

**CITY OF VIDOR  
VIDOR CITY COUNCIL  
REGULAR MEETING  
AUGUST 26, 2021**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Mayor Misty Songe  
Councilmember Nicole McGowan  
Councilmember Jerry Aldridge  
Councilmember Jessica Barker  
Councilmember Gary Herrera  
Councilmember Jane Hill

**MEMBERS ABSENT:**

Councilmember Kelly Carder

**Administrative Personnel:** Robbie Hood, City Manager; Vicki Watson, City Secretary; Chris Leavins, City Attorney; Cheryl Ray, Supervisor of Finance & Accounting; and Rod Carroll, Chief of Police

**A. OPENING, PRESENTATIONS, AND CITIZENS COMMENTS**

**A -1. Call to order and the establishment of a Quorum**

A quorum was present, and the Regular Meeting of the Vidor City Council began at 7:00 p.m., Mayor Songe presiding.

**A -2. Invocation and Pledge to the United States Flag and the State of Texas Flag**

Chris Leavins, City Attorney, gave the Invocation and led the Pledge to the United States Flag and the State of Texas Flag.

**A -3. Citizen Comments**

Robbie Hood (City Manager), 805 Westbrook, addressed Council regarding the successful Texas Music Friendly Community Designation ceremony held on Tuesday, August 24, 2021. Mr. Hood stated Chip Adams, Texas Music Office, texted him that night after he got back to Austin and stated the event was topnotch and compared us to the big cities. Mr. Hood displayed the star with the Texas Music Friendly logo on one side and Where the Music Began on the back and explained a larger version of the star will be available for businesses in Vidor to purchase. Mr. Hood also showed Council the Proclamations received from Congressman Brian Babin and Dade Phelan, Speaker of the House of Representatives, as well as the Designation Certificate from the Texas Music Office.

**B. COUNCIL CONSENT AGENDA**

**B -1. Approval of Accounts Paid:**

<b>Paid Invoices:</b>	<b>General Fund - \$186,122.91</b>
	<b>MCBSF - \$70.82</b>
	<b>Emergency Management - \$156.48</b>
	<b>Juvenile Case Manager Fund - \$149.89</b>
	<b>Sanitation Fund - \$14,741.45</b>

**B -2. Approval of Minutes: Regular Meeting – August 12, 2021**

**B -3. Ratification of the transfer of funds from Interest & Sinking 2013 General Obligation Refunding Bonds-Capital One Bank account to Interest & Sinking 2008/2016 General Obligation Refunding Bonds-TexPool account in the following amounts:**

**August 16, 2021:                 \$ 1,874.11**

**August 23, 2021:                 \$ 286.36**

**B -4. Ratification of the payment of the monthly sales tax in the amount of \$6,219.96 for July out of General Account/Pooled Cash**

**B -5. Ratification of the transfer of funds from the Disaster Fund to the Coronavirus Local Fiscal Recovery Funds (CLFRF) in the amount of \$1,288,858.62**

A motion was made by Councilmember Herrera, seconded by Councilmember Aldridge, to **APPROVE THE COUNCIL CONSENT AGENDA AS PRESENTED.** The Council voted six (6) for and none (0) opposed. The motion carried.

**C. COUNCIL REGULAR AGENDA**

**C -1. PUBLIC HEARING to show just cause why the buildings, dwelling, or structures located at 3060 Ward, Vidor, Texas, should not be demolished or repaired in accordance with the Ordinances of the City of Vidor, Texas**

*This agenda item was skipped.*

**C -2. Consideration and possible approval of an Ordinance finding certain buildings, dwellings and/or structures located at 3060 Ward, Vidor, Texas, to be public nuisances and ordering the demolition and/or repair of buildings, dwellings, or structures; providing for severability and providing for a penalty**

*This agenda item was skipped.*

**C -3. PUBLIC HEARING to show just cause why the buildings, dwelling, or structures located at 130 Horton, Vidor, Texas, should not be demolished or repaired in accordance with the Ordinances of the City of Vidor, Texas**

Mayor Songe opened the **PUBLIC HEARING to show just cause why the buildings, dwelling, or structures located at 130 Horton, Vidor, Texas, should not be demolished or repaired in accordance with the Ordinances of the City of Vidor, Texas** at 7:06 p.m.

