

**CITY COUNCIL MEETING SPECIAL SESSION**

**Tuesday, September 12, 2023 at 6:00 PM**

**City Hall, 102 W. Ashley Wilson Rd, Sweeny, Texas**

**MINUTES**

BE IT KNOWN that the City Council of the City of Sweeny met in **Special Session** on **Tuesday, September 12, 2023 at 6:00 PM.** at City Hall, 102 W. Ashley Wilson Rd, Sweeny, Texas with the following agenda.

---

**CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL**

Mayor Hopkins called the meeting to order at 6:02 PM

Mark Morgan Jr., Reese Cook, Brian Brooks, and John Rambo were in attendance. Tim Pettigrew was absent upon roll call. Pettigrew arrived late at 6:08 p.m.

**PLEDGES & INVOCATION**

Pledges were led by Brian Brooks.

Invocation was given by Reese Cook.

**CITIZENS WISHING TO ADDRESS CITY COUNCIL**

N/A

**PUBLIC HEARINGS AND ACTION ITEMS**

*Mayor Hopkins opened the Public Hearing at 6:03 PM. Mayor Hopkins read the Proposed Tax Rate for the Fiscal Year 2023-2024 aloud, stated below in full, during the open public hearing. (Item #1) Mayor Hopkins then read aloud the stated below item #2 on the Proposed Fiscal Year 2023-2024 Budget during the open public hearing.*

- 1. Public Hearing on proposed property tax rate for the Fiscal Year 2023-2024

A tax rate of \$0.607158 per \$100 valuation has been proposed by the governing body of CITY OF SWEENY.

PROPOSED TAX RATE                      \$0.607158 per \$100

NO- NEW REVENUE TAX RATE    \$0.516525 per \$100

VOTER-APPROVAL TAX RATE    \$0.607158 per \$100

The no-new-revenue tax rate is the tax rate for the 2023 tax year that will raise the same amount of property tax revenue for CITY OF SWEENY from the same properties in both the 2022 tax year and the 2023 tax year.

The voter-approval rate is the highest tax rate that CITY OF SWEENY may adopt without holding an election to seek voter approval of the rate.

The proposed tax rate is greater than the no-new-revenue tax rate. This means that CITY OF SWEENY is proposing to increase property taxes for the 2023 tax year.

A PUBLIC HEARING ON THE PROPOSED TAX RATE WILL BE HELD ON September 12, 2023 AT 6:00PM AT Sweeny City Hall; 102 W Ashley Wilson Road, Sweeny, Texas 77480.

The proposed tax rate is not greater than the voter-approval tax rate. As a result, CITY OF SWEENY is not required to hold an election at which voters may accept or reject the proposed tax rate. However, you may express your support for or opposition to the proposed tax rate by contacting the members of the City Council of CITY OF SWEENY at their offices or by attending the public hearing mentioned above.

YOUR TAXES OWED UNDER ANY OF THE RATES MENTIONED ABOVE CAN BE CALCULATED AS FOLLOWS:

Property Tax amount= (tax rate) x (taxable value of your property) / 100

**For the Proposal:** Reese Cook, Brian Brooks

**Against:** Mark Morgan Jr.

**Absent:** John Rambo, Tim Pettigrew

Visit [Texas.gov/PropertyTaxes](https://www.texas.gov/PropertyTaxes) to find a link to your local property tax database on which you can easily access information regarding your property taxes, including information about proposed tax rates and scheduled public hearings of each entity that taxes your property.

The 86th Texas Legislature modified the manner in which the voter-approval tax rate is calculated to limit the rate of growth of property taxes in the state.

The following table compares the taxes imposed on the average residence homestead by CITY OF SWEENY last year to the taxes proposed to be imposed on the average residence homestead by CITY OF SWEENY this year.

	2022	2023	Change
Total tax rate (per \$100 of value)	\$0.730954	\$0.607158	decrease of -0.123796, or -16.94%
Average homestead taxable value	\$150,593	\$151,363	increase of 770, or 0.51%
Tax on average homestead	\$1,100.77	\$919.01	decrease of -181.76, or -16.51%
Total tax levy on all properties	\$1,426,740	\$1,578,636	increase of 151,896, or 10.65%

For assistance with tax calculations, please contact the tax assessor for CITY OF SWEENY at (979) 864- 1320 or [taxoffice@brazoriacountytx.gov](mailto:taxoffice@brazoriacountytx.gov), or visit <https://www.brazoriacountytx.gov/departments/tax-office> for more information.

