

The Austwell City Council met for its regular monthly meeting on Tuesday, July 26, 2022 at the Community Center. Mayor Andy Biery called the meeting to order at 6:02 PM and led the pledge of allegiance to the flag. He announced the upcoming workday on Saturday, July 30, focusing on projects at the wastewater plant and the baseball field at the park.

**Item 4: Public Comments**

No citizens signed up for public comments.

**Item 5: Staff Reports**

**A. City Secretary**

1. Fund balances in City accounts at Wells Fargo Bank
2. Report of \$5000 donation from J. Keng

**B. Water Systems Director Rene Rodriguez** reported on the recent problems at the water plant. Sediment was found in screens in the pressure tanks that were cleaned about one year ago. The city should consider replacement of the aging water system, and this year's budget starts to put money aside in preparation for future water system adjustments.

**C. County Commissioner Blaine Wolfshohl** announced that there would be a temporary closure of the bayfront area while work is being done on the area that will become the bayfront park.

**D. Vickie Whitaker** reported that her accounting firm has prepared documents for an audit of 2021 financial records. She is in the process of looking for an auditor to review City of Austwell finances, but it may take two to three months to accomplish the audit. She recommended that the city stay current in regard to reporting information requested by state agencies.

**Item 6: Minutes for June 21, 2022**

In regard to "Item 17: Sell the storage building" from the June meeting, Mayor Biery announced that the storage building that had previously been located next to the Community Center had been sold for \$2,650 and that it had been removed from the city.

In regard to the "Item 21: Authorization to transfer all accounts to First National Bank: Port Lavaca" from the June meeting, he announced that an account had been opened at First National and that bank representatives had visited with City of Austwell officials to collect signatures and discuss plans for future services that the bank could provide. Motion to accept the minutes of the June 21, 2022, meeting was made by Commissioner Ancira, seconded by Commissioner Torres, and passed unanimously.

**Item 7: Adopt Tax Discount Rate**

Communication has been received from the County Tax Assessor-Collector's office regarding discount rates for the October, November, and December payments of the 2022 tax collections and/or split payment of taxes. Motion was made by Commissioner Torres to accept the discount rates proposed by the county tax assessor's suggested discount rates and split payment proposal. Motion seconded by Commissioner Ancira and passed unanimously.

**Item 8: Frontier Service Contract**

Following discussion of the cost of the city's current telephone service, Commissioner Ancira moved that council members study provisions and costs of other providers. Commissioner Torres seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

**Item 9: TCAP Electricity Resolution**

The city's existing five-year contract to purchase power through the Texas Coalition for Affordable Power, Inc. ends on December 31, 2022. Motion was made by Commissioner Ancira

to allow a thirty-day investigation period to compare TCAP rates with the costs of other service providers. Motion seconded by Commissioner Torres and passed unanimously.

**Item 10: Increased Minimum Water Bill Rate**

Following discussion regarding methods of raising city income, Commissioner Torres moved that the issue of increasing the minimum water bill rate be tabled until the next meeting. Motion seconded by Commissioner Ancira and passed unanimously.

**Item 11: City Tax Rate**

Discussion of the items included in the city's Income and Expense listings were reviewed. The Council also invited citizens' suggestions for additional sources of revenue. Commissioner Torres moved that this item be tabled until the next meeting. Commissioner Ancira seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

**Item 12: Take Action: Post Proposed 2022-23 First Draft Budget**

Motion was made by Commissioner Ancira to make the suggested changes in the current proposed budget and to make fifteen (15) copies of the adjusted budget available at the post office and fifteen (15) copies available at city hall. Second by Commissioner Torres. Motion carried unanimously.

**Item 13: Adjournment**

Mayor Andy Biery declared the meeting adjourned at 8:30 PM.