

MINUTES
SPECIAL CALLED CITY COUNCIL MEETING
CITY OF STAFFORD, TEXAS
TUESDAY, JUNE 18, 2024

On the 18th day of June, 2024, at 4:00 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 Alice Chen, and Council Members William K. Bostic Jr., Tim Wood, Christopher Caldwell, Virginia Rosas, and Xavier Herrera. Absent: None. The following City Staff were present: City Secretary Roxanne Benitez, Chief Financial Officer Alka Shah, Chief of Police Richard Ramirez, Director of Human Resources Shanell Garcia, Fire Chief Larry Di Camillo, Senior Development Services Specialist Laura Morales, Code Compliance Administrator Scott McElrath, GIS Administrator Wesley Bennett, and City Planner Thomas Coon.

1. Call to Order.

Mayor Mathew called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

2. Pledges of Allegiance.

Council Member Rosas led the pledge to the United States flag. Council Member Herrera led the pledge to the Texas flag.

3. Public Comments.

None.

4. Executive session as authorized by Section 551.074 of the Texas Government Code to deliberate the appointment and employment of a public officer or employee (Director of Public Works / Development Services).

The City Council went into executive session at 4:01 p.m.

The City Council came out of executive session at 4:47 p.m.

The meeting reconvened at 4:52 p.m.

5. (a) Discussion regarding the appointment of a Public Works Director.

Council Member Rosas commended the committee on their selection. Mayor Pro Tem Chen commended the committee and Director of Human Resources Shanell Garcia.

(b) Public Comments on item (a).

None.

(c) Possible Consideration of appropriate action on item (a).

Council Member Wood made a motion to appoint Kyle Jung as the Director of Public Works/Development Services, and Mayor Pro Tem Chen seconded the motion. Mayor Mathew, Mayor Pro Tem Chen, and Council Members Bostic, Wood, Caldwell, Rosas, and Herrera voted “Aye”. “Nay” – None. Motion passed 7-0.

6. (a) Discussion on all matters essential to guaranteeing the Public Safety Tax Initiative is ready for the November 2024 ballot election after receiving reports from the City Attorney, Chief Financial Officer, and any pertinent City consultant regarding the Public Safety Tax Initiative.

Council Member Rosas advised that she requested that this item be added to the agenda to receive an update. She advised that the City Attorney sent them some communication. Council Member Rosas provided some background on how the City Council got to this point.

Chief Financial Officer Shah advised that she sent a memo last week regarding the deadlines. She spoke about what preparations had been taken for next fiscal year’s budget. Ms. Shah also spoke on what actions still need to be taken.

Ms. Shah answered questions from the Council Members.

The Council Members spoke of their concerns regarding public safety.

Leslie Cook, with RBC Capital, spoke on the process and answered questions from the Council Members.

- (b) Public Comments on item (a).

Public comments were received from the following:

- Liza Mendonca, who lives at 12343 Fern Meadow, spoke on decisions made in the past by previous Council Members and those consequences, such as having several bars and warehouses in the City. Mrs. Mendonca also spoke about several rental houses as well as the GRID. She suggested that everyone look at the whole picture.
- Cliff Cowperthwait, who lives at 111 Squires Bend, spoke on budget plan a and plan b, the public safety tax, and advised that there would be a shift of funds. He suggested that there be a property tax instead of a public safety tax. Mr. Cowperthwait advised that, if approved, signage and the website would need to be changed as they currently indicate no property taxes. He also suggested that they do not borrow from the fund balance.
- Greg Holsapple, who lives at 13111 Naples Lane, advised that he agreed with everyone and added that he was generally against any tax increases. He spoke about Council Members who campaigned on no property taxes. Mr. Holsapple suggested that the Council provide a range for the tax rate

so that the people will know. He advised that people are worried about high taxes and expressed his own concerns. Mr. Holsapple spoke on possible exemptions.

