

**CITY OF SULPHUR SPRINGS, TEXAS
SPECIAL MEETING OF THE
CITY COUNCIL**

**September 21, 2021
7:30 p.m.**

Mayor John A. Sellers called the special meeting of the Sulphur Springs City Council to order at 7:30 p.m.

The following council members and staff were present:

Present: Mayor John A. Sellers
Mayor Pro Tem Doug Moore
Councilman Jay W. Julian
Councilman Harold Nash Sr.
Councilman Oscar Aguilar
Councilman Gary Spraggins

Absent: Councilman Freddie Taylor

Staff: Marc Maxwell, City Manager
Gale Roberts, City Secretary
Lesa Smith, Assistant City Manager/Finance Director
Tory Niewiadomski, Assistant City Manager/CD Director
Gordon Frazier, Assistant City Manager/HR Director
Natalie Darrow, SSPD Records Clerk
Jason Ames, Officer SSPD

PLEDGE AND INVOCATION

Mayor Sellers led in the pledge of allegiance to the United States Flag and the pledge to the Texas Flag. The invocation was led by Councilman Julian.

**DISCUSSION/ACTION ON PUBLIC HEARING FOR SECOND AND FINAL
READING OF ORDINANCE NO. 2790, ESTABLISHING A MASTER FEE
SCHEDULE FOR COSTS, FEES, AND RATES ASSOCIATED WITH
PERMITTING, UTILITY SERVICES, AND OTHER SERVICES PROVIDED BY
THE CITY**

Assistant City Manager/Finance Director Smith presented the staff report. Previously, most fees were an appendix in the budget book. This ordinance establishes a master fee schedule as Appendix C of the Code of Ordinances. This makes it easier to amend fees throughout the year, if necessary, and keeps a consolidated list of fees as adopted

through their own ordinances. There was a lengthy discussion. Councilman Julian stated that the street maintenance fee was based on the water bill but all of Hopkins County uses the streets, leaving the entire burden on the citizens of Sulphur Springs. He suggested the fee should be based on a vehicle approach instead of on the water meter. He proposed the possibility of adding a fee to vehicle registrations since over 40,000 drivers traveled the city streets from 2019 to 2020. He also suggested a fee that could be adjusted for yearly cost fluctuations and a workshop with the county to discuss options of how we can share the financial burden. Mayor Sellers expressed disappointment that there was no one to speak from the public since he had noticed comments and misinformation on social media in reference to how long the fee had been in place and where it has been used. He also stated that he believed the increase should be gradual since people are struggling financially. He suggested that a fact sheet in reference to street repair should be available to the public to prevent misinformation. There was no one else to speak to the issue. Councilman Spraggins moved to adopt the ordinance on the second and final reading. Mayor Pro Tem Moore seconded and the vote as follows:

AYES: Julian, Aguilar, Spraggins, Moore
NAYS: Sellers, Nash
ABSTAIN: None

Motion carried.

DISCUSSION/ACTION ON PUBLIC HEARING FOR SECOND AND FINAL READING OF ORDINANCE NO. 2783, THE APPROPRIATIONS ORDINANCE FOR THE CITY OF SULPHUR SPRINGS FOR FISCAL YEAR 2021-2022

Assistant City Manager/Finance Director Smith presented the staff report. This is the second and final reading of the ordinance adopting the FY 2022 budget and appropriating certain funds and directing their expenditure. There was no one else to speak to the issue. Mayor Pro Tem Moore moved to adopt the ordinance on the second and final reading. Councilman Aguilar seconded and vote was unanimous.

Motion carried.

DISCUSSION/ACTION ON PUBLIC HEARING FOR SECOND AD FINAL READING OF ORDINANCE NO. 2784, SETTING THE TAX RATE FOR THE CITY OF SULPHUR SPRINGS FOR FISCAL YEAR 2021 – 2022

Assistant City Manager/Finance Director Smith presented the staff report. The property tax rate is set at \$0.42692 per \$100 of valuation as discussed in budget workshops. Taxes for properties on the tax roll as of January 1, 2021, will be assessed October 1, 2021. The Local Government Code requires specific language for the motion, and the ordinance. The percentage increase in the motion is not the same as the percentage increase in the ordinance. The State requires different tax rate calculation for each one. The motion uses the no-new-revenue tax rate, and the ordinance uses the no-new-revenue maintenance &

operations rate. There was no one else to speak to the issue. Councilman Spraggins stated, *“I move that the property tax rate be increased by the adoption of a tax rate of \$0.42692 per 100 dollars which is effectively an 11.96 percent increase in the tax rate”* and to adopt the ordinance on the second and final reading. Councilman Julian seconded and the vote was unanimous.

Motion carried.

DISCUSSION/ACTION ON PUBLIC HEARING FOR SECOND AND FINAL READING OF ORDINANCE NO. 2785, SETTING THE WATER RATE

Assistant City Manager/Finance Director Smith presented the staff report. There was no water rate increase in the 2020-2021 FY budget. This year, as we already discussed in the budget workshops, we propose to increase the water rate by 2%. Councilman Julian asked if this will be applicable to the rural areas. Assistant City Manager/Finance Director Smith pointed out Section B that applies. There was no one else to speak to the issue. Councilman Spraggins moved to adopt the ordinance on the second and final reading. Councilman Aguilar seconded and the vote was unanimous.

Motion carried.

DISCUSSION/ACTION ON PUBLIC HEARING FOR SECOND AND FINAL READING OF ORDINANCE NO. 2786, SETTING THE SEWER RATE

Assistant City Manager/Finance Director Smith presented the staff report. The proposed increase in the sewer rate is 2% and is the same as presented in the budget workshops. There was no one else to speak to the issue. Councilman Julian moved to adopt the ordinance on the second and final reading. Councilman Nash seconded and the vote was unanimous.

Motion carried.

DISCUSSION/ACTION ON PUBLIC HEARING FOR SECOND AND FINAL READING OF ORDINANCE NO. 2787, SETTING THE SANITATION RATE

Assistant City Manager/Finance Director Smith presented the staff report. The sanitation contract will increase by 5% in the new budget year. There was no one else to speak to the issue. Mayor Pro Tem Moore moved to adopt the ordinance on the second and final reading. Councilman Spraggins seconded and the vote was unanimous.

Motion carried.

DISCUSSION/ACTION ON PUBLIC HEARING FOR SECOND AND FINAL READING OF ORDINANCE NO. 2788, AUTHORIZATION OF UPDATED SERVICE CREDITS

Assistant City Manager/HR Director Frazier presented the staff report. This ordinance establishes the authorization of “Updated Service Credits.” There was no one else to speak to the issue. Councilman Julian moved to adopt the ordinance on the second and final reading. Councilman Nash seconded and the vote was unanimous.

Motion carried.

VISITORS AND PUBLIC FORUM

Mayor Sellers announced that there was an event to be held on Thursday on Strong Towns. Councilman Spraggins wanted to introduce his mother-in-law, Martha Brantley and wife, Deana Spraggins. There was no one else to speak.

ADJOURN

With all business complete the meeting was adjourned at 7:48 p.m.