. Mr. Herren acknowledged last night the reason no citizens come to Council meetings is apathy. This is because we are tired of watching Council Members berate each other, ignore recommendations from the City Staff and in general forgetting that you work for us. Yes, there is a silent majority out there and they voted for change last year. This year there are hundreds more who are tired of the continued lack of transparency and the bullying tactics that are on display. This is not public apathy, it is outrage and frustration. Our City fore-fathers would be ashamed of what went on last night. Mr. Moss, Mr. Klutz, Mr. Pullen, Mr. Lovell, and Mr. Hatfield, to name just a few, dedicated years of their lives so the City of McLendon-Chisholm could prosper and reflect the members of this community. Their hopes and aspirations were that a younger generation could carry on and bring our City to the next level. We should not let them down. Thank you.

Frankie Pooladsnji, 1506 Corrara Dr., I got to read some interesting stories in the Rockwall Herald Banner and one thing that I have learned in my career is that you don’t slander your partners next to you. That’s what your executive sessions are for. You have disagreements and you talk to them about it behind those closed doors to your right, to your left, and behind you. But doing it publicly, that shows your character. It shows your cowardness. That’s ugly. Is that what McLendon-Chisholm is about? Is that what you guys represent? Lack of transparency, I read that too. You record me, I’m recording you. A lot of people are seeing it, a lot more people on my Facebook than yours, than your social media are going to see this. We’re tired of it. We are going to prove that again May 4th. Thank you.

5. Approval of City Council Meeting Minutes

5.1 January 8, 2019

Council Member Balkum made a motion to approve the minutes as presented.

Mayor Pro Tem Turnbull seconded the motion.

Motion carried 4 in favor, 0 against (Bloom absent).

5.2 February 15, 2019

Council Member Balkum made a motion to approve the minutes as corrected.

Council Member Herren seconded the motion.

Motion carried 4 in favor, 0 against (Bloom absent).
6. Individual Items for Consideration

6.1. State of the City Address

Mayor Short delivered his 2019 State of the City Address. A copy of his speech is included as Attachment A to these minutes.

6.2. Statement Regarding 3rd Annual Citizen Survey for 2018-2019

Council Member Balkum presented a public statement regarding the 3rd Annual Citizen Survey. A copy of her statement is included as Attachment B to these minutes.

6.3. Statement Regarding Solid Waste and Recycling Services

Council Member Balkum gave a public statement regarding CWD. A copy of her statement is included as Attachment C to these minutes.

Mayor Short called a recess at 7:13 p.m. The Council reconvened at 7:24 p.m.

6.4. Statement Regarding Reporting Code Violations

Council Member Balkum presented this as a reminder that the City does have a website and there’s a place to fill out a form for a code violation. There are a lot of issues that people are saying are going on in our City regarding ordinances not being followed. She asked citizens to please go to the “Report a Code Violation” on the website and we can have the City Administrator follow up with steps to review the file that’s been reported.

Mayor Short explained the reason they ask you to report something when it comes to code violations is so we have a tracking system for the violation. It’s not to track who is calling in, it’s so we can produce a timeline so if we have somebody who is a multiple violator, that timeline helps, depending on what the violation is and what the actions are concerning that violation. It helps us rectify the problem. That’s why we need those reports, so it is documented.

6.5. Discussion and Action Regarding Reviewing the 2018-2019 Citizen Survey Questions

Addressed in the March 11, 2019 City Council Meeting


Addressed in the March 11, 2019 City Council Meeting

6.7. 2018-2019 Citizen Survey Distribution

Addressed in the March 11, 2019 City Council Meeting
6.8. Council Chambers Audio Equipment

Council Member Balkum asked to bring this item up as a discussion and the need to take action. She stated the audio has worsened. When she contacted the City Administrator/City Secretary, it appears she is also having difficulties.

Council Member Balkum believes we need to contact Axios and have them come out here and remedy the problem.

Mayor Short asked if she was presenting this as a motion.

**Council Member Balkum made a motion to have the company come out and review the system and improve it.**

**Council Member Larkin seconded the motion.**

**The motion carried by a vote of 4-0 (Bloom absent).**

6.9. Animal Control Services

City Administrator Palomba reported that the former City Administrator contacted several area cities regarding possible interlocal agreements for animal control. These options were very expensive. The City would have to pay part of an animal Control Officer’s salary, benefits, truck and facilities costs. For such a small City this just is not financially feasible.

All American Dogs is a private company that provides animal control services. Their main facility is between Pilot Point and Celina. The cost for a yearly contract is between $20,000 to $25,000. The company is willing to contract for a fee per call basis at a rate of $450 per call for one truck for one animal. If the call requires a rabies quarantine, it is an additional $350. This will require a mid-year budget amendment.

