

Walnut Grove City Council
Municipal Building – 1021 Park St.
Public Hearing (Budget)
Thursday, June 11, 2020
6:30 P.M.

Present: Mayor Mark Moore, Linda Pilgrim, and Stephanie Moncrief

Also Present: City Clerk Tangee Puckett, City Attorney Mike Malcom & Jesse Couch

I. INVOCATION

Attorney Mike Malcom gave the invocation.

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGINACE

All participated in the pledge of allegiance.

III. CALL TO ORDER

Meeting called to order by Mayor Mark Moore at 6:30 p.m.

IV. AGENDA APPROVAL

Councilmember Stephanie Moncrief made a motion to approve the agenda as presented. Councilmember Linda Pilgrim seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

V. PUBLIC COMMENT

Mayor Mark Moore gave a breakdown of the City's finances. The City has 5 bank accounts.

- 1) Downtown Development Authority – Balance of \$91,373. This balance has been there since we had a Downtown Development Authority. The money can not be used for anything other than to build our downtown.
- 2) 2013 SPLOST (Special Local Option Sales Tax) – This money is used for roads and sewer purposes only. The balance as of 5/30/20 is \$74,204.97. The remaining balance will pay the GEFA loan. This loan was used to build the sewer plant. There is about 20 months left to pay at \$3,482.33 a month.
- 3) 2019 SPLOST – As of 5/30/20 the balance was \$121,607.95. This money is allocated for sidewalks and roads. We currently paved the sidewalks with this fund. This amount will grow as we get money from Walton County. We get money from the 7% sales tax everyone pays.

- 4) Money Market Account – (Savings Account) – The balance as of 5/30/20 is \$594,037.64. By law we have to have 4 months’ worth of reserves.
- 5) General Operating Fund – Balance as of 5/30/20 was \$251,354. We will keep funds in this account to cover in bills for the 2019 fiscal year. We could move the access over to the money market account to draw interest.

Public Comments –

Maxine McClanahan – 4081 Habersham Circle – I tend to review the budget every year and bring to the council my suggestions. Library – disappointed the library fund was not increased, considering the library is important to the City. It’s important the community support the library. I know we started at \$60,000 and it was lowered. There are other places we could move the money from. For instance, the health benefits of \$10,000 could be removed and used towards the library. I’m not saying benefits to the employees are not important and you could look at this in the future. LOST receivables – you allocated \$190,000 on the proposed budget. As of to date you show \$158,660, I don’ know if this includes the last payment. That’s \$30,000 less than what you anticipated for the 20-21 budget. I do not see any losses due to COVID. I have called around to other communities to see what they were doing, and they are given an allowance of about 12% to help recover from COVID. Sanitation Bills – I have mixed emotions with waiving the sanitation bills. I also called around to other communities. I asked the question “what are your thoughts in waiving the sanitation bills for a year instead of a property tax reduction”? I did explain we only had sanitation bills. I had a lot of different responses. All the comments were not in support of this change.

Mayor asked if there were any further comments or questions. There were none.

Mayor when you do a mill rate rollback, it cuts the tax income all across the board for both commercial and residential. I would love to cut the mill rate for residents, but I can’t cut for one and not the other. So how else can we reduce the cost to our residents, especially residents on a fixed income without losing revenue for our businesses? This is just a start. We have in our budget \$101,000 to do improvements in the City.

Mayor asked again if there were any questions.

Maxine McClanahan are you proposing with the new sanitation bills that the business would not be included only residents? Mayor Moore answered, you are correct. We have negotiated with our current sanitation company (our contract does not start over until January 2021) and will also be sending it out for bids. The advantage will be the sanitation company will have exclusive rights to the City of Walnut Grove citizens. There has been a miscommunication, at this time they do not. We will also have the opportunity to allow our businesses to get a better rate. This is a benefit for them.

Maxine McClanahan asked if there would be a time the Mayor would discuss specific line items? There are a few line items different from this budget then the one she was sent. Mayor Moore asked what line item, she stated the public works salary. Mayor Moore noted this was a misunderstanding. I did not increase the public works salary to increase the income for my workers. I am considering bringing in a third person, part time. The part time worker will also be our janitor.

The public hearing was closed at 6:56 pm.

VI. Adjourn

Motion made by Councilmember Stephanie Moncrief to adjourn at 6:56 p.m.
Councilmember Linda Pilgrim seconded. The vote was unanimous.

Approved by Mayor and Council this _____ day of July 2020.

Mayor Steven Mark Moore

Tangee B. Puckett, City Clerk