

**MINUTES: CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION
SEPTEMBER 2, 2008**

**PRESENT: Mayor Joe Higgs, Councilman Robert Patton, Councilman Glenn Ervin,
Councilman Thomas Muir, Councilman Andy Garza**

ABSENT: Councilman Mike Walker

OTHERS

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

ABSENT: Councilman Mike Walker

1. Call Meeting to Order.

Mayor called meeting to order at 6:04 p.m.

2. Discussion on Limb Pickup.

City Manager indicated that he had staff prepare a report on the annual expenses for operation and maintenance of the truck and chipper. Councilman Ervin had asked for this item to be placed on the work session agenda for discussion. City Manager explained that there have been a couple of recent issues; one was a gentleman who had half a tree that had fallen in his yard. He did not want to cut the tree in reasonable pieces in order for it to be put through the chipper. The City Manager indicated we do not have the staff to spend a lot of time cutting trees prior to chipping; the employees can double or even triple their time if they tried to do this. City Manager advised there was one location where the employees spent four days chipping the limbs, and if the limbs hadn't been cut up the job would have possibly taken two weeks.

Councilman Garza indicated there are a lot of citizens who don't have the tools to cut up the limbs. There are also those citizens who don't have trees, and they still pay the \$2.00.

Councilman Ervin indicated the estimated fees that are collected by the City average about \$50,000 a year. The intent was to keep the City from not having limbs all over town. He expressed if the limbs have to be cut up in 4ft pieces, then why does the customer pay the \$2.00 fee.

The City Manager explained that the City does not require the limbs to be cut up in 4ft pieces. The City requires that the limbs be cut up to where they can go through the chipper.

Councilman Ervin indicated there have been several issues; it is not just the issue concerning cutting the tree. The citizens are being told the City will not pick up their limbs unless they were cut up in 4ft length. It could be that the employees are

misinterpreting the ordinance. He indicated if the ordinance needs to be changed to read 4ft, then the \$2.00 charge needs to be dropped.

Discussion concerning the cutting of the trees and making sure we enforced the ordinance.

Councilman Garza inquired as to when the City plans to cut the trees around the power lines. He also inquired on the status of phone lines that were to be tied to the new poles. It has been at least ten months since the project was completed.

The City Manager advised the trimming of the trees around the power lines is currently getting done. In some areas they are cutting them down. On the status of the phone lines the City is making efforts to get this completed.

3. Discussion on Proposed Amendments to the Subdivision Ordinance Concerning Streets.

The City Manager advised that the amendment to the ordinance is adding a section under 5.01-Streets. This will include streets for Residential Lane undivided. The City currently does not have anything for an estate-type road with open ditches instead of curb and gutter. There has been a company that is within the ETJ that is planning a large development on five and ten acre tracts. This is not cost effective for the developer to build curb and gutter. This amendment will add a 28ft residential, two-lane, undivided estate road. The City is also allowing an option of asphalt instead of concrete. This is basically 8 to 12 inches of subgrade, 5 inches base asphalt, 2 inch surface coat, and concrete edge restrains on both sides.

The City Manager advised that the Planning & Zoning Commission approved with one Board Member, Russell Martin, who voted against it because of the asphalt street.

Councilman Ervin expressed his opposition concerning the asphalt streets. The City Council had the same problem with Indian Springs. The City has had to make major street repairs recently in that subdivision. The concern is there were still a lot of streets in town that needed to be repaired. If a developer can afford to put concrete edges then they can afford the concrete road. The streets that were currently done with asphalt in the City are already having the edges falling off.

The City Manager indicated he does not have a problem with an asphalt road as long as it is done correctly. He emphasized if the road is done correctly it will work. He indicated since the City has an engineer on staff this can be monitored more efficiently than in the past.

Discussion followed concerning Indian Springs Subdivision. The subdivision put in asphalt roads when it was developed. The City currently spent capital improvements funds in road repairs in that subdivision.

Councilman Ervin indicated that when Steve Koch approached Council a few months ago the Council would not allow him to put asphalt streets. This ordinance contradicts what the Council told him. He expressed a concern that in some future

date if these subdivisions are annexed into the City and the roads are falling apart, it will be responsibility of the City to repair those roads. This is at the expense of the taxpayers.

There was discussion concerning asphalt and concrete roads. The Council continued to express concerns regarding the asphalt roads; however, they did not have an issue with open ditches as long as they are maintained.

Councilman Muir indicated that in the Choctaw Ridge Subdivision the streets are asphalt, and they do not look bad.

There was a lengthy discussion concerning open ditches and culverts, and making sure they are monitored closely. Property that is within our ETJ, future annexations, and the consequences of allowing asphalt streets.

Councilman Garza indicated that the ordinance needs to be followed for property within our ETJ. The City does not need to make allowances every time someone comes in and makes a request that it be changed.

The discussion continued concerning certain subdivisions that are within our ETJ that currently have asphalt streets.

City Manager advised that the City does not have a rural residential street section. Most cities have this in place. The big issue for a developer who wants to develop larger lots is the drainage issues. This is where it can become cost prohibited.

The Council discussed that it will cost the same amount of money to put in asphalt streets versus concrete.

The Council was in agreement that they prefer the concrete streets in rural residential areas. This is to include 1 ½ acreage plus lots and will not require curb and gutter.

City Manager advised he will bring this back to Council.

4. Overview of Items on Regular Agenda.

Councilman Ervin asked if the City was to buy an ice machine would it not be more cost effective than leasing.

The City Manager advised this is a high maintenance item and he has done a comparison. The City Manager indicated this was actually the best option.

Councilman Muir had a question concerning the tax rate and the revenues in the budget that was clarified by the City Manager.

Councilman Garza's question concerned Item (d) Pro-rata agreement for the Marion Road Lift Station. He wanted to make sure the City is not responsible for payment until it is collected.

City Manager indicated that he was correct. The pro-rata is for ten years.

5. Adjournment.

Mayor adjourned the work session.