

Village of Salado
Salado Municipal Building
301 North Stagecoach Road
Salado, Texas
Minutes of Regular Meeting of Board of Aldermen
September 17, 2020 at 6:30 p.m.

The Board of Aldermen meeting was called to order at 6:31 p.m. by Mayor Skip Blancett.

Mayor Blancett gave the Invocation and the Board of Aldermen led the Pledge of Allegiance to the United States and Texas flags.

Board Members Present: Mayor Skip Blancett, Mayor Pro-tem Michael Coggin, Aldermen Rodney Bell, Amber Preston Dankert, and John Cole. Alderman Frank Coachman was absent.

Staff Present: Village Administrator Don Ferguson and City Secretary Cara McPartland

1. Citizens Communications

No citizen comments were heard.

2. Consent Agenda

- A. Approval of minutes of the Regular Board of Aldermen meeting of September 3, 2020.
- B. Approval of the August 2020 Financial Statements for the Village of Salado.
- C. Approval of the FY 2020 Quarterly Investment Reports for the Village of Salado.
- D. Approval of the Comprehensive Fund Balance Policy and the Fund Balance Classification Plan for the Village of Salado.
- E. Approval of the Investment Policy for the Village of Salado.

Alderman Cole moved to approve the Consent Agenda, as presented. Mayor Pro-tem Coggin seconded. Motion carried on a vote of 4-0.

3. Village Administrator Status Report

- Village of Salado Wastewater System

Village Administrator Ferguson stated that wastewater connection issues will be detailed later in tonight's meeting.

- Village of Salado Sales Tax Collections

Village Administrator Ferguson reported that the September 2020 sales tax check, representing July sales, totaled \$41,174.88, which was up about 8 percent from the same period last year. He advised that fiscal year-to-date collections total \$554,557, are up about 3 percent from the same period last year, and 13 percent higher than budgeted for the entire fiscal year.

- Salado National Night Out Against Crime

Village Administrator Ferguson reported that this year's national night out will not be held due to COVID-19. He added that discussions regarding Stroll favored tentatively proceeding with the event with safety plans in place, but noted Stroll organizers may cancel if conditions warrant. He also spoke briefly on October concerts at Johnny's and associated COVID safety measures.

- Main Street Improvement Project Update

Village Administrator Ferguson anticipated receipt of a punch list from TxDOT on Monday. He said railings are being fabricated, and drainage work and pavement marking continues. He advised TxDOT expects street light work to be completed within 30 days.

- Sanctuary Development

Village Administrator Ferguson reported receipt of sewer plans for part of the commercial phase. He anticipated apartment construction to begin within 120 days.

Discussion included Alderman Dankert's request for a salary review; TxDOT timeframe for completion of railings and streetlights; installation of flags by Veterans Day; status of Carothers and Rosamond developments; status of stepping stone design; tree trimming schedule; low water crossing bridge clean-out and State permitting; traffic counts; heavy truck traffic; and apartment construction.

4. Public Hearing

Hold a public hearing regarding the Proposed Village of Salado Ad Valorem Tax Rate for the 2020 Tax Year to help fund the Proposed Fiscal Year 2021 Operating Budget for the Village of Salado. (*Village Administrator*)

Mayor Pro-tem Coggin introduced this item and Village Administrator Ferguson presented the proposed Voter Approval Tax Rate of \$0.5339, consisting of a \$0.2020 Maintenance and Operation Tax Rate and a \$0.3319 Debt Tax Rate. He advised that both proposed tax rates are below the current tax rates. He noted the Board's previous commitment to reduce the debt burden for taxpayers and said future surplus revenue could be used to reduce debt.

Mayor Pro-tem Coggin pointed to the Village's Maintenance & Operations rate as one of the lowest of any city in Bell County and felt the Board has done a good job of managing Village finances, but needs to better communicate this to the public. Discussion addressed the availability of public information on taxing entities and tax rates and ensuring the public is aware of and understands such information.

Mayor Pro-tem Coggin opened the public hearing at 6:58 p.m. After three calls for public comments, none were heard. Mayor Pro-tem Coggin closed the public hearing at 7:00 p.m.

5. Ordinances

- A. Discuss and consider approval of an ordinance of the Village of Salado, Texas, adopting the Fiscal Year 2021 Operating Budget for the Village of Salado; declaring findings of fact; providing an effective date; providing a severability clause; and providing an open meetings clause. (*Village Administrator*)

Village Administrator Ferguson presented an overview of the Proposed Fiscal Year 2021 Operating Budget, including specific funds, expenditures, and revenues. He highlighted certain grant funding opportunities and partnerships, as well as planned park/road improvements.

