

MINUTES
REVENUE EXPLORATION WORKSHOP
CITY OF STAFFORD, TEXAS
WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 12, 2025

On the 12th day of February, 2025, at 7:00 p.m., the City Council of Stafford, Texas met in the SMSD Leonard Scarcella Administration Building. 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 (arrived at 7:09 p.m.), Christopher Caldwell, Virginia Rosas, and Xavier Herrera (arrived at 7:19 p.m.). Absent: None. The following City Staff were present: City Secretary Roxanne Benitez, Director of Human Resources Shanell Garcia, Chief Financial Officer Alka Shah, Director of Public Works/Development Services Kyle Jung, Fire Chief Larry Di Camillo, Chief of Police Richard Ramirez, Assistant Chief of Police Kelly Wright, Director of Information Technology Ryan Young, Police Captain Nathan Cohn, Police Captain Joe Williams, Director of Recreation Susan Ricks, Code Compliance Administrator Scott McElrath, and City Attorney Bridgette Begle.

1. Call to Order.

Mayor Mathew called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

2. Pledges of Allegiance.

Mayor Pro Tem Chen led the pledge to the United States flag. Council Member Rosas led the pledge to the Texas flag.

3. Updates from City Departments regarding current fiscal year expenditures and budgetary needs.

Mayor Mathew made a motion to table the item for a future meeting, and Council Member Bostic seconded the motion. Mayor Mathew, Mayor Pro Tem Chen and Council Members Bostic voted "Aye". "Nay" – Council Members Rosas and Caldwell. Motion carried 3-2.

At this time, Council Member Rosas made a motion to suspend the rules for the remainder of the meeting, and Council Member Bostic seconded the motion. Mayor Mathew, and Council Members Bostic, Wood, and Rosas voted "Aye". "Nay" – Mayor Pro Tem Chen and Council Member Caldwell. Motion carried 4-2.

4. Comments and Questions by City Council Members regarding revenue generating exploration.

Council Member Rosas requested feedback from the public and spoke on previous actions from various Council Members regarding generation of revenue.

Council Member Wood spoke regarding previous suggestions from various Council Members regarding revenue generation, shopping local, needs of the City, and imposing a drainage assessment fee.

Council Member Bostic spoke regarding increased sales tax revenue, available grants, and crime control districts.

Mayor Pro Tem Chen spoke regarding the process of revenue generation, local businesses, the effect of the Covid-19 pandemic on businesses, and the Small Business Association (SBA).

Council Member Herrera spoke regarding revenue generating ideas that had been suggested in previous years, special purpose districts, county facilities located in the City, and the City's financial situation.

Council Member Caldwell spoke regarding the costs of City services, operating budget, general fund, short-term grants, long-term financial solutions, City Council's management of budget expenditures and revenues, and sustainability.

5. Questions and Comments from the Public regarding revenue generating exploration ideas.

Questions and Comments were received from the following:

- Manuel Hinojosa, who lives at 12807 Linda Street, advised that he wanted to receive the updates from the City Departments and expressed his disappointment. He suggested using local businesses. Mr. Hinojosa asked questions regarding finances and revenue. He also asked questions regarding if a property tax was imposed.
- Sadie Williams, who lives at 2403 West Bend Drive, spoke on the sales tax revenue that was supposed to be from the GRID, having the City conduct an investigation regarding finances, lack of transparency, and the suffering of the Fire and Police Departments.
- Joe Longoria, who lives at 12811 Linda Street, expressed his disappointment regarding the tabling of Agenda Item 3, shopping local, vacant warehouses and retail spaces, financial districts, maintenance of City services, imposing a property tax, and the lack of funding.
- Angela Bryant, owner of Power Lounge, suggested implementing paid parking at the Civic Center and Stafford Centre, streamlining processes for issuing certificates of occupancy, partnering with the schools to increase social media messaging, and collaborating with business owners to create revenue generating ideas.
- Randy Krahn, SEDC President who lives at 13119 Frances Street, spoke regarding current SEDC projects. He suggested implementing a tax on buildings that are vacant for a certain period of time, hiring an EDC Director to attract businesses to the City, and creating a comprehensive plan. Mr. Krahn spoke on the increase in the sales tax revenue received, and implementing a public safety tax.

- Don Jones, who lives at 12123 Maple Leaf Lane, spoke regarding the City Council being divided. He also spoke regarding his concerns on the City Council not reaching the people and the meeting not being productive. Mr. Jones spoke regarding the Police and Fire Departments mostly serving businesses, the needs of the Police and Fire Departments, and the City not being in the 21st century.
- Patricia Soza-Montelongo, who lives at 1814 Terrance Drive, spoke regarding previous retail establishments that were in the City and the lack of amenities. She suggested that the City be revitalized so that families can continue to raise their children there.
- Cliff Cowperthwait, who lives at 111 Squires Bend, advised that he would have liked to have heard from the Department Heads. He spoke regarding various City Departments having five year plans with no funding, previous and current year's budgets, hiring staff for permitting, the general fund, grants, school taxes, hotel occupancy tax funds, lack of funds, the need for a property tax, frozen employee positions, funding City departments, and messaging to residents.
- Arthur J. Honore, who lives at 162 Kingsway Drive, advised that he was against a property tax and suggested a city-wide storm water utility assessment. He spoke on unfunded deferred maintenance, sales tax revenue, property tax exemptions, utility franchise agreements, public/private partnerships,

Council Member Caldwell exited the meeting at 9:05 p.m.

- Mr. Honore spoke on revenue restructuring, risk management, school vouchers, children at risk, as well as including SMSD in City planning.

Council Member Caldwell entered the meeting at 9:07 p.m.

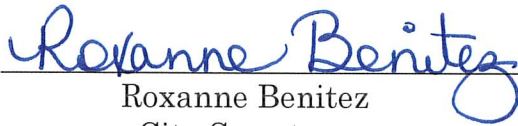
- Mr. Honore continued to speak on restructuring and recapturing of funds.
- Chief of Police Richard Ramirez spoke regarding his experience with the City, previous Council actions, the Police Department's five-year business plan, increasing costs, lack of revenues and funding, City population, and accommodating the needs of the residents.
- Fire Chief Larry Di Camillo spoke regarding his experience with the City, increased expenditures, costs of Fire apparatuses, and the lack of life saving equipment.
- Director of Public Works/Development Services Kyle Jung spoke regarding the costs of asphalt and concrete street replacements, the lack of a capital improvement plan, and the City's revenue sources.

- Director of Information Technology Ryan Young spoke regarding the work culture, lack of maintenance on equipment and buildings, lack of long-term vision, and crumbling infrastructure.
- Director of Human Resources Shanell Garcia advised that the employees were excellent, the City's biggest asset, and seventy-percent of the budget. She spoke on the lack of stability, succession planning, and career development in the City.
- Chief Financial Officer Alka Shah advised that the City was unique in that the City only planned for one year at a time and did not plan for the future. She suggested that the Council Members think about long range planning. Ms. Shah advised that the City was reactive, not proactive.

6. Adjournment.

Without objection, the meeting was adjourned at 9:42 p.m.

ATTEST:



Roxanne Benitez
City Secretary



Ken Mathew
Mayor