Although the City does not receive many calls, the Sheriff’s office has requested the City seek a solution in the event the animal must be removed from a location for health and safety reasons.

Staff recommends authorizing the City Administrator to enter into an agreement with All American Dogs for a fee per call incident to remove only aggressive, injured or sick animals. In this situation, All American Dogs would be instructed not to accept calls from the general public but would respond to calls placed by the City Administrator or her designee and/or the Sheriff’s office to remove an animal from a specific location. The City would not provide services for lost or roaming animals.

Mayor Short reported that the Sheriff had requested that McLendon-Chisholm help them out with these calls. They will respond, but they don’t have the training or equipment to do much.

Mayor Pro Tem Turnbull stressed that unless a dog is contained, the call is not made.
Council Member Balkum asked if we can get a guarantee from the Sheriff’s department that they will only make a call if the animal is contained?

City Administrator Palomba responded they can’t make guarantees.

Mayor Pro Tem Turnbull stated that $450 is really high. He stated that unless the dog is contained, we don’t make calls.

City Administrator Palomba stated they will have to stipulate that citizens either call the Sheriff or City Hall. They can not call directly to the company.

Council Member Larkin asked if they work in other cities and do they have a local substation.

City Administrator Palomba answered yes, they do work in other cities but they do not have a local substation.

Mayor Short stated he is not ready for an annual contract, but he also doesn’t agree with the $450 charge should a call be made and there is no animal when they respond. He asked if they would reduce the cost if there is no animal.

City Administrator Palomba stated she will ask.

Council Member Balkum suggested maybe re-negotiate the cost.

City Administrator Palomba stated she will try to get a lower cost.

**No Action**

6.10. **Updates to City of McLendon-Chisholm Code of Ordinances, Chapter 4, Business Regulations**

Addressed at March 11, 2019 City Council Meeting

6.11. **Proposals for City Planning Services**

Addressed at March 11, 2019 City Council Meeting

6.12. **Proposals for City Accounting Services**

Addressed at March 11, 2019 City Council Meeting

6.13. **Proposals for Information Technology Services**

Addressed at March 11, 2019 City Council Meeting

Addressed at March 11, 2019 City Council Meeting

6.15 Public Hearing – Revisions to Chapter 10, Subdivision Regulations of the McLendon-Chisholm Code of Ordinances

Mayor Short opened the public hearing at 6:43 p.m.

No comments were received.

Mayor Short adjourned the public hearing at this time to allow the City Planner, Michael Coker, to give information on this item.

Mr. Coker reported that both he and the City Engineer, along with some of the other staff, have made recommendations for amendments to the subdivision regulations. Most of them are pen and ink things, clarifications, and reducing redundancy. But collectively, it is bringing us into conformance with the local government requirements. The last time the regulations were modified as a whole was in 2007 and laws have changed on some requirements since then.

Mr. Coker discussed the modifications. He also reported that P&Z had workshops on this item.

Mayor Pro Tem Turnbull asked about the requirements for street lights found in Appendix 1, Section 5. He wondered if they should put LED rather than vapor.

Mr. Coker suggested they put “or an approved alternative”.

Mayor Pro Tem Turnbull asked about speed limits and if the City has enforcement authority.

Mayor Short stated the City cannot enforce traffic speed limits on private roads.

City Administrator Palomba pointed out these updates are basically general clean-up.

Council Member Balkum ask if there will be another public hearing.

City Administrator Palomba stated this is the second public hearing. Planning & Zoning held the first.

Mayor Short reopened the Public Hearing at 7:52 p.m.

No comments were received.

The Public Hearing was closed at 7:53 p.m.
6.16. Discussion and Action Regarding Proposed Revisions to Chapter 10, Subdivision Regulations of the McLendon-Chisholm Code of Ordinances

Mayor Pro Tem Turnbull made a motion to accept the revisions as presented.

Mayor Pro Tem Turnbull withdrew the motion.

Mr. Coker stated he would review, reword and provide language as requested and bring back to the Council to reconsider and give direction.

No Action

6.17. Public Hearing – Revisions to Chapter 14, Zoning Regulations of the McLendon-Chisholm Code of Ordinances

Mayor Short opened the Public Hearing.

