

CITY OF COOPER  
CITY COUNCIL MEETING – PUBLIC HEARING AND REGULAR MEETING  
AUGUST 12, 2024 – 5:30 PM

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT: DARREN BRADY; MAYOR, DAVID PHILLIPS, SCOTTY DEATHERAGE, LINDA BARNES AND JOSH HOSKISON

CITY ATTORNEY: JAY GARRETT

OTHERS PRESENT: EMILY HOWSE, KAREN ATKINS, SUSAN RASER, LISA SPRAGUE, RICKY CAUTHEN, VANESSA CAUTHEN, DUANE STANLEY, MELISSA MILLARD, TANNER CRUTCHER, CAROLYN BACY ROBERTS, TRECIA FREEMAN, CECIL DUCKWORTH, JUDY FALLS, SAM FALLS, AND VIA ZOOM ASHLEY COLVIN, CITK, LINDA IPHONE, ALVAREZ, IPHONE 2, IPAD

ABSENT: DIANE STEGALL

AGENDA ITEM #1

Darren Braddy opened the public hearing to discuss a zoning variance change for DCAD Property ID #5530 and the Re-Plat for DCAD Property ID #6002. Darren stated that the zoning variance would allow a beauty shop to be placed between 701 S.W. 1<sup>st</sup> and 751 S.W. 1<sup>st</sup> that would have parking in the back. Darren stated that there was room to allow this variance. Darren also stated that the steps to allow this variance had not been completed at this time.

Ricky Cauthen and Duane Stanley stated that they did not want this variance to be allowed. There were no further comments.

AGENDA ITEM #2

Darren Braddy closed the public hearing at 5:35 PM

AGENDA ITEM #3

Mayor Darren Braddy called the regular meeting to order and Darren also voiced the prayer.

AGENDA ITEM #4

No comments on the agenda items were made.

AGENDA ITEM #5

Josh Hoskison made the motion to approve the July 8, 2024 public hearing and regular meeting minutes and the July 23, 2024 budget work session minutes as written. Scotty Deatherage seconded. David Phillips abstained. Vote carried.

AGENDA ITEM #6

Mayor Darren Braddy stated that, after many interviews, it was his desire to hire Cecil Duckworth as the City Foreman. Mayor Braddy stated that Cecil was completely honest in stating that he had no water or sewer utility knowledge, but he was willing and capable of obtaining the education and license required for this position. Mayor Braddy stated that Cecil would have to have two years of experience before he could obtain his full capacity of license required. Mayor Braddy also stated that if the license could not be obtained within the required timeframe, then the city would have to take reorganizational steps. Mayor Darren Braddy stated that he had no concern that Cecil

Duckworth wouldn't be able to obtain the required license in the allotted time frame. Mayor Braddy stated that Cecil Duckworth would report to the mayor and not the council, but the council must approve the action of hiring a department head position.

Mayor Braddy also stated that, former City Foreman, Elmo Robinson was willing to continue training if the city would continue paying for his license and education membership until his services were no longer needed.

Josh Hoskison made the motion to approve the appointment of Cecil Duckworth to the City Foreman position. David Phillips seconded. Vote unanimous.

#### AGENDA ITEM #7

Tanner Crutcher presented the council with information that the fire department had been notified that their SAFER (Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response) grant from FEMA had been awarded. The department had applied for the grant in 2022 and was denied. The department hired a grant writing firm for \$1,500 and were successful this application cycle. The grant award was in the amount of \$657,410.31 which would allow the department to hire three full-time firefighters. The Cooper Fire Department was one of only five fire departments in the United States to receive the grant funding this past award cycle, and one of only two in Texas with the other being the City of Marble Falls. The grant covers the salary and benefits for the three full-time employees for a 3-year performance period, beginning in January, 2025 and ending in January, 2028. After the 3-year period, it would be the responsibilities of the entities to continue funding the positions. Crutcher emphasized that he wanted to ensure that all three entities involved would be committed to the continuity and continuation of the positions after the grant's performance period. Crutcher stated the amount that it would cost each entity varied on the different coverage scenarios with the best coverage being around \$88,000 per entity and the cheaper scenario that still provided 24-hour coverage, with only one person on the nights and weekends was around \$57,000 per entity. This would be in addition to the amounts already budgeted by each entity. Crutcher stated the full budget impact would not occur until FY 2029 and only a partial (70%) impact in FY 2028. The grant does not allow for any staff to be reduced during the grant's performance period. Crutcher stated the award was given on August 2, 2024 and the department had thirty days to accept the award, 180 days to complete the rigorous hiring process and to have the personnel on staff, and a pre-roster of current staff had to be submitted by Friday, August 16th. Crutcher stated he had met with Mayor Braddy, City Secretary Emily Howse, and two members of the ESD Board earlier in the afternoon to present different funding scenarios post-award. The ESD Board was receptive and supportive of the program and the proposal. Mayor Braddy and other council members spoke about the desire to provide better coverage, the positive impact the firefighter staffing program has had thus far, and the city's desire to support this program.