- Lana Hoelsing, who lives at 327 N. Esplanade Lane, spoke regarding businesses located in the GRID. She advised that several of the buildings were in close proximity to each other and added that there was no planning. Mrs. Hoelsing advised that she was not in favor of citizens paying property taxes.
- Randy Krahn, who lives at 13119 Francis, advised that the conversation should have started in the 1980s. He spoke on his involvement in the City as a volunteer firefighter. Mr. Krahn advised that the City had never been progressive in funding the City departments or City as a whole. He spoke about previous budget processes. Mr. Krahn advised that he did not want to pay more taxes, as a business owner, but understood the need. He suggested getting the information out with rates. Mr. Krahn also suggested that the public safety tax be only used for that.
- Brisa Wood, who lives at 2022 Secretariat Drive, advised that, based on the recommendations of the financial consultants, she was in favor of property taxes.
- Ken Floyd, who lives at 311 Fair Oak Court, spoke on the huge buildings using the City's resources, wearing out City vehicles, and causing the need for more employees. He advised that the commercial businesses were the issue and added that they needed to pay for worn out City equipment. Mr. Floyd advised that the City Council needed to consider families, senior citizens, and the cost of living. He also advised that he believed there may be something better than a property tax, such as a police and fire fee.

(c) Possible Consideration of appropriate action on item (a).

Council Member Bostic made a motion to make public the confidential attorney client privilege document that was sent to the City Council on June 14, 2024, and Mayor Pro Tem Chen seconded the motion. Mayor Mathew, Mayor Pro Tem Chen, and Council Member Bostic voted "Aye". "Nay" – Council Members Wood, Caldwell, Rosas, and Herrera. Motion failed 3-4.

7. (a) Discussion regarding the deadline by which the Mayor must submit a budget for a possible Public Safety Tax Initiative and the timeline for City Council to pass and approve such a budget.

Council Member Wood advised that he requested that this item be added to the agenda. He also advised that he believed his questions were answered. Council Member Wood provided the deadline for the Mayor to present budget A and

budget B, the date the Mayor would present his budget message, as well as the date the City Council would vote on the budget.

(b) Public Comments on item (a).

Public comments were received from the following:

- Cliff Cowperthwait, who lives at 111 Squires Bend, thanked Council Member Wood for providing the timeline. He asked questions regarding the Plan B budget.

(c) Possible Consideration of appropriate action on item (a).

Council Member Wood made a motion to compel the Mayor to provide Budget A and Budget B by the deadline of July 19, 2024, and Council Member Rosas seconded the motion. Mayor Mathew, Mayor Pro Tem Chen, and Council Member Bostic, Wood, Caldwell, Rosas, and Herrera voted “Aye”. “Nay” – None. Motion passed 7-0.

8. (a) Discussion regarding City Council appointments to the Finance Committee and the role of the Finance Committee.

Council Member Tim Wood advised that he requested that this item be added to the agenda. He spoke on the purpose of the Finance Committee and advised that he wanted to revisit the issue.

Mayor Pro Tem Chen spoke on the purpose of the Finance Committee and previous actions.

Council Member Herrera exited the meeting at 6:10 p.m.

The Council Members discussed who should serve on the Committee.

Council Member Herrera entered the meeting at 6:17 p.m.

(b) Public Comments on item (a).

Public comments were received from the following:

- Lana Hoelsing, who lives at 327 N. Esplanade Lane, spoke regarding previous appointments voted on by the City Council. She suggested that the Finance Committee remain as is.
- Cliff Cowperthwait, who lives at 111 Squires Bend, agreed with Council Member Rosas in that the Committee Members are at-will positions. He suggested that, if a Council Member wished to make a change, to bring forward the names of the people to be removed and added.
- Greg Holsapple, who lives at 13111 Naples Lane, advised that Council Member Wood may want to replace Committee Members based on the tax. He recommended that the Committee be left as is.

(c) Possible Consideration of appropriate action on item (a).

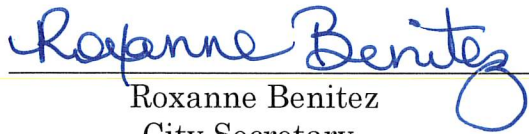
Council Member Bostic made a motion that the Finance Committee remain as is, and Mayor Pro Tem Chen seconded the motion. Mayor Mathew, Mayor Pro Tem Chen, and Council Member Bostic voted "Aye". "Nay" – Council Member Wood, Caldwell, Rosas, and Herrera. Motion failed 3-4.

Council Member Wood made a subsequent motion to appoint Council Member Caldwell, Council Member Wood, and Mayor Mathew to the Finance Committee, and Council Member Rosas seconded the motion. Council Member Wood, Caldwell, Rosas, and Herrera voted "Aye". "Nay" – Mayor Mathew, Mayor Pro Tem Chen, and Council Member Bostic. Motion passed 4-3.


9. Adjournment.

Without objection, the meeting was adjourned at 6:21 p.m.

ATTEST:



Roxanne Benitez
City Secretary



Ken Mathew
Mayor