

MINUTES  
SPECIAL CALLED CITY COUNCIL MEETING  
CITY OF STAFFORD, TEXAS  
WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 7, 2024

On the 7<sup>th</sup> day of August, 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 Alice Chen, and Council Members William K. Bostic Jr., Tim Wood, Christopher Caldwell (arrived at 3:38 p.m.), and Virginia Rosas. Absent: Council Member Xavier Herrera. The following City Staff were present: City Secretary Roxanne Benitez, Chief Financial Officer Alka Shah, Chief of Police Richard Ramirez, Fire Chief Larry Di Camillo, Director of Public Works/Development Services Kyle Jung, Senior Development Services Specialist Laura Morales, Director of Information Technology Ryan Young, Director of Human Resources Shanell Garcia, Police Captain Nathan Cohn, Police Captain Joe Williams, and Assistant Police Chief Kelly Wright.

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. Council Member Rosas led the pledge to the Texas flag.

3. Public Comments.

Public comments were received from the following:

- Cliff Cowperthwait, who lives at 111 Squires Bend, spoke of information provided at previous budget workshops. He provided information regarding the Police, Fire, and Fire Marshal Departments. Mr. Cowperthwait spoke on Plan B and possible budget amendments.

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

- Mr. Cowperthwait spoke on the Council Member's options regarding the proposed fiscal year budget.
- Joe Longoria, who lives at 12811 Linda Street, spoke on the timing of the budget workshops. He suggested that there be a Council budget workshop in which citizens could ask questions and speak for longer than three minutes. Mr. Longoria advised that public safety services would not stop for lack of funds, but services would be reduced.

- Ray Thomas, who lives at 614 Go Man Go Drive, spoke on the benefits of being able to participate in City government. He also spoke about the consequences of budget cuts. Mr. Thomas spoke on Stafford Economic Development Corporation (SEDC) funds.

Council Member Wood made a motion to allow Mr. Thomas to speak for an additional minute, and Mayor Pro Tem Chen seconded the motion. Mayor Mathew, Mayor Pro Tem Chen, and Council Members Bostic, Wood, Caldwell, and Rosas voted “Aye”. “Nay” – None. Motion carried 6-0.

- Mr. Thomas advised that SEDC funds should not be mentioned as funds the City could use as the City could not use those funds. He spoke of the proposed budget and services citizens needed.
- Johnny Baiamonte, who lives at 12819 Linda Street, asked why the tax was being called a public safety tax instead of a property tax.

4. Budget Workshop on proposed FY 2024-2025 Budget of the City of Stafford, with a suspension of the rules, including the following:
  - (a) Layout of Budget by Mayor Ken Mathew.
  - (b) Presentation by Finance Department.
  - (c) Other items related to the FY 2024-2025 Budget.

Mayor Mathew advised that this year was unique, with Budgets A and B.

Chief Financial Officer Alka Shah advised that Budgets Plan A and B were presented at the previous budget workshop. She provided a PowerPoint presentation on special revenue funds.

Ms. Shah answered questions from the Council Members.

Chief Financial Officer Alka Shah also provided a PowerPoint presentation on the proposed budget for the Stafford Economic Development Corporation (SEDC).

Ms. Shah answered questions from the Council Members.

Director of Public Works/Development Services Kyle Jung also answered questions from the Council Members.

- (d) Public comments on items (a)-(c).

Public comments were received from the following:

- Cliff Cowperthwait, who lives at 111 Squires Bend, advised that he had been watching the budget closely for three years. He also advised that he believed a property tax was needed. Mr. Cowperthwait advised that an Economic Development Administrator was needed. He also advised that City services were slowly deteriorating. Mr. Cowperthwait suggested that the frozen positions in the Police Department, be unfrozen. He advised

that Plan B was needed and suggested that the people be given the opportunity to vote.

- Joe Longoria, who lives at 12811 Linda Street, commended Chief Financial Officer Alka Shah on her PowerPoint presentations. He asked questions regarding the proposed budget, drainage, and financial policy requirements. Mr. Longoria advised that there had been a lack of proper drainage for over thirty years.

Council Member Wood made a motion to allow Mr. Longoria to speak for an additional minute, and Council Member Bostic seconded the motion. Mayor Mathew, Mayor Pro Tem Chen, and Council Members Bostic, Wood, Caldwell, and Rosas voted “Aye”. “Nay” – None. Motion carried 6-0.

- Mr. Longoria suggested that a public town hall meeting be held. He advised that other residents needed to hear about what was going on in the City.
- Johnny Baiamonte, who lives at 12819 Linda Street, advised that he was not against a property tax. He also advised that the average person did not understand the way a property tax worked. Mr. Baiamonte suggested that residents be made aware of how their property taxes would be calculated. Mr. Baiamonte advised that if there was a property tax, it would not be so bad. Mr. Baiamonte asked about revenues generated from the Fire Department. Fire Chief Larry Di Camillo answered his question.

*Council Member Rosas exited the meeting at 4:36 p.m.*

*Council Member Rosas entered the meeting at 4:37 p.m.*

Council Member Wood made a motion to allow Mr. Baiamonte to speak for an additional minute, and Council Member Bostic seconded the motion. Mayor Mathew, Mayor Pro Tem Chen, and Council Members Bostic, Wood, Caldwell, and Rosas voted “Aye”. “Nay” – None. Motion carried 6-0.

- Mr. Baiamonte provided suggestions regarding the use of restricted funds and increases to permit fees and tickets. He suggested that revenues be increased wherever they could.
- Ray Thomas, who lives at 614 Go Man Go Drive, advised that he liked the streets swept as well as drainage. He spoke on the consequences of not having the streets swept. Mr. Thomas also spoke of his actions during Hurricane Beryl to minimize flooding. He spoke on the City having one street sweeper and one employee to operate it. Mr. Thomas advised that public services should be provided to the citizens to ensure that they had all appropriate services when they needed them.

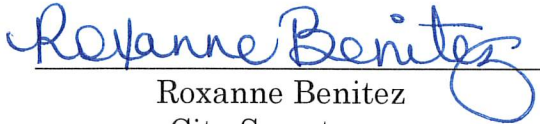
(e) Possible Consideration of appropriate action on items (a)-(c).


After discussion, no action was taken.

5. Adjournment.

Without objection, the meeting was adjourned at 5:12 p.m.

ATTEST:

  
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Roxanne Benitez  
City Secretary

  
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Ken Mathew  
Mayor