Troy Reich, 441 Briar Glen. I have a problem with the procedure. You’re asking for public input. If it’s only doting “i’s” and crossing “t’s” or making changes per state law, that’s fine. But you’re asking us to give you input on something we don’t know a thing about. If you’re changing the code or regulations, then in order for us to be able to comment on those, we need to know what they are. The other thing is that these are probably things that were brought forward by the Planning & Zoning and your Chairman of the P&Z should be here and report to you on each one of these items. Then those of us sitting in the audience would know what it is we’re supposed to be commenting on at a public hearing. It almost seems like, let’s pass it and then we can see what’s in it. That’s a backward way of doing things. I would like to make comments on subdivision changes or any of these other things because in the past I was part of the process that put these regulations in place. If we’re changing them, I’d like to know what those changes are. But, I don’t and there’s nothing here that tells me. There’s nothing on the website that tells me. You’re asking for an uninformed public to comment on something that we know nothing about. In a way, I think each one of these items should be tabled until a later date and you can post the changes on the website and those of us who want to read it, we can and we can come to a public hearing and we can voice our opinion.

Council Member Balkum asked Lisa if she posted the agenda for everyone to read.

City Administrator Palomba replied she did.

Council Member Balkum asked if that document is there as well to review.

City Administrator Palomba replied it was.

Council Member Balkum asked if the advertisement took place two weeks ago.

City Administrator Palomba responded yes.
Council Member Balkum stated she just wanted to make sure the rules were followed. She asked if the P&Z chairman had been invited to come tonight. She then asked Mr. Coker if was able to provide information.

Mr. Coker responded yes, he was.

No additional speakers came forward.

Mayor Short closed the public hearing

6.18. Discussion and Action Regarding Proposed Revisions to Chapter 14, Zoning Regulations of the McLendon-Chisholm Code of Ordinances

Council Member Herren made a motion to accept the proposed revisions to the Zoning regulations.

Council Member Herren made a motion to discuss this item.

Council Member Balkum seconded the motion.

Mr. Coker reported that P&Z had workshops last year to discuss the proposed changes that were advertised. Then they had the public hearing on the 28th that was advertised. The redlines of both of these documents have been available.

Mr. Coker gave his report of recommendations for changes and revisions.

Council Member Balkum asked when the changes will go into effect.

City Attorney Halla answered when the Code of Ordinances is approved.

Council Member Balkum asked if existing properties would be grandfathered.

City Attorney Halla answered yes, but if any changes were made, it would have to be made compatible.

City Administrator Palomba stated what is existing will stay as is.

Council Member Herren withdrew his motion.

No Action Taken

6.19. Public Hearing – Revisions to the Official City of McLendon-Chisholm Zoning Map

Mayor Short opened the public hearing.

No comments were received.
Mayor Short closed the public hearing.

6.20. Discussion and Action Regarding Proposed Revisions to the Official McLendon-Chisholm Zoning Map

Mr. Coker reported that all changes have been made since 2007. This is an accurate reflection of current zoning.

Council Member Balkum moved to discuss this item.

Mayor Pro Tem Turnbull seconded the motion

Council Member Balkum asked if the map online is an interactive map.

Mr. Coker answered no, they can't do that right now. They have a lot of resources, but they don't integrate with each other.

Mr. Coker reviewed the suggested changes and answered questions.

Council Member Balkum made a motion to approve the updated proposed zoning map.

Mayor Pro Tem Turnbull seconded the motion.

The motion carried unanimously.

6.21. Public Hearing - Revisions to the Official City Limit/Extraterritorial Jurisdiction (ETJ) Map

Mayor Short opened the public hearing at 9:00 p.m.

No comments received.

The public hearing was closed at 9:01 p.m.

6.22. Discussion and Action Regarding Proposed Revisions to the Official City Limit/Extraterritorial Jurisdiction (ETJ) Map

Mayor Pro Tem Turnbull made a motion to discuss this item.

Council Member Herren seconded the motion.

Mr. Coker gave information and answered questions.

Mayor Short called a recess at 9:06 p.m.

Council reconvened at 9:16 p.m.
Mayor Pro Tem Turnbull made a motion to approve the proposed revisions to the official City Limit/Extraterritorial Jurisdiction (ETJ) Map.

Council Member Larkin seconded the motion.

The motion carried 4 in favor, 0 against (Bloom absent).

6.23. Discussion and Action Regarding Reconsideration of Council’s Decision on February 26, 2019 to Send a Letter to Residents Who Reside on Substandard Roads

Addressed in Executive Session

7. EXECUTIVE SESSION

7.1. Recess into Executive Session (Closed Meeting) in accordance with Texas Government Code: Section 551.074(1) Personnel Matters to deliberate the appointment, employment, evaluation, reassignment, duties, discipline or dismissal of a public officer or employee: City Administrator/City Secretary; Assistant to the City Secretary; Building Permit Technician; Fire Chief/Fire Marshal; Assistant Fire Chief and Firefighters

The Council recessed into Executive Session at 9:30 p.m.

