

**CITY OF CASTROVILLE CITY COUNCIL
SPECIAL CALLED COUNCIL MEETING**

**1209 Fiorella
City Council Chambers**

**Tuesday
August 11, 2020**

**2:00 p.m.
MINUTES**

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 2:00 p.m. by Mayor Pro Tem Schroeder

II. ROLL CALL

Present:

Mayor Pro Tem Darrin Schroeder
Councilmember Sheena Martinez
Councilmember Paul Carey
Councilmember Phil King
Councilmember Todd Tschirhart

Leroy Vidales, Interim City Administrator/Finance Director
Debra Howe, City Secretary
John Gomez, Public Works

III. CITIZEN COMMENTS

The public was permitted to offer public comments telephonically as provided by the agenda and as permitted by the presiding officer during the meeting. Written questions or comments could be submitted up to two hours before the meeting. A recording of the telephonic meeting was made and available to the public in accordance of the Texas Public Information Act upon request.

No one requested to speak.

IV. Presentation on the FY2021 Utility Fund including water, wastewater, gas, electric, garbage and Capital Improvement Plan Vehicles & Equipment. (John Gomez, Public Works Director)

Public Works Director John Gomez thanked the public works staff attending for helping with the presentation the city council was being provided on the different utilities. Staff in attendance were from administration, electric, water, and wastewater departments. Mr. Gomez presentation began with the employees in each of the departments saying they were fully staffed this year, contracting with an afterhours answering service, implementing a Facebook page and implementing a replacement/repair meter audit program for gas, electric, and water utilities. Mr. Gomez reviewed the goals for 2021 including a proposal for consultation on smart metering and funding options for the city; being proactive on development infrastructure; adopt new water and sewer design standards; update utility infrastructure maps on all utilities; proposing to hire an in-house inspector to conduct inspections on utility infrastructure, cross-connection, and grease traps; work with City Engineer to resolve TCEQ requirements on tree removal at the Wastewater Treatment Plant; update utility policy; improvement of communication with customers on issues or projects that would affect customers through I-Info, social media and website; and better use of work order system to capture work hours, asset management, and work specifics. Councilmember Martinez said she did not receive an I-Info message on the recent water main break and boil water notice. She was concerned about the issues this system had and hoped it could be improved. Council was pleased with the addition of the after-hours answering service.

Mr. Gomez said he would speak more on this at the next meeting. Mr. Gomez briefed the city council on his request for an additional position for an inspector under utility administration, including additional training for that position. Also shown was a new computer, additional security cameras, and shown in the fleet vehicles an SUV for inspector/administration a 3% increase in salaries and increase for each of the departments for certification pay from a maximum of \$100 to \$300. A handout of the current personnel policy with the requested changes to the pay certification was given to council for consideration. Council was in favor of incentives to keep trained employees at the city. Councilmember Martinez asked about the SUV and felt a truck would serve the department better. Wastewater Department - the permit had been renewed, all but one violation had been resolved, staff was moving forward with monitoring and rebuilding the main lift station in-house. They were working with Friese and Nichols to replace pumps and restructure the return activated sludge system. Implemented a Televising and clean-out program for sewer lines and two members of staff had obtained advanced licensing and certification. Increases in wastewater was additional chemicals due to change in plant operations, a small increase in uniform cost, and safety equipment for confined entry and cargo gear. Electric Department – in 2020 acquired a mini-excavator and work trailer, was completing city’s portion of rerouting the powerline around the elementary school campus and working to upgrade underground transformers and service in River Bluff with an outside contractor. Mr. Gomez said they were working with Schneider Engineering to update the 2012 electrical assessment of the River Bluff Subdivision. The 2021 Goals was to continue that upgrade project shown in the capital improvement projects, start the upgrade project in Country Village Subdivision, in-house training ;program with CPS Energy and Medina Electric, install new generator for public works and continue upgrades to electric infrastructure with meters, panels, power poles and services. Replacement equipment shown was a 6-ton digger, small bucket truck, pole trailer and mobile crane unit. Water Department – in 2020 the water wells and lift stations were brought up to operational standards with staff monitoring daily, involved in inspections of eastside lift station system located at the Airport, and two employees had obtained advanced licensing and certification. Goals for 2021 were the FM 471 waterline extension project, Inserta-valve installation project, and implementation of cross-connection inspection program. Increases for 2021 were a hydraulic chainsaw, confined space safety equipment, 4-wheel drive Extend -A-Hoe plus hydraulics, and shared cost of skid steer and mobile crane unit. Gas Department – increases shown were meter replacement program and utility system maintenance line testing, a state requirement. Refuse Department – minimum increase due to new contract with Waste Management for garbage and brush pickup. Five Year Plan included: Wastewater 2021– main lift station fencing (\$10,000), vehicle replacement (\$27,000), secondary pumps for lift stations and guard rails (\$57,000), generator installation at Country Village Lift Station (\$58,000), complete Riverside Lift Station repair (\$60,000), CCTV testing and repair program (\$75,000), complete Country Village Lift Station repair (\$75,000), SCADA installation at Wastewater Treatment Plant (pending RFP estimate \$95,000), Tree removal from ponds at WW Treatment Plant (\$200,000 under review of City Engineer), Sewer Collection Lines – Repair and Replacement (\$450,000, and TCEQ Ponds (\$500,000 under review of City Engineer). Council asked about the TCEQ violation requiring tree removal and ponds. Mr. Gomez said they had requested an extension of 2 years to complete and costs were shown in 2021 and 2022. Electric 2021 – Infrastructure Assessment/repairs (\$80,000), River Bluff improvements (Bond \$640,000 2021-2025 pending cost) Tree/Trimming/removal (\$80,000 each year per RFP), vehicle & equipment (\$405,000). Water 2021 – FM 471 Water Line Extension/1800 linear feet (service & fire hydrant replacement) (\$25,000), Lafayette Street water line replacement (Bond \$628,000), 4-wheel drive Extend -A-Hoe plus hydraulics

(\$75,000), Inserta-valves (10 at \$8,000) (\$160,000), and vehicles and equipment (\$12,000). Gas and Refuse 2021 through 2025 – nothing shown. Mayor Pro Tem Schroeder and council were in favor of the need for safety equipment. Councilmember King asked about the cost and number shown for valves. It was determined it was for 20 at \$8,000 each. Also, the back-up pump cost was to be reevaluated.

V. ADJOURN

Mayor Pro Tem Schroeder adjourned the meeting at 4:09 p.m.

Darrin Schroeder
Mayor Pro Tem

ATTEST:

Debra Howe
City Secretary