When questioned by Chris Leavins, City Attorney, Richard Oldbury, Assistant Code Enforcement Officer, explained the property located at 130 Horton was inspected on June 8, 2015, and again on August 23, 2021. Mr. Oldbury stated the structure has been vacant for years, flooded in Harvey and possibly Imelda, and is open and accessible. Mr. Oldbury displayed pictures for the audience and Council showing the condition of the structure and property. Mr. Oldbury stated the property continues to be in violation of Chapter 10 of the Vidor Code of Ordinances and the structure meets the definition of a dangerous structure as defined under Section 10-271. Mr. Oldbury stated the structure also meets the definition of a substandard structure and cannot be brought into compliance at a cost of less than 50% of the fair market value. Mr. Oldbury confirmed all notices regarding the violations were sent to the property owners (*Wayne M. & Lucille Ruggles*) on June 29, 2021, but no permits have been pulled or repairs made.

Mayor Songe asked if there were any persons in the audience with an interest in the property, but there were none. There were no questions or comments from Council, and Ms. Songe closed the **PUBLIC HEARING to show just cause why the buildings, dwelling, or structures located at 130 Horton, Vidor, Texas, should not be demolished or repaired in accordance with the Ordinances of the City of Vidor, Texas** at 7:12 p.m.

**C -4. Consideration and possible approval of an Ordinance finding certain buildings, dwellings and/or structures located at 130 Horton, Vidor, Texas, to be public nuisances and ordering the demolition and/or repair of buildings, dwellings, or structures; providing for severability and providing for a penalty**

A motion was made by Councilmember Aldridge, seconded by Councilmember McGowan, **to approve the Ordinance.** The Council voted five (5) for and none (0) opposed. The motion carried.

Mr. Leavins advised that since one of the Council members was absent tonight, this will have to come back to Council for a second reading and final passage at the next meeting.

**C -5. Public Hearing - on the proposed tax rate for the City of Vidor for fiscal year 2021-2022**

*This agenda item was skipped.*

**C -6. Public Hearing – on the proposed fiscal year 2021-2022 budget for the City of Vidor**

Mayor Songe opened the **Public Hearing – on the proposed fiscal year 2021-2022 budget for the City of Vidor** at 7:13 p.m.

Cheryl Ray, Supervisor of Finance & Accounting, stated, *“We are going to go over the changes since the first draft of the general fund budget was presented on July 22, 2021:*

- 1. The first draft of the budget was drafted on the preliminary taxable value of \$478,619,965 at a tax rate of .70371. The second draft of the budget was drafted on the certified taxable value of \$461,451,886 (a decrease in value of \$17,168,079) at a tax rate of .69190, which would generate \$2,453,781. From draft one to draft two, property tax revenue increased by \$256,766 in the General Fund (page 13).*
- 2. Decreased payroll costs by \$2,275 by adjusting worker’s compensation amounts to those provided by Texas Municipal League Intergovernmental Risk Pool*
- 3. Increased liability and property insurance costs by \$10,780 to those provided by Texas Municipal League Intergovernmental Risk Pool*
- 4. Increased vehicle and equipment maintenance line items by \$9,495 to add Verizon equipment trackers*
- 5. For the Sanitation Fund, we decreased worker’s compensation costs by \$410, increased liability/property insurance by \$602, and increased vehicle and equipment maintenance costs by \$850 for Verizon equipment trackers*
- 6. Current Fiscal Year Revenue over Expenditures 20/21 column & Projected 9/30/2021 columns were changed*

*We adopt the budget on Thursday, September 23<sup>rd</sup>.*

*Total Revenues for the proposed 2021/2022 proposed budget year are: General Fund -\$7,095,360; Debt Service Funds - \$455,500; Special Revenue Funds - \$25,410,504; and Sanitation Fund - \$ 1,110,750. The total revenues budgeted for all funds is \$34,072,114.*

*Total expenditures for the proposed 2021/2022 budget year: General Fund - \$7,596,544; Debt Service Funds - \$525,094; Special Revenue Funds - \$26,269,675; Sanitation Fund - \$1,093,830. The total expenditures budgeted for all funds is \$35,485,143.”*

Robbie Hood, City Manager, stated \$150,000 for street projects was budgeted in the initial draft of the budget, but after talking with Ms. Ray, that amount was moved to \$250,000. Mr. Hood stated this will allow us to do about a mile of road next fiscal year. Discussion ensued.

Ms. Ray stated other minor changes in the next budget will include animal control, HOT funds, and a couple of other things. Ms. Ray stated we will bring Council one more budget before we are done.