6. Reconvene Regular Meeting

The Council reconvened the regular meeting at 10:50 p.m.

7. EXECUTIVE SESSION ACTION

No Action

8. STAFF REPORTS

8.1. 1ST Quarter Investment Report

8.2. Financial Reports for January 2019


8.4. McLendon-Chisholm Fire Rescue Run Reports for January and February 2019

8.5. Sheriff Report for January 2019

All Reports were addressed at the March 11 meeting.

9. UPDATES, DISCUSSION AND DIRECTION TO STAFF
9.1. McLendon-Chisholm Fire Rescue

9.2. Subdivision and Zoning Regulations and City Map Updates

9.3. iCompass Streaming Implementation

9.4. Upcoming Request for Proposals and Qualifications

9.5. Future Agenda Items

All reports were addressed at the March11 meeting.

10. COUNCIL MEMBER REPORTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

10.1. Mayor’s Announcements including events, area happenings, and general information

No Report

10.2. Council Member Balkum’s announcements including Communications, Community Engagement, Keep McLendon-Chisholm Beautiful Committee, MC50 Committee, and Veterans Memorial Brick Campaign Committee

No Report

10.3. Council Member Larkin’s Announcements including NCTCOG 9-1-1 Board and Veterans Memorial Brick Campaign Committee

Council Member Larkin reported there have been 986 bricks ordered at a cost of $1.35 each. The bricks will be delivered in another week. He displayed the 4x8 brick which will display a veteran and cost $50.00. The American Legion has offered to have the funds channeled through them and that will make a tax-deductible donation. The cost for installation will be around $4000.00. Mr. Larkin also displayed an 8x8 stone which will have sandblasted engraving. Forty of these corporate or “family” bricks have been ordered. An artist’s rendering, created by Bob Herman’s wife, was also displayed. The next step will be a marketing campaign.

10.3. Mayor Pro-Tem Turnbull’s Announcements including Budget and Finance

No Report

10.5. Council Member Bloom’s Announcements including Economic Development Advisory Panel and Emergency Services

No Report
10.6. Council Member Herren’s Announcements including Roads and Transportation and Economic Development Advisory Panel

Council Member Herren reported the Economic Development Advisory Panel had a meeting prior to the City Council Meeting. They established their vision and developed the objectives and goals of the panel.

Following is a recap of the results of this meeting:

- Economic Development Advisory Panel Vision Statement
  - The Economic Development Advisory Panel will advise City Council on strategies and actions to broaden and diversify the tax base through appropriate commercial and land development consistent with the historic nature and character of McLendon-Chisholm in collaboration with the City Council, Planning and Zoning Commission and City Planner to guide the Comprehensive Plan.
  - Goals / Priorities
    - Define the Economic Development Vision for the City of M-C
      - Define who we are as a city and a people
      - Define what M-C means in order to determine our Economic Development Vision and help develop our engagement strategy
    - Understand the upcoming changes within the City of M-C and growth in cities that surround the City of M-C
      - HWY 205 Expansion and impacts on the City
      - Other road expansion like HWY 550 Expansion from two lanes to four lanes
      - Future Loop 17 south of the City in 2035 Roads Plan
      - Economic Development Plans within the Cities and ETJs surrounding M-C
    - Determine the areas within the City of M-C the citizens desire for Economic Development and Growth to take place
      - Based on the changes that will happen in and around M-C
      - Based on citizen input
      - Based on the Best Practices and Standards of advisors
    - Use the Economic Vision, Planned Changes in and around M-C and identified locations for economic development with M-C findings to develop the next M-C Comprehensive Building Plan Strategy
      - The M-C City Council will utilize this CBP Strategy to provide guidance and direction to the City Planner and Planning and Zoning Committee in the development of the next M-C Comprehensive Building Plan
11. ADJOURN

Mayor Pro Tem moved to adjourn the meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 10:50 p.m.

ATTEST:                                   APPROVED:

Lisa Palomba, City Secretary               Keith Short, Mayor
2019 STATE OF THE CITY ADDRESS

MAYOR KEITH SHORT

Presented March 12, 2019

Fellow citizens, today marks my first State of the City address to you to report on the status of our city, our shared accomplishments and our collective vision for a better future for McLendon-Chisholm. Providing the Mayors annual assessment to the citizens of our city is a practice that was started by Mayor Steinhagen two years ago and I will continue this tradition as long as I have the privilege to hold this office.

When sworn into office last May, I was a newcomer to both politics and the role of Mayor. While having an extensive background in law enforcement and public safety, this last eight short months has been a learning experience and I appreciate the patience of Council, City Staff and our citizens as I gained greater proficiency in executing the duties as mayor. Every day I am humbled by the confidence displayed in me by my fellow citizens, every day I am honored to represent each of you as we conduct the business of our city and every day I am grateful to our God for our nation, its liberties and freedoms. I promise to each of you that I will continue to serve the people of McLendon-Chisholm first and foremost.