**THIS TAX RATE WILL RAISE MORE TAXES FOR MAINTENANCE AND OPERATIONS THAN LAST YEAR'S TAX RATE.**

**THE TAX RATE WILL EFFECTIVELY BE RAISED BY 3.50 PERCENT AND WILL RAISE TAXES FOR MAINTENANCE AND OPERATIONS ON A \$100,000 HOME BY APPROXIMATELY \$-148.96.**

2. Public Hearing Date on the Proposed Budget for the Fiscal Year 2023-2024

**This budget will raise more revenue from property taxes than last year's budget by an amount of \$151,896, which is a 10.65% increase from last year's budget, and of that amount, \$6,967 is tax revenue to be raised from new property added to the tax roll this year.**

Councilman Tim Pettigrew arrived at 6:08 PM

*Mayor Hopkins closed the Public Hearing at 6:10 PM. No visitors were in attendance nor comments made during the Public Hearing.*

## **REGULAR AGENDA**

3. Discussion/ Possible Action to Adopt the Proposed Budget by Ordinance for the 2023-2024 Fiscal Year, per the Texas Government Code Sec. 102.007  
**MUST BE A RECORD VOTE, Motion Must Be: *To approve the Fiscal Year 2023/2024 Proposed Budget (specify which one) and approving the City Ordinance adopting the municipal budget for the 2023/2024 fiscal year.***

*Reese Cook moved to approve the proposed budget included in the September 12<sup>th</sup>, 2023 agenda packet as presented on pages 18-30 with the following amendments:*

1. *Reallocate \$10,500 from line 50-11-6730 Vehicle Expense to line 50-11-6710 Maintenance of Water System bringing budgeted amount to \$2,500 and \$90,500 respectfully.*
2. *Reallocate \$10,500. From lines 50-21-6730 Street Department Vehicle Expense and 50-22-6730 Drainage Department Vehicle Expense each in the amounts to the lines as follows:*
  - a. *\$3,150.00 to lines 50-21-6730 Street Vehicle Expense and 50-22-6730 Drainage Vehicle Expense respectively bringing totals to \$5,650.*
  - b. *\$10,500 to line 50-24-6730 Police Vehicle Expense bringing total to \$23,000.*
  - c. *\$4,200 to line 50-28-6730 Parks/Rec Vehicle Expense bringing total to \$11,200.00.*
3. *Create a line item for Capital Improvement Projects and allocate the proposed budget savings amount of \$14,367 to this line.*

Cook stated that in other terms, take the overage from the general fund and reallocate to a capital improvements projects line item. Also, remove the Enterprise Fleet Vehicle requests and reallocate those amounts as he previously stated. Then approving the budget with the amendments proposed. City Manager agreed with the motion and reallocations. Councilman Rambo asked if by re-allocating the \$14,000 within the same budget, would this be leaving the proposed tax rate the same? City Manager Lindsay Koskiniemi stated yes. Councilman Morgan asked about the current vehicle maintenance. She stated large repairs are needed on four (4) of the public works vehicles, including transmissions and AC work. Discussion ensued on the removal of the leased vehicles and how the reallocation was suggested.

*Seconded by Mark Morgan Jr.*

Discussion: Councilman Brooks asked about the Maintenance of the Water System, including the significant increase, due to the amendment. Councilman Rambo asked if the expenditure increase in that line was due to Inframark. No, stated Koskiniemi, we grossly exceeded this year in the Enterprise Fund. She feels it is a much more judicious use of funds to place the funds into the Water Maintenance System. Councilman Brooks asked if we have budgeted for new vehicles? He feels we need to start budgeting for new vehicles, as we haven't in the past. Each year we need to take out an old and rotate yearly, including the Police Department vehicles, versus leasing three (3) vehicles. Koskiniemi stated we have talked about starting an equipment replacement fund for

vehicles and could use some of the \$14,000 overage for that. Currently, we have the salvaged goods allocated in that fund and it was to purchase a new sewer jetter, as previously approved. Cook stated amendments are possible if needed as funds are in the budget. Koskiniemi stated interest earnings can be utilized as well, as they are not restricted. Brooks stated he has seen the vehicles and they are horrible, but the guys also need to take care of them. Koskiniemi stated we will be starting a vehicle maintenance plan. Mark Morgan Jr. stated he seconded the motion, as it was more for having the funds allotted for reallocation. As long as we have it for later on, with better numbers, in order to go back later to make a budget amendment.