Josh Hoskison made a motion to table the item until the upcoming budget work session so the council could further analyze the different funding scenarios. David Phillips seconded. Vote unanimous. Crutcher asked that the item be placed on the budget work session agenda as an action item. Mayor Braddy stated he would make sure it was listed as an action item.

#### AGENDA ITEM #8

David Phillips made the motion to table the approval of Ordinance #01-08-24 re-zoning DCAD Property ID #5530 until the proper steps for such is complete. Josh Hoskison seconded. Vote unanimous.

AGENDA ITEM #9

Mayor Darren Braddy presented Ordinance #02-08-24 for approval to re-plat DCAD Property ID #6002. Mayor Braddy stated that the Planning & Zoning Commission had met on July 22, 2024 and approved this action. Mayor Braddy stated that there is ample room for the setbacks to allow this change.

Linda Barnes made the motion to read Ordinance #02-08-24 by caption. Josh Hoskison seconded. Vote unanimous. City Attorney, Jay Garrett, read:

**ORDINANCE #02-08-24  
AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF COOPER,  
TEXAS, APPROVING THE FINAL PLAT FOR REPLAT OF A PORTION OF  
LOTS 4 & 5, BLOCK 42 OF THE SUBDIVISION OF OLD TOWN ADDITION.**

Scotty Deatherage made the motion to approve Ordinance #02-08-24 authorizing the re-plat of DCAD Property ID #6002. Linda Barnes seconded. Vote unanimous.

AGENDA ITEM #10

Mayor Darren Braddy presented Ordinance #03-08-24 for adoption the updated water conservation plan and drought contingency plans. Mayor Braddy stated that Hayter Engineering updated the plan as required by Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) and Texas Water Development Board (TWDB).

Josh Hoskison made the motion to read Ordinance #03-08-24 by caption. David Phillips seconded. Vote unanimous. City Attorney, Jay Garrett, read:

**ORDINANCE # 03-08-24**

**AN ORDINANCE OF THE COOPER CITY COUNCIL AMENDING ORDINANCE #04-08-19 UPDATING A WATER CONSERVATION PLAN WHICH INCLUDES A WHOLESALE DROUGHT CONTINGENCY PLAN AND RETAIL DROUGHT CONTINGENCY PLAN ALONG WITH ANY MODIFICATIONS REQUIRED BY TCEQ OR TWDB**

Linda Barnes made the motion to approve Ordinance #03-08-24 adopting the 5-year update to the water conservation plan and drought contingency plans as presented along with any modifications required by TCEQ or TWDB. Josh Hoskison seconded. Vote unanimous.

AGENDA ITEM #11

Mayor Darren Braddy presented to the council that the city's electricity contract would be expiring in June 2025. Mayor Braddy stated that the new rates will be substantially higher than it is currently. Mayor Braddy stated that the increase is reflected in the upcoming budget, but it is his desire to lock in the best pricing before the deadline. Mayor Braddy stated that several brokers have been price searching and the city needs to make a decision of which broker to select to continue this process. Emily Howse stated that there is a blend and extend option for cities which would allow the price to be lowered if the price drops below the contracted cost at the time of signing.

Josh Hoskison made the motion to allow, Mayor Darren Braddy, to obtain the best pricing for the benefit of the City of Cooper and sign the contract to reflect such. Scotty Deatherage seconded. Vote unanimous.