I entered office, critical of policies of the past, which I believe had failed and divided our city. My campaign theme as “Unity in our Community,” and I remain committed to promoting this spirit of partnership and cooperation. While I always try to conduct myself in a civil manner even when we disagreed on a policy and implementation, I acknowledge there are times I failed to maintain this standard. For those moments I am sorry and tonight recommitment myself to a higher standard. As we prepare to celebrate our 50th anniversary of incorporation, I invite each member of Council to join me in recommitting to maintain civility and render respect to each other, city staff and each citizen of our wonderful city. My focus remains unifying our city, healing any divides and where disagreements exist, to forge a workable solution that benefits all involved. I also propose, in this same spirit, that we move forward as partners with our sister cities and the County. By forging a partnership based on mutual respect, can we find the answers to pressing issues to allow McLendon-Chisholm and our County to grow and prosper to achieve a brighter future which is one of the keystones of the great American dream.

Last year we promoted Lisa Palomba to the position of City Administrator. Lisa has been tremendous in her new role and we appreciate all she does for this Council, but more importantly, for every resident in McLendon-Chisholm. We also recently completed the process to hire a new City Attorney, Mr. Michael Halla of the Halla Law Firm. We look forward to working with Michael. He is knowledgeable and brings significant experienced in municipal law while understanding the culture and climate of Rockwall County and McLendon-Chisholm. We hired a new trash and recycling vendor, Community Waste Disposal. As with all transitions there were a few bumps in the road and we are committed to working through each one to favorably resolve to the benefit of each citizen. If citizens are still having issues, they should contact city staff so the issues can be addressed. CWD
is well established in North Texas and experienced in several cities in the area, we anticipate a long and rewarding relationship with them.

One of our major highlights is the establishment of a Municipal Fire Department, the McLendon-Chisholm Fire Rescue or MCFR as mandated by the Ordinance 2018-01 which was put in place by Mayor Steinhagen and City Council on April 4, 2018. Ultimately, creating this department resolved the question of fire service and emergency response for our city and Fire District 22. It allowed us to return to a normalized relationship with Rockwall County for coverage of the unincorporated areas and allow all citizens to sleep at night knowing their families and possessions were protected. While there are still issues to work through, it also secured a clear future for fire protection and emergency services. Normalizing MCFR will establish greater budget predictability year-to-year and should also eliminate much of the counterproductive political debate. Now our citizens own the fire department and it will be their voices, as orchestrated by Chief Jim Simmons that will define requirements and set service levels.

The journey to establish a fire department proved more difficult and thorny than many expected, however in the end, Chiefs Jim Simmons and Patrick Murphy were able to rise above the turmoil and work together to forge a successful merger that provided a workable solution which benefitted our citizens and our beloved firefighters. We owe them our “thanks” for a job well done. Unfortunately, mistakes were made through this process, including the unnecessary expenditure of your tax dollars due to hasty and rash decisions. Every citizen in McLendon-Chisholm has my commitment to never allow this to happen again while I am Mayor. Public safety and fiscal responsibility are two hallmarks of successful cities. We will deliver on both. I have complete confidence in Chief Simmons and all of our firefighters and know he is committed to creating the best Fire department in Rockwall.

We have worked to maintain a reasonable property tax rate. Yet in establishing the 2018-2019 Fiscal Year Budget, I was disappointed Council did not seize the opportunity to cut the effective tax rate in keeping with rising value of our property values. As we create next year’s budget, you have my pledge to work to reduce spending wherever possible and strive to reduce the overall tax rate.

As we look forward, McLendon-Chisholm is a growing city, with population estimates of just over 3,000 residents; as measured by percentage of growth, our small city is the fastest growing in Rockwall County. This means we must plan for the future or it will simply overtake us. We should never let others make our decisions; I believe we must make and own our destiny. This means we need to carefully plan for what comes next. My greatest concern is the divisive nature of the political environment at all levels of government across our nation and state will have a chilling impact this can have on our national economy. The last few months of last year showed that an economic downturn, while not forecast to happen in the near-term, could occur and therefore we need to prepare the city should we experience a slowing of our regional or local economy.

