

MINUTES
SPECIAL CALLED CITY COUNCIL MEETING
CITY OF STAFFORD, TEXAS
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 27, 2024

On the 27th day of March, 2024, at 3:00 p.m., the City Council of Stafford, Texas met in the Council Chambers. The following members of the City Council were present: Mayor Ken Mathew, Mayor Pro Tem Xavier Herrera, and Council Members Alice Chen, William K. Bostic Jr., Virginia Rosas, and Tim Wood. Absent: Council Member Christopher Caldwell. The following City Staff were present: City Secretary Roxanne Benitez, Chief of Police Richard Ramirez, Director of Information Technology Ryan Young, Chief Financial Officer Alka Shah, Code Compliance Administrator Scott McElrath, Fire Chief Larry Di Camillo, Senior Development Services Specialist Laura Morales, Director of Human Resources Shanell Garcia, Public Works Superintendent Otis Brown, and Assistant Superintendent Ian Sergeant.

1. Call to Order.

Mayor Mathew called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m.

2. Pledges of Allegiance.

Council Member Wood led the pledge to the United States flag. Mayor Pro Tem Herrera led the pledge to the Texas flag.

3. Discussion and Direction from City Council regarding Departmental Budgetary Needs for Fiscal Year 2024-2025.

Chief Financial Officer Alka Shah provided a PowerPoint presentation regarding the budget planning process for Fiscal Year 2024-2025.

Ms. Shah answered questions from the Council Members.

Director of Human Resources Shanell Garcia provided information on compensation and benefits items that were requested by the Directors. She asked for feedback and guidance from the City Council on which items should be included in the budget for Fiscal Year 2024-2025.

Ms. Garcia answered questions from the City Council.

City Council and City Staff discussed the following:

- Challenges City Staff were facing.
- Which compensation and benefits recommendations should be implemented. The consensus from the City Council was to move forward with the benefit of compensating employees who work on federal holidays.
- Which employee positions should be included in the Fiscal Year 2024-2025 budget.

- Implementing a Cost-of-Living Adjustment (COLA) based on inflation.
- Hiring a tax consultant and what the cost would be.

Council Member Rosas exited the meeting at 4:24 p.m.

Council Member Rosas entered the meeting at 4:25 p.m.

- Implementing a public safety tax and what the amount would be.

4. Public Comments.

Public comments were received from the following:

- Cliff Cowperthwait, who lives at 111 Squires Bend, advised that he was glad that the City Council began budget discussions. He spoke on the \$5 million that would need to be paid in the next fiscal year, the reduced contingency fund, previous year's budget, previous spending, as well as the cutting of benefits and positions.

Council Member Wood made a motion to allow Mr. Cowperthwait to speak for an additional two minutes, and Mayor Pro Tem Herrera seconded the motion. Mayor Mathew, Mayor Pro Tem Herrera, and Council Members Chen, Bostic, Rosas, and Wood voted "Aye". "Nay" – None. Motion carried 6-0.

- Mr. Cowperthwait spoke on additional funding requested by the Fire and Police Departments for the next fiscal year, implementing a public safety tax, and implementing a property tax. He advised that, if the City Council were to implement a tax, the City Council needed to tell the citizens why, and there would need to be a vote on it.


5. Adjournment.

Without objection, the meeting adjourned at 4:53 p.m.

ATTEST:



Roxanne Benitez
City Secretary



Ken Mathew
Mayor