

MINUTES OF THE CROCKETT CITY COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON THE 1<sup>ST</sup> DAY OF JULY 2024 IN THE CITY HALL COUNCIL CHAMBERS, LOCATED AT 200 NORTH FIFTH IN THE CITY OF CROCKETT, HOUSTON COUNTY TEXAS AT 9:00 A.M.

THE COUNCIL MET IN REGULAR SESSION WITH THE FOLLOWING MEMBERS PRESENT: IANTHIA FISHER, DENNIS IVEY, DARRELL JONES, NATRENIA HICKS, ELBERT JOHNSON & MIKE MARSH. CITY OFFICIALS PRESENT: CITY ADMINISTRATOR JOHN ANGERSTEIN, CITY SECRETARY MITZI STEFKA, ASSISTANT CITY ADMINISTRATOR LEE STANDLEY, POLICE CHIEF CLAYTON SMITH, FIRE CHIEF JASON FRIZZELL, LIBRARY DIRECTOR JUDY SCOTT AND PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR GERALD COLTER.

OPEN MEETING WITH INVOCATION AND PLEDGE

Mayor Fisher called the Regular session open; Council member Ivey gave the invocation, and all joined in the pledge.

RECOGNITION OF VISITORS

Mayor Fisher recognized all visitors present.

COMMENTS FROM AUDIENCE OR COUNCIL *(At this time, anyone will be allowed to speak on City related matters only; no personnel matters or matters under litigation will be allowed. The length of time may not exceed three minutes. NO Council discussion or action may take place on a matter until such matter has been placed on an agenda and posted in accordance with law.)*

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APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. REGULAR SESSION: MAY 6, 2024, SPECIAL SESSION: MAY 13, 2024, REGULAR SESSION: MAY 20, 2024 AND SPECIAL SESSION: MAY 28, 2024

Mayor Pro Tem Marsh made a motion to approve the minutes of the May 6, 2024 Regular session, May 13, 2024 Special session, May 20, 2024 Regular session, and May 28, 2024 Special session. Council member Ivey seconded the motion. Motion passes 5-0.

BUSINESS

2. CONSIDER AND APPROVE A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF CROCKETT, TEXAS FOR THE EXEMPTION OF MUNICIPAL PROPERTY TAXES FOR THE RENAISSANCE TREEHOUSE ACADEMY, A QUALIFYING CHILD-CARE-FACILITY UNDER THE TEX. TAX CODE ANN. 11.36 (2024)

Mr. Angerstein explained to council that this facility met all the guidelines for this tax exemption and that it was not an abatement dependent on a performance agreement. Dr. John A. McCall addressed council and explained that 21% of day care facilities in the State of Texas closed in 2023 and it was estimated that 70% of these businesses would

close in the next two years due to rising business costs. This tax exemption would provide considerable relief to Renaissance Treehouse Academy and help them keep the costs lower for parents. The facility provides significant support to our local community and economy by allowing parents of small children to find jobs and increase the size of our local workforce. Over 90% of the children at this facility are recipients of government subsidies and it provides essential support for their families. Dr. McCall reminded council that this resolution had originally been on the agenda for the June 25, 2024 council meeting that was cancelled due to a lack of quorum. He said today (7/1/2024) was the deadline to qualify for this exemption and if it wasn't passed tonight, they would be ineligible. Council member Ivey made a motion to approve a Resolution of the City of Crockett, Texas for the exemption of municipal property taxes for the Renaissance Treehouse Academy, a qualifying child-care-facility under the Tex. Tax Code Ann. 11.36 (2024). Mayor Pro Tem Marsh seconded the motion. Motion fails 2-3. Council member Jones, Hicks and Johnson voted against. After some discussion in which council member Hicks expressed concerns about the loss of tax revenue from the exemption and Council member Johnson expressed his opinion that everyone should pay their taxes, Council member Hicks made a motion to table the vote until she had researched the matter further. Council member Jones seconded the motion. Motion passes 3-2. Council member Ivey and Mayor Pro Tem Marsh voted against the motion.

3. CONSIDER AND APPROVE A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF CROCKETT, TEXAS, EXPRESSING INTENT TO FINANCE EXPENDITURES TO BE INCURRED FOR THE REPAIR OF CLARIFIER #2 AT NORTHSIDE WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANT

Mayor Pro Tem Marsh made a motion to approve a resolution of City Council of the City of Crockett, Texas, expressing intent to finance expenditures to be incurred for the repair of clarifier #2 at the Northside Wastewater Treatment Plant. Council member Jones seconded the motion. Motion passes 5-0.

4. CONSIDER AND APPROVE APPOINTMENT OF REPRESENTATIVE TO SERVE ON BOARD OF DIRECTORS FOR DEEP EAST TEXAS COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

Council member Hicks made a motion to approve the reappointment of Mayor Fisher to serve as a representative on the Deep East Texas Council of Government's Board of Directors. Council member Jones seconded the motion. Motion passes 5-0.

5. CONSIDER AND APPROVE NOMINATION AND APOINTMENT OF NEW MEMBER TO THE CHARTER REVIEW COMMISSION

Council member Jones made a motion to approve the nomination and appointment of Jessica James to the Charter Review Commission. Council member Johnson seconded the motion. Motion passes 5-0.

6. FISCAL YEAR 2025 BUDGET WORKSHOP

The budget workshop began at 9:50 AM.

Mr. Angerstein expressed his desire to take advantage of the lower cost of our new benefits plan and use the savings to offer COLA to city employees to help counter the effects of inflation and keep our compensation levels competitive with other cities.

Department heads presented the following capital requests:

Public Works:

- Padfoot roller for building and stabilizing roads - \$70,000
- Oil distribution tank and mechanical tools - \$100-120,000
- Chip spreader to replace current model from 1979 – \$80,000

Library:

- Maintenance costs for the library's Bookmobile unit - \$1,500 per year
- Interior renovations - \$270,000, with \$100,000 coming from an approved grant and another \$100,000 likely to come from donors
- Expansion of sidewalk access and additional parking - \$22,000

Facilities

- Animal shelter painting, fencing - \$20,000
- Civic Center roof repairs - \$24,000
- Civic Center painting and camera system - \$64,000
- Welcome to Crockett signs - \$125,000
- Security cameras at Fire Dept and Civic Center - \$20,730

Police Department

- Body cameras - \$65,000 over 5 years
- Four patrol vehicles - \$248,000 - \$260,000

Fire Department

- Class A Pumper truck - \$873,000
- Ladder truck refurbishment - \$550,000
- Five additional firefighters/equipment - \$328,825

Department heads presented the following budget appropriations:

- Full-Time Water Office Clerk - \$58,084
- Animal Shelter Operations - \$51,134
- 3% COLA - \$120,769
- Police Dept Incentive Pay - \$35,400

Council member Jones asked Mr. Angerstein to consider the acquisition of a satellite phone to provide reliable communication during emergencies.

Mr. Angerstein informed council that the vehicles for fire and police could be funded via a tax note and was given authority to consult the city's financial advisor about drafting a certificate of obligation.

Mr. Angerstein asked council which projects they would like to see prioritized for the use of ARPA funds and they gave a preference to the civic center roof/painting, animal shelter repairs, library parking lot construction, fire/civic center security cameras and welcome signs. Mr. Angerstein was also authorized to budget for animal shelter operations, a 3% COLA for city employees and a new full-time water office clerk.

#### ADJOURNMENT

Without objection, Mayor Fisher adjourned the meeting at 1:06 P.M.

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Dr. Ianthia Fisher, Mayor

ATTEST:

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Mitzi Stefka, City Secretary