Many citizens have commented to me that they feel they lost control of even the most basic decisions made by their government about essential services while at the same time they see the demand by government for more of their money. Our commitment must remain the best possible services at the lowest possible cost. I am committed to budgetary
discipline that has been lacking. Our city budget has almost doubled since the 2014-2015 fiscal year. I have spoken to many residents whose property taxes have more than doubled from 2014 to 2018 without any substantial change in city services. Excessive spending must stop and I ask the City Council and City Staff to find ways to reduce spending. Moving forward we will force the justification of every dollar spent and focus on reducing spending. Governments have a habit of spending more of your tax dollars while claiming conservative virtues. I am committed to “walking the talk” and make sure we constrain future budgets, with the goal to reduce spending.

I will seek greater balance in our sources of revenues. To successfully execute our budget this year requires new home construction to maintain pace with prior years. As I highlighted, the last six months reminds us that we can economic downturns can occur suddenly with little warning and therefore we need to ensure the city’s revenue sources are balanced and based on realistic forecasts.

By focusing on economic development we can lessen the burden on homeowners and the city’s dependence on home property taxes. We have created an Economic Development Committee and charged them to develop make recommendations to council for ways to improve economic development and attract businesses which aligned with the rural lifestyle we enjoy, our free market culture and family orientated community. My faith in the citizens of McLendon-Chisholm is boundless. We seek to leverage the private sector to successfully move our community forward and we seek successful churches, businesses and non-profits that help our community grow smartly.

The expansion of State Highway 205 and the pending improvements along FM 550 will bring more vehicle traffic to our city. This provides us opportunity to thoughtfully grow our business base that will reduce the tax burden being disproportionally placed on home owners. To this end, I will direct city staff to coordinate with the Planning and Zoning Commission to begin working to update the 2015 Comprehensive Plan for our city. This plan serves as the guide for our future development and redevelopment that reflects the goals and objectives that align with our citizen’s vision for the future. I will request Planning and Zoning be positioned to deliver this later this year for Council’s consideration.

Finally, this year is the 50th Anniversary of the creation of McLendon-Chisholm. We are very proud of those who have brought us to this place and time. This year we will celebrate our accomplishments while refocusing on that which brings us together as a community. We have organized a McLendon-Chisholm 50 Committee to begin planning a fall celebration where we can come together in fellowship and rejoice in living in the best city in Rockwall County. For those who wish to participate on this committee, please contact Lisa Palomba, City Administrator.

In conclusion, our future is bright! As we enter 2019, your city staff is hard at work to create a great place to live, raise a family and enjoy affordable country living. I am committed to partnering with our citizens to move us forward. I am reminded every day that I am not perfect, yet through God’s grace and understanding, together we move forward to realize McLendon-Chisholm as a fantastic place to call home.

God bless you and thank you for listening.
Public Statement | 3rd Annual Citizen Survey
By: Council Member Balkum

After reviewing information regarding a Council Member providing an earlier draft version of the survey to a citizen, I decided to share a public statement regarding the 3rd Annual Citizen Survey. The purpose of my statement is to bring clarity and to debunk those whose favorite past time is speculating and sharing misinformation about myself and other City Council Members.

As a Council Member I represent everybody. I do not represent a clique, nor do I have a speechwriter. I feel that one of the most important jobs of a Council Member is to aggregate information from multiple sources of citizen input and use the aggregate data when preparing to deliberate the various agenda items addressed by the Council. For me these sources include responses from eblasts, one on one meetings with citizens, social media information, town halls and most importantly city surveys. The varied sources provide me greater input from a broader demographic. Rather than relying solely on input from townhall meetings, or public hearings which are so notorious for presenting a vocal minority position that the TML Handbook for Council Members and Mayors explicitly cautions council members from being swayed from such events.

If we took a head count on how many people actually attend a council meeting it is not a packed house. We may have 1 or 2 consistently. Sometimes we may have 10 and on certain meetings we may have a topic that we will have 40 to 50 people in attendance. But that is very rare. Our last town hall meeting we had approximately 40 people. 14 spoke. And only 9 of those who spoke were citizens of McLendon-Chisholm.

On September 5, 2018 a Council Member stated his biggest take away from the Town Hall meeting is that citizens expect and deserve a plan. He believes they have all the information they need to make a decision and it points towards a merger. The truth is we received more response from the 2nd Annual Citizen Survey that supports the City's direction to start a city owned fire department. The Town Hall did not showcase the actual input from citizens as well as sharing a presentation that was not verified or had an approved budget. See page 61 on the 2nd Citizen Survey that shows 67.17% SUPPORT out of 471 responses from 1,968 invitations were asked, "Would you support the City forming a Fire/Rescue/EMS department, led by an experienced and qualified full-time Chief whose focus will be to build the largest, best, equipped, most highly trained all-volunteer department in Rockwall County? This department will welcome all career emergency services professionals, who reside in McLendon-Chisholm and surrounding areas and gratefully utilize their skills to support our volunteers in situations such as major motor vehicle accidents or structure fires?"
The survey would also serve as a guide before taking steps to plan and/or revise plans for the city. On September 11, 2018 the City Council voted in favor of issuing the 2018-2019 Citizen Survey. At that time a request was made to all Council Members and Mayor Short to contribute questions they felt needed to be included on the survey.

