

**MINUTES: City Council Workshop Meeting
March 17, 2008**

**PRESENT: Councilman Glenn Ervin (Mayor Pro-Tem), Councilman Robert Patton
Councilman Andy Garza, Councilman Thomas Muir**

MEMBERS

ABSENT: Mayor Joe Higgs, Councilman Mike Walker

OTHERS

PRESENT: City Manager Mike Brice, City Secretary/Asst. City Manager Rose Chavez,

1. Call Meeting to Order.

Mayor Pro-Tem called meeting to order.

2. Discussion on Increasing the Atmos Franchise Fee.

City Manager advised that the franchise fee is part of the agreement that was signed with Atmos allowing us to raise the fee from 3% to 5%. This is a direct cost to the consumer and will raise the gas bill by 2%. The estimated revenue it will generate is around \$26,000.

Councilman Garza expressed a concern in raising the fee. There will be additional increases coming in electric fees and emphasized these are tough times for people.

Mayor Pro-Tem asked if this does not get approved, does Atmos have the option of raising the fee on their own.

City Manager advised that Atmos can't raise the fee since this is a City option.

Councilman Muir discussed how the Atmos increase is allocated and expressed concerns about the reserve that the City has to try to have as recommended by the city auditor.

Discussion on other franchise fees and the reserve for the General Fund. This increase is based on usage and the impact on the customer.

3. Discussion on Raising Current Utility Deposits and Reconnect Fees.

City Manager indicated he was still trying to work on the fees regarding building construction and he will get back to Council on those changes at another workshop. He proceeded with the discussion concerning Business Related Fees. Section 3.6 (Hearing Fee Regarding Unsafe Buildings or Premises) had a paragraph regarding unsafe buildings that was in conflict with state statute and it was taken out. Section 3.7 was taken out since it is referenced in another section. Section 3.11 (Fees of Itinerant

Merchant, Peddlers and Vendors) was changed to permit fee of \$250.00 for the year and for each additional person it is \$25.00. They must also show proof of a sales tax permit before the City issues the permit. Section 3.12 (Private Refuse Haulers) was taken out since the City has an inclusive contract with IESI for services. Section 3.15 (Alcoholic Beverages) was clarified.

Article 4.000 (Utility Related Fees) Section 4.101 (Reconnection Fees) was changed to reflect the charge of \$30.00 for each. Section 4.103 (b) After Hour Utility Service Fee will have a change to reflect \$50.00 for water and \$50.00 for electric and the time was moved to 4:00 p.m.

In Section 4.201 (Special Trash Collection) was deleted. Section 4.202 (Collection Fees) was changed to reflect actual cost plus \$2.00 administrative fee. This will keep us from changing the ordinance every time IESI raises their fees. Section 4.203 (Waste from Tree/Shrub Trimming) is deleted in lieu of the \$2.00 fee for limb pick up that is being charged. Section 4.204 (Fee for Removal of Illegally Dumped Refuse on Private Property) language was added “over and above the actual cost of removal.” In the same paragraph “City Manager” to be changed to “Code Enforcement.”

In Section 4.301(Residential Water Service Connections) City Manager referenced the problems concerning the water meters and how they are damaged during construction. When a new meter is set in the construction of a home the meter gets run over, gets full of dirt, gets broken and the City can't get the builder's attention to the problem. The proposal is to add a \$200.00 deposit in case of damage to the meter during construction and is refundable if the meter is not damaged. The cost of the meter is about \$125.00, the box is \$40.00 and the sender is about \$90.00.

Council discussed that the fee should be set to where it covers all the City cost including the employees. The deposit was set at \$500.00 and the connect fees were changed to reflect \$30.00. In the same Section item (d) was deleted.

Section 4.303 (Commercial Water Service Connections) (b) 2nd paragraph “charge for meter, box and connections” to reflect actual cost plus \$500.00. City Manager advised he will research this to see if it needs to be a larger amount.

Section 4.306 (Water Service Rates) under (c) multifamily dwellings occupied was marked out to reflect total units.

Discussion concerning having a commercial rate. The size of the meter should determine the charge.

Councilman Ervin asked City Manager to contact the City of Denton on how they have this set up.

Discussion continued on the method of billing that is currently used. The discussion included the revenues generated from the multi-units. Possible multipliers in the water meters.

Item (6) is added to allow a charge for customers who have sewer service and don't have water service to reflect a \$35.00 maximum charge.

Section 4.308 (Water and Sewer Deposit) a new item was added to reflect a multiple property residential deposit. The current ordinance does not allow a deposit and with this change a deposit will be charged of \$100.00 to both multiple property residential owners and single family residential. Large volume user will have a deposit of \$200.00 with the commercial deposit of \$100.00.

Councilman Muir asked if “large volume user” can be defined.

Section 4.309 was deleted.

Section 4.401 (Electric Deposits) a \$200.00 deposit on residential and on the multiple properties is to be charged. At the end of this paragraph a definition is added to reference a temporary service as 30 day maximum for remodeling purposes.

Section 4.402 (Electric Service Connection) (1) reflects a change from \$20.00 to \$30.00 (2) is deleted (4) service fee to reflect \$30.00 charge (6) change wording to a 3-phase service installation fee of \$90.00.

Discussed that on **Item 4** the fee should not be charged regarding a trouble call.

Section 4.408 and 4.410, 4.412 are obsolete and will be deleted.

City Manager discussed **Section 4.411** he is trying to get some information on ways to simplify the calculations. There will be a request for proposals sometime this year concerning a rate study. This does not necessarily mean to raise rates.

Article 5.000 (Municipal Court Fees, Section 5.10) (a) warrant fee change to reflect \$50.00.

Article 6.000 (Miscellaneous Fees) Section 6.100 (Returned Check) fee raised to \$50.00.

City Manager advised that in **Section 7.100 (Park Usage Fees)** (3) the \$15.00 fee for lights is questionable and he will get some more information to make sure this fee is adequate.

City Manager indicated he will make sure he gets the research that Council had requested and will get the building construction fees finished. After this is completed there will be another scheduled meeting.

4. Questions from the Council.

None

5. Overview of Items on Regular Agenda.

Councilman Muir inquired that in the disbursements there was a big expense item for \$10,008.00 in the Police Department and asked for clarification.

City Manager advised the expense is for the video cameras that will be installed in the two new police cars.

Councilman Muir also inquired on the payment of \$15,966.45 for a lease payment in the Waste Water Collections.

City Manager advised this is an annual payment.

6. Adjournment.

Mayor Pro-Tem Ervin adjourned the workshop.