Mayor Songe asked if there were any further questions or comments. When none were presented, she closed the **Public Hearing – on the proposed fiscal year 2021-2022 budget for the City of Vidor** at 7:17 p.m. Mr. Hood spoke up at the same time and briefly updated Council regarding the sanitation truck that Council approved purchasing at the last meeting. Mr. Hood stated the truck was ordered the following morning, and we actually received more insurance revenue for the sanitation truck that was wrecked than we were expecting (right at \$79,000 and the option to keep the truck or sell it). Mr. Hood also stated we received the first half of the ARP (*American Rescue Plan*) funds (*\$1.3 million*). After a brief discussion ensued, Mayor Songe closed the **Public Hearing – on the proposed fiscal year 2021-2022 budget for the City of Vidor** at 7:21 p.m.

**C -7. Consideration and possible action resulting from the public hearing on the City’s proposed tax rate for fiscal year 2021-2022**

*This agenda item was skipped.*

**C -8. Consideration and possible action resulting from the public hearing on the City’s proposed 2021-2022 budget**

A motion was made by Councilmember McGowan, seconded by Councilmember Herrera, to **postpone taking action**. The Council voted five (5) for and none (0) opposed. The motion carried.

**C -9. Consideration and possible approval of A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF VIDOR, TEXAS IN COMPLIANCE WITH CHAPTER 102, LOCAL GOVERNMENT CODE PROVIDING FOR THE ADOPTION OF A BUDGET THAT WILL REQUIRE RAISING MORE REVENUE FROM PROPERTY TAXES FOR FISCAL YEAR 2021-2022 THAN WERE RAISED IN FISCAL YEAR 2020-2021; PROVIDING FOR THE REPEAL OF ANY AND ALL RESOLUTIONS IN CONFLICT; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY CLAUSE; AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE**

Cheryl Ray, Supervisor of Finance & Accounting, stated this is not saying we are adopting the budget tonight; it is stating we realize we are going to adopt a budget that will increase the total taxes, not the tax rate, that are in the budget.

Chris Leavins, City Attorney, explained it is part of the transparency acts. Mr. Leavins stated this is one of the statements that is required, and upon the advice of TML (*Texas Municipal League*) a couple of years ago, they suggest passing a Resolution notifying that this is what is most likely going to happen. Robbie Hood, City Manager, explained we are not raising the tax rate (the multiplier), we actually went down, but the value of the property increased.

A motion was made by Councilmember McGowan, seconded by Councilmember Aldridge, **to approve the Resolution**. The Council voted five (5) for and none (0) opposed. The motion carried.

**C-10. Consideration and possible action to approve a Resolution creating the Cadet position within the City of Vidor Police Department**

Rod Carroll, Chief of Police, stated during the 2021 negotiations with the Police Association, he asked if they would consider having a cadet, which would be a full-time employee that we send to the Police Academy. Chief Carroll explained an employee in the dispatcher center finished her bachelor's degree in criminal justice. Chief Carroll stated with her coming from inside of the department and the Association having a say in it, it was good for morale. Chief Carroll explained this will give us someone who is cross trained in dispatch and as a police officer. Chief Carroll stated her wages will remain the same as the dispatcher pay while she completes her training, but after completion of her training and TCOLE certification, she will transition from dispatch to officer pay per the CBA (*Collective Bargaining Agreement*). Chief Carroll stated the cost of the academy is \$2,800, a large portion of which is picked up by the Regional Planning Commission and explained if she does not stay with the Department for two years after completion, she will have to pay us back. A brief discussion ensued.

Chief Carroll stated she is also bilingual, which is a plus. Chief Carroll explained with everything going on today, young people are not going into police work and stated Lumberton, Port Neches, and Nederland are all sponsoring cadets this year. Robbie Hood, City Manager, explained this will be creating the position which will be added to the flow chart, so if they decide to do this in the future, we will only have to ask for funding.

A motion was made by Councilmember McGowan, seconded by Councilmember Aldridge, **to approve the Resolution creating the cadet position**. The Council voted five (5) for and none (0) opposed. The motion carried.

**C-11. Consideration and possible action to approve a Resolution approving the First Amended City Manager Employment Agreement**

Chris Leavins, City Attorney, explained the agreement is basically the same as what is in place, but changes were made to the term. Mr. Leavins stated it will now go through September 30, 2026, instead of September 30, 2022. Mr. Leavins stated the date and spelling of the name will be corrected in the Resolution; however, the contract is correct. Mr. Leavins explained the only other change was under Section 4 (*Salary*). Mr. Leavins stated a provision was added that the City Manager gets the same across-the-board increase as the other employees for the duration of the contract, but if Council chose to do a flat amount, that would still be okay.