This request for the Mayor and Council to participate in compiling questions for the survey was repeated at numerous Council meetings following the September 11, 2018 meeting.

Council Members Larkin and Bloom along with Mayor Short have on numerous occasions stated their opposition to the survey for various reasons among which were; questions are repetitive, not actionable by the Council, and too expensive. However, rather than solving their perceived problems with the survey, they have chosen not to provide “fresh” questions to reduce the level of repetitiveness or questions they feel would obtain actionable citizen input, thereby making the survey, in their eyes, cost effective.

Mayor Short did not provide questions. Council Member Bloom did not respond until his March 11, 2019, email where he expressed his disapproval of the survey but did not offer questions or solutions. Council Member Larkin sent an email on January 21, 2019 stating his objections to the survey questions but offered none of his own. He repeated his objections in his email dated March 11, 2019, while yet again offering no questions of his own.

Last night Council Member Larkin stated that “he and Council Member Bloom were the only ones to respond to Lisa’s request for feedback on the survey questions.” I assume this was to distract from their lack of involvement since September 11, 2018.

The survey conducted by the city is similar to city elections and ballot initiatives, since respondents have complete control over their participation. Unlike a random sample poll, where a small sample is selected at random where everyone within the designated group has a chance of being selected, self-selecting surveys like this one invites participation from the entire citizenry.

**Anonymity Increases Reliability**

Bottom line, people are often afraid to tell researchers or in our case the City Council what they really think. This is what is called "social desirability bias" — the idea that respondents give polling answers that for whatever reason they think will reflect well upon them. Instead, more people prefer the safe confines of an election booth to the risk of expressing their true feelings openly.

Respondents in previous surveys articulated the same kinds of sentiment where they talk of a familiar relationship with the very ones whose actions they rail against in the comment section of an anonymous survey. It is therefore reasonable to conclude that the only way
to discover the real feelings and opinions of people inside this community is through a mechanism that helps to ensure and protect a respondent's anonymity.

Focus on Reliability

For populations of less than 100,000, like McLendon-Chisholm, self-selecting surveys are the ideal way to gather public opinion. Though they take significantly more time to conduct, the results are typically more reliable than a random sample poll because respondents are demonstrating, by their participation, higher levels of interest in what is going on in the city than those who opt out.

A self-selecting survey, like this one, is a far more reliable way to sample the views of voters, since those who respond are likely to be the same ones to show up at the polls.

Recently, it has come to my attention that a former mayor created a sample survey and provided the results in a letter to Planning & Zoning. The results were listed but only 5 replied to this survey. And this same person gave the City Council criticism he is against our Citizen Survey. Then on January 8, 2019 he gave some ideas of what he would like to see in this next Citizen Survey. Which it was noted and applied in this current Citizen Survey. Then he continues to be against the Citizen Survey.

Well, as much as I can tear apart every point that was made in the emails. It is clear to me based on the evidence and discussion that Council Member Herman Larkin is not interested in representing the entire citizenry nor does he think that inviting the citizenry to participate in being informed about their local government. His actions alone by facilitating meetings and skirting the process of the City Council appointing citizens to committees is the same type of influences that continues to happen that got this City in trouble of the City Hall bond debt.

The intent of the Citizen Survey was to go out and solicit about upcoming events as well as invite citizens to get involved in their community.

To answer questions regarding the cost of the survey. I'm going to give you two figures. The City Administrator is going to make some purchases that I am not going to participate in.

The total amount of people who will be invited are 2603 Registered Voters and Property Owners
Online Survey Application Costs: $899.00 (Annual fee)
Postcard Printing: $166.03
Postcard Stamps ($0.35): $911.05
TOTAL EXPENSE: $1,976.08

Or

2603 Registered Voters and Property Owners
Online Survey Application Costs: $899.00 (Annual fee)
Postcard Printing: $166.03
First Class Letter Stamps ($0.55): $1,431.50

TOTAL EXPENSE: $2,496.68 City Council vs City Administrator to Create the Survey

Having a member from the city council spearhead the creation of a citizen survey costs the City budget is $0. However, if the City Administrator being involved in the creation of a citizen survey takes her time away from her current assignments and responsibilities as City Administrator. So in discussion of the process this was addressed to prevent a walking quorum as well as an understanding of the role that will later be administered by the City Administrator by her being involved in having access to the application to upload the URIDs, prepare the postcard invitations with URID which is the key that the respondent would use to take the online survey. In addition to this I will mention that the lists were provided by the City Administrator which she obtained from the Rockwall County Elections office and Rockwall County Appraisal District.