AGENDA ITEM #12

Linda Barnes made the motion to table the action of signing the electricity agreement that was presented and allow Mayor Darren Braddy to search for the best pricing and sign an agreement that has the best cost for the city. Josh Hoskison seconded. Vote unanimous.

#### AGENDA ITEM #13

Mayor Darren Braddy presented the item of water credit for long term retired employees and spouse. Mayor Braddy stated that credits are given to some retired employees, but there is no official documentation of terms and stipulations and there needs to be something put into place. Mayor Braddy stated that it would be the council's decision of terms and whom would receive this benefit for long term dedicated employees after retirement.

Linda Barnes made the motion to table this item until further information could be obtained. Josh Hoskison seconded. Vote unanimous.

#### AGENDA ITEM #14

Josh Hoskison made the motion to recess into executive session in accordance with Texas Government Code, Chapter 551. David Phillips seconded. Vote unanimous.

#### AGENDA ITEM #15

Josh Hoskison made the motion to reconvene into open session in accordance with Texas Government Code, Chapter 551. Scotty Deatherage seconded. Vote unanimous.

Mayor Darren Braddy stated that the executive session was an informational session on an employee status and no council action was needed.

#### AGENDA ITEM #16

Mayor Darren Braddy presented the Delta County Appraisal District (DCAD) preliminary budget. No action was needed on this item.

#### AGENDA ITEM #17

Mayor Darren Braddy presented the information for the proposed 2024-2025 tax rate. Mayor Braddy stated that the information needed to be discussed further and could be discussed at the next budget work session which would be determined at a later date.

Josh Hoskison made the motion to table the 2024-2025 tax rate discussion until the next budget work session was scheduled. David Phillips seconded. Vote unanimous.

#### AGENDA ITEM #18

Mayor Darren Braddy introduced Judy Falls and Lisa Sprague to discuss art related items to be funded for the upcoming Annual Cotton Harvest Festival. Lisa Sprague is the new Family and Community Health Extension Agent and 4-H Coordinator for Delta County. Judy Falls stated that Lisa is wonderful person for recruiting activities that would be associated and in compliance with the will directions of the Frankie McKinney Arts Alliance and use of the McKinney House. Lisa stated that she would like to propose a Creative Arts Contest which would include categories from youth up to seniors which could include ribbons, art, food preservation, handiwork, horticulture, photography, quilting, sewing, woodworking, and baked goods. It was the consensus of the council that this would be a good idea.

Emily Howse verified that the funds could be used for invoices from online purchases or funds made payable to Lisa Sprague as needed up to the amount approved.

Linda Barnes made the motion to approve funds requested for the Creative Arts Contest for the upcoming Cotton Harvest Festival which could be in the area of \$1,000.00 from the Frankie McKinney Arts Alliance Fund. Josh Hoskison seconded. Vote unanimous.

AGENDA ITEM #19

Mayor Darren Braddy updated the council on the city status.

AGENDA ITEM #20

Monthly budget reports were reviewed.

AGENDA ITEM #21

Account payable was reviewed.

AGENDA ITEM #22

Mayor Darren Braddy presented to the council the proposed 2024-2025 updated budget. Josh Hoskison stated that a salary tier should be put into place. It was the consensus of the council to table this discussion until a budget work session could be scheduled.

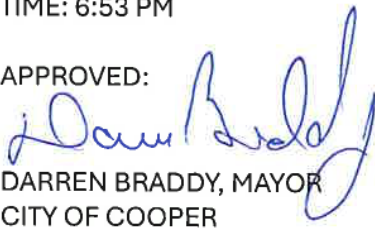
Linda Barnes made the motion to table the 2024-2025 proposed budget discussion until a later date. David Phillips seconded. Vote unanimous.

AGENDA ITEM #23

Josh Hoskison made the motion to adjourn. Linda Barnes seconded. Vote unanimous.

TIME: 6:53 PM

APPROVED:

  
DARREN BRADDY, MAYOR  
CITY OF COOPER

ATTEST:

  
EMILY HOWSE  
CITY SECRETARY