Councilmember Herrera made a motion **to approve the Resolution**. Councilmember Barker seconded. The Council voted five (5) for and none (0) opposed. The motion carried.

**C-12. Consideration and possible approval of AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF VIDOR, TEXAS AMENDING THE CODE OF ORDINANCES BY AMENDING CHAPTER 22. – ENVIRONMENT, ARTICLE III. – JUNKED, WRECKED OR ABANDONED PROPERTY, REGARDING VIOLATIONS, NOTICE AND ENFORCEMENT; PROVIDING FOR A PENALTY; PROVIDING FOR REPEAL OF CONFLICTING ORDINANCES; PROVIDING FOR A SEVERABILITY CLAUSE; PROVIDING FOR PUBLICATION AND AN EFFECTIVE DATE**

Chris Leavins, City Attorney, stated this will have to come back for a second reading, as well. Mr. Leavins explained the substance of the Ordinance is not changing, but the process is. Mr. Leavins stated this is an effort to simplify things for Code Enforcement and the Police Department. Mr. Leavins noted a change to Section 22.85 – Exceptions, subsection (2). Mr. Leavins stated the Police Chief suggested adding wording that the licensed vehicle dealer is selling vehicles on that property.

Linda Cathey, Code Enforcement Officer, stated in the past, all they could do was write citations, but once this is passed, they can begin pulling the junked vehicles. Ms. Cathey clarified they will start with the vacant lots. Ms. Cathey explained under the current Ordinance, when a structure is demolished, the junked vehicle has to stay and used 130 Horton as an example. A lengthy discussion ensued.

A motion was made by Councilmember McGowan, seconded by Councilmember Aldridge, **to approve the Ordinance.** The Council voted five (5) for and none (0) opposed. The motion carried.

**C-13. Consideration and possible approval of an ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF VIDOR, TEXAS AMENDING THE CODE OF ORDINANCES BY AMENDING CHAPTER 10. – BUILDINGS AND BUILDING REGULATIONS, ARTICLE III. – HOUSING STANDARDS AND SUBSTANDARD OR DANGEROUS STRUCTURES OR BUILDINGS, REGARDING VIOLATIONS, NOTICE AND ENFORCEMENT; PROVIDING FOR A PENALTY; PROVIDING FOR REPEAL OF CONFLICTING ORDINANCES; PROVIDING FOR A SEVERABILITY CLAUSE; PROVIDING FOR PUBLICATION AND AN EFFECTIVE DATE**

Chris Leavins, City Attorney, stated this is a similar type of restructuring and is simplifying the process for dwellings and other structures that need to be abated, repaired, and/or demolished. Mr. Leavins discussed the process under the current Ordinances. Mr. Leavins explained this will dwindle the process down as the notice will be sent and the hearing set at the same time. Mr. Leavins stated it is not cutting down the notice, only the waiting period between the notices. Discussion ensued.

Robbie Hood, City Manager, stated we are trying to streamline the process as everything will be included in the first letter. Mr. Hood stated this is just keeping us from having to send out multiple certified letters.

Councilmember McGowan made a motion **to approve the Ordinance.** Councilmember Aldridge seconded. The Council voted five (5) for and none (0) opposed. The motion carried.

**C-14. Update and discussion regarding Neighborhood Enforcement and Traffic Program (NEAT)**

Rod Carroll, Chief of Police, stated it has been slow and explained several people in the department have been out with COVID and another officer will be returning tomorrow after having a stroke and being out several weeks. Chief Carroll stated he has only been able to man one man a week over the past three weeks due to so many being out and trying to keep patrol staffed.

Councilmember Herrera asked for a report showing how many hours were worked, which streets were included, and how many hours are left, and Chief Carroll stated he would get the data compiled. Robbie Hood, City Manager, stated it is a great program, and we will get it kick started with a lot of publicity earlier next year, way in advance of school letting out for the summer. A brief discussion ensued.

**C-15. Consideration of Adjournment**

A motion was made by Councilmember McGowan, seconded by Councilmember Barker, for **Consideration of Adjournment**. The Council voted five (5) for and none (0) opposed. The motion carried, and the Regular Meeting of the Vidor City Council adjourned at 7:54 p.m.

*These minutes approved September 9, 2021.*

  
Misty Songe, Mayor

ATTEST:

  
Vicki Watson, City Secretary