Last year there was some issues where we had multiple invitations that were sent for the same person or married persons, because the lists were not scrubbed. So, to assist in combining these two lists I spent many hours removing multiple names such as Mr. and Mrs. Joe Brown. So, it will be just Mr. Joe Brown and Mrs. Jenny Brown. They should each receive their own invitation with their own URID #. That is what should happen when it is properly labeled through a mail merge and labeling the postcards.

The Costs for having a third party contractor.
There was an official presentation that was held on November 8, 2016 by a Fort Worth consultant (redacted) which would have produced a survey but the costs were over $10,000 and that didn't include the invitation list that we have. There were other methodologies presented and it would not be as comprehensive as the surveys that we have. Months ago the City Administrator also made a similar suggestion, but again this was suggested after the fact of the Council agreeing to do a Citizen Survey on September 11, 2018 and for the purpose of the City Council to contribute their information to the Citizen Survey.
Questions with Actions

As I briefly mentioned earlier about the fire department question. It was put on there because in October 2017 I presented a presentation that included a legal question to be answered. Such as can the fire department topic be placed on the general election 2018 ballot. Our city attorney gave the legal answer and said no. However, he confirmed my request that I listed in the presentation can we pose a question in the Citizen Survey. And he said yes. So, we did. The survey was created between November 2017 – January 2018. It was released in January 15, 2018. We received the results just after February 15. The former mayor gave us a sneak peek through the State of the Cities address which happened at the end of February 2018. The City Council proceeded to establish a city owned Fire Department.

There is a number of questions regarding the budget that was also asked. Such as since we do have unspent amount of monies, we wanted to know what do the citizenry want us to do with the money? The City Council took action on it and we fulfilled that answer in 2018.

51% from the first City Survey respondents didn’t want a Tax Rate increase to support the MCVFD budget.
44% only supported the City’s Budget to increase the Fire Department Budget.
In our second survey:
65.89% we had support for allocating some of the monies budget for public safety to secure additional emergency medical services through Rockwall County EMS.
73.35% supported a feasibility study to determine the future needs for Rescue/EMS services and facilities as the City grows.
39.23% supported to put funds towards a city owned Rescue/EMS department and paying down the city hall debt.
25% Put the funds towards a city owned Rescue/EMS department.
21.11% Put money toward paying down the debt on the City Hall.
27% Waste Connections received 5 stars for their value.
31% Waste Connections received 4 stars for the value. That’s 58%.
56% rated 4 to 5 stars for their customer service.
42% rated 5 stars for their day of pickup.
59% rated their time 4 to 5 stars of their pickup.
50% rated their bulky items pickup with 4 to 5 stars.
60% rated 4 to 5 stars for Recycling.

Survey Results and Web Traffic
801 users have visited the citizen survey link on the website.
610 users have visited the 2017 – 2018 citizen survey link on the website.
Finally, there are a significant amount of new questions in this survey. From informing the citizenry what your local government has done in 2018 as an option to participate to share that you are or not aware. This is the appropriate place to share that information. We should be the first ones to say here is what we have done. It's a cost-efficient method, because if we were to include that on a printed piece such as a newsletter that would be several pages of content. If we were to do another newsletter, we can easily make reference to the survey results or go to the link to the website.

There are questions that are different than last year and forward thinking about our economics. I have been criticized and that is quite alright. Everyone has a right to their opinion. Even though I have opposition on this Council I'm still going to try to facilitate a transparent government. And even if this Council doesn't want the public to know what has transpired in 2018. I will find a way to have that information published. We had 23.83% that responded out of 1,968 last year. I'm hoping to continue to be above average in the response participation. Your opinion does matter. I encourage every person that receives an invitation to take the citizen survey.
Public Statement | CWD
By: Council Member Balkum

Thank you to those who have shared their feedback regarding our current waste and recycle services with CWD. I do hope that you do share your experience in the upcoming Citizen Survey.

Your information will be utilized in future discussions with CWD representatives to have remedied. It is the responsibility of the City Council to hold any and all contractors accountable for their service agreements.

If you are still having trouble with your service, whether it is billing or service please contact CWD Customer Service at (972) 392-9300. Choose option 2.

We have scheduled to have an Extreme Green Event Scheduled for Saturday, June 8, 2019. This event is a one-stop place to dispose of household hazardous waste, automotive tires, used electronics and household metal goods. Confidential document shredding will also be available on site.