*Voting FOR: Mark Morgan Jr., Reese Cook, Brian Brooks, John Rambo, Tim Pettigrew*  
*Voting AGAINST: None*  
*Present and NOT Voting: Mayor Dusty Hopkins*  
*All in favor. Motion carried.*

- 4. Discussion/ Possible Action to Adopt the Tax Rate and Ordinance adopting the Tax Rate for the 2023-2024 Fiscal Year  
MUST BE A RECORD VOTE Motion Must Be: ***I move that the property tax rate be increased by the adoption of a tax rate of ( SPECIFY RATE), which is effectively a ( \_\_\_ %) percent increase in the tax rate and approving the ordinance adopting the tax rate of (REPEAT RATE) per \$100 valuation for the 2023/2024 Fiscal Year.***

Voter Approved Rate	.607158 / 17.55% increase
Lesser Rate/\$0 Surplus	.592525 / 14.71% increase
No New Revenue	.516525 / % increase

*Reese Cook motioned that the property tax rate be increased by the adoption of a tax rate of 0.607158, which is effectively a 17.55 % percent increase in the tax rate and approving the ordinance adopting the tax rate of 0.607158 per \$100 valuation for the 2023/2024 Fiscal Year.*  
*Seconded by Tim Pettigrew*

Discussion: Councilman Brooks stated we go thru this every year and in years past we state we want to bring in the same amount of tax revenue as the previous year. Council has to realize things go up and things aren't as cheap; gas prices, frozen wages. In the future we are going to have to have enough money for water lines changes, etc. Keeping the tax rate the same won't bring in enough to fix it. In the future, he things we should put the rate at an amount the voters would have to vote on. Council Pettigrew stated the city does not have enough money saved for emergencies. The City should make between 15-22 percent on what the budget is and we are way short. We are pulling funds to complete repairs instead of having money set aside. Brooks stated he doesn't like the way the tax rate is worded showing an increase, but yet the rate itself is dropping from last year. He thinks we need to let voters decide in the future.

*Voting FOR: Mark Morgan Jr., Reese Cook, Brian Brooks, John Rambo, Tim Pettigrew*  
*Voting AGAINST: None*  
*Present and NOT Voting: Mayor Dusty Hopkins*  
*All in favor. Motion carried.*

**ITEMS OF COMMUNITY INTEREST**

Neal Bess Jr. stated that last there was a car stopped at the red light at Ashley Wilson and Main Street that appeared to be either having car troubles or a medical issue. Officer Scales was several cars behind and noticed Bess with the gentleman, unable to start the vehicle. Scales arrived and proceeded to get behind the car, pushing it out of the way with Bess, until reaching the ballpark. Bess Jr. wished to

recognize Office Scales for her caring and sharing. Bess Jr. gave Officer Scales a card of appreciation for her community service and proceeded with a photo opportunity.

Mark Morgan Jr. stated he was sorry for raising taxes.

Brian Brooks stated we need a community prayer for rain.

Mayor Hopkins stated the Sweeny Bulldogs Football team is 2 in 1. They play in Needville on Friday. Brooks stated the network that televises the games are good; shoutout to the school. Hopkins stated the community themed tailgate party was a success at the last home game against Hempstead, even with the rain and lighting. They had food trucks and approximately 250 people attend and the stands were about 75% full.

City Manager stated that National Night Out is scheduled for 10/03/2023 and Chief is actively recruiting for sponsorships. She will be requesting at the next regularly scheduled City Council meeting to reschedule the 10/03/2023 Special Meeting.

Tim Pettigrew stated he was glad to be back in Texas after a short vacation out of state.

### **ADJOURN REGULAR SESSION**

Mayor Hopkins adjourned the meeting at 6:41 PM.

City Officials/Employees Present:

City Manager, Lindsay Koskiniemi  
City Secretary, Kaydi Smith  
Finance Director, Karla Wilson  
Police Chief, Brad Caudle  
Project Manager, Rusty Lofton  
Gas Operator, Shae Welman

Passed and approved this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2023.

Kaydi Smith, City Secretary