

**MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL SESSION MEETING OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF JERSEY VILLAGE, TEXAS, HELD ON SEPTEMBER 28, 2020 AT 7:00 P.M. AT THE CITY OF JERSEY VILLAGE CIVIC CENTER AUDITORIUM, 16327 LAKEVIEW DRIVE, JERSEY VILLAGE, TEXAS 77040.**

**A. CALL TO ORDER AND ANNOUNCE A QUORUM IS PRESENT**

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Mitcham at 7:08 p.m. with the following present:

|                                  |                             |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Mayor, Andrew Mitcham            | City Manager, Austin Bless  |
| Council Member, Drew Wasson      | City Secretary, Lorri Coody |
| Council Member, Greg Holden      | City Attorney, Scott Bounds |
| Council Member, Bobby Warren     |                             |
| Council Member, James Singleton  |                             |
| Council Member, Gary Wubbenhorst |                             |

**B. CITIZENS' COMMENTS** - Any person who desires to address City Council regarding an item on the agenda will be heard at this time. In compliance with the Texas Open Meetings Act, unless the subject matter of the comment is on the agenda, the City staff and City Council Members are not allowed to discuss the subject. Each person is limited to five (5) minutes for comments to the City Council.

**Mark Maloy** – Mr. Maloy spoke to City Council about the City Charter and how he believes it limits resident input about approving or not approving large expenditures. In the past the Council has used Certificates of Obligation to get around bringing projects to the residents for a vote. He gave background information about various projects that Council has approved that were not brought to the public for a vote. He had many comments pertaining to the City's golf course and the berm project. He believes that the City, for many years, has set the tax rate higher than needed in order to accumulate many dollars for projects not voted on by the voters. He stated that Jersey Village has one of the highest tax rates in Texas without granting the residents the maximum exemptions. He wants City Council to give the residents the maximum tax exemptions.

**C. Conduct Public Hearing on proposed tax rate increase.**

Mayor Mitcham opened the public hearing at 7:13 p.m. in order to give all interested persons the right to express support for or opposition to the proposed tax rate of 0.723466 per \$100; a rate that exceeds the lower of the voter-approval rate or the no-new-revenue rate.

After opening the meeting, he called upon Isabel Kato, Finance Director to summarize the subject of the public hearing. Ms. Kato gave a presentation outlining the proposal to set the tax rate at 0.723466 per \$100; a rate that exceeds the lower of the voter-approval rate or the no-new-revenue rate.

In completing the Finance Director's presentation, Mayor Mitcham called upon those signing up to speak as follows:

**Michael Stenbridge** – Mr. Stenbridge spoke to City Council about the tax increase. He does not support the tax increase. He cannot afford the taxes. He does not support the New City

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Hall. He worries about evacuations. Currently we use the existing City Hall for evacuations. If we have to use the New City Hall, he is worried that he will not be able to get there. He cannot afford any higher taxes.

**Mark Maloy** – Mr. Maloy spoke to City Council about the City not giving the full 20% State allowed property tax exemption. He does not understand why employees are getting pay raises when many people are not working. He does not understand why City Council believes that with these things going on in the US that we should be giving pay raises this year. He also stated that the City is planning on doing expensive projects. He wants the tax payers to have a say whether the project should be done. He feels that the Council has taken and accumulated large amounts of money without having voter approval for projects. The Charter should be changed to permit the residents to vote on these projects such as City Hall and the Golf Course Convention Center.

With no other persons signing up to speak to express support for or opposition to the proposed tax rate of 0.723466 per \$100; a rate that exceeds the lower of the voter-approval rate or the no-new-revenue rate, Mayor Mitcham closed the public hearing at 7:25 p.m.

**D. Discuss and consider approval of a motion to set the tax rate for debt service for tax year 2020.**

There was discussion about the tax rate calculation process. Because of this process, the increase is about \$262,000 in revenues. The figure is the aggregate. The taxes will go down for some homeowners. If one's valuation does not change, then the taxes will go down. It was noted that this increase barely keeps in front of inflation. Also, the tax rate is going down from \$0.74250 per \$100 to 0.723466 per \$100.

The property valuation process was is under the control of Harris County. If residents are not happy, there is an appeal process.

Some members explained why we pay our employees, stating that there is a value to raises. There is a value to employees. Our experienced employees very well offset the cost. We have an experienced workforce.

There was limited discussion about increasing the exemptions during the next budget year.

With no further discussion on the matter, Council Member Singleton moved for approval of setting the Debt Service tax rate of \$.132072 per \$100 value for the year 2020. Council Member Wubbenhorst seconded the motion. The vote follows:

Ayes: Council Members Wasson, Holden, Warren, Singleton, and Wubbenhorst

Nays: None

The motion carried.

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**E. Discuss and consider approval of a motion to set the tax rate for maintenance and operation for tax year 2020.**

With limited discussion on the matter, Council Member Singleton moved to approve setting the Maintenance and Operation tax rate of \$.591394 per \$100 value for the year 2020. Council Member Wubbenhorst seconded the motion. The vote follows:

Ayes: Council Members Wasson, Holden, Warren, Singleton, and Wubbenhorst

Nays: None

The motion carried.

**F. Consider Ordinance No. 2020-23, providing for the levy and collection of ad valorem taxes by the City of Jersey Village, Texas, for the year 2020.**

With limited discussion on the matter, Council Member Wubbenhorst moved to approve Ordinance No. 2020-23 providing for the levy and collection of ad valorem taxes by the City of Jersey Village, Texas, for the year 2020; providing for the date on which such taxes shall be due and payable; and providing for penalty and interest on all taxes not timely paid. I further move that property taxes be increased by the adoption of a tax rate of \$0.723466, which is effectively a 4.91 percent increase in the tax rate. Council Member Singleton seconded the motion. The record vote follows:

|                        |     |                             |     |
|------------------------|-----|-----------------------------|-----|
| Council Member Wasson: | Aye | Council Member Singleton:   | Aye |
| Council Member Holden: | Aye | Council Member Wubbenhorst: | Aye |
| Council Member Warren: | Aye |                             |     |

Mayor Mitcham, although present, did not vote.

The motion carried.

ORDINANCE NO. 2020-23

AN ORDINANCE PROVIDING FOR THE LEVY AND COLLECTION OF AD VALOREM TAXES BY THE CITY OF JERSEY VILLAGE, TEXAS, FOR THE YEAR 2020; PROVIDING FOR THE DATE ON WHICH SUCH TAXES SHALL BE DUE AND PAYABLE; PROVIDING FOR PENALTY AND INTEREST ON ALL TAXES NOT TIMELY PAID; REPEALING ALL ORDINANCES OR PARTS OF ORDINANCES INCONSISTENT OR IN CONFLICT HEREWITH; AND PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY.

**G. Adjourn**

There being no further business on the Agenda the meeting was adjourned at 7:34 p.m.



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Lorri Coody, City Secretary