Alderman Bell moved to approve the ordinance adopting the Fiscal Year 2021 Operating Budget for the Village of Salado, as presented. Alderman Cole seconded.

Mayor Pro-tem Coggin called for a record vote as follows: Alderman Dankert, aye; Alderman Cole, aye; Alderman Bell, aye; Mayor Pro-tem Coggin, aye; and Mayor Blancett, aye. Alderman Coachman was not present and not voting. Motion carried on a vote of 5-0.

- B. Discuss and consider approval of an ordinance of the Village of Salado, Texas, setting a property (ad valorem) tax rate; approving the Ad Valorem Tax Rate and levy of \$0.5339 per one hundred dollars (\$100) of assessed valuation of all taxable property within the corporate limits of the Village for the 2020 Tax Year to help fund the Fiscal Year 2021 Operating Budget for the Village of Salado; providing for an exemption on residence homesteads; providing for exemptions for individuals who are disabled or 65 years of age or older; providing for penalties and interest; providing for severability; providing for repealing conflict; providing for proper notice & meeting; providing for engrossment & enrollment; providing for notification to assessor; and providing for publication & effective date. (*Village Administrator*)

Village Administrator Ferguson explained the need for a record vote by the Board and there was brief discussion of procedural issues related to possible recusals.

Alderman Bell moved to approve the ordinance setting an Ad Valorem Tax Rate of \$0.5339 consisting of \$0.2020 Maintenance & Operation Tax Rate and \$0.3319 Debt Tax rate, as presented. Alderman Dankert seconded.

Mayor Pro-tem Coggin called for a record vote as follows: Alderman Dankert, aye; Alderman Cole, aye; Alderman Bell, aye; Mayor Pro-tem Coggin, aye; and Mayor Blancett, aye. Alderman Coachman was not present and not voting. Motion carried on a vote of 5-0.

6. Discussion and Possible Action

Discuss and consider action renewing the Village of Salado's insurance agreement with Texas Municipal League Health to provide employee insurance benefits. (*Village Administrator*)

Village Administrator Ferguson recommended approval of renewing the insurance agreement, which reflects a 7 percent increase for medical coverage, with no increases in dental or vision coverages. It was noted that the Village funds insurance costs for all full-time employees, while each employee is responsible for any dependent(s) coverage. Discussion addressed police officer turnover and need to evaluate base pays, benefits, or other incentives.

Alderman Cole moved to approve renewing the Village of Salado's insurance agreement with Texas Municipal League Health, as presented. Alderman Dankert seconded. Motion carried on a vote of 4-0.

7. Workshop

- A. Discuss and consider issues relating to those properties required to connect to the Village of Salado Wastewater System who have failed to meet the connection requirement. (*Village Administrator*)

Village Administrator Ferguson asked for Board input on the issue of approximately one dozen properties that have not connected for various reasons, including availability of plumbers. Discussion addressed possible options such as soliciting bids from contractors to connect properties and legal means of recovering costs from property owners; issue of fairness for those that have either connected or pulled permits to connect; 60-day limit for property owner to connect before Village forces connection; notification to non-compliant owners; issuance of a bid package; preference for payment agreements versus liens; and consensus to place this item on a future agenda for action.

- B. Discuss and consider issues relating to the future connection of select commercial properties whose owners have expressed interest in connecting to the Village of Salado Wastewater System. (*Village Administrator*)

Village Administrator Ferguson provided the following estimates to connect certain interested properties, some of which would require annexation to connect:

- \$283,640 for a low pressure service extension to connect Sonic, Fairway, and convenience store
- \$71,250 for a low pressure service extension to the Salado Public Library
- \$75,000 for line along south side of Salado Plaza Drive for Salado Plaza Drive and Brookshire Brothers
- \$129,000 for commercial properties along Rock Creek (minus \$60,000 if Barton House handles its own connection)

He said remaining 2018 bond proceeds and wastewater disbursement funds will be more than adequate to cover the approximately \$558,000 total connection costs outlined above. Discussion addressed Board direction on making properties subject to impact fees or considering as part of initial service area; future system capacity; requests from developers for wastewater service; high cost of connecting Holiday Inn; additional revenue gained from extending service; and use of additional revenue to reduce debt service. Consensus was reached to include this item for action

on a future agenda and to treat the service extensions as part of the initial service area without imposition of impact fees.

- C. Discuss and consider issues relating to odor control at the Royal Street Lift Station. (*Mayor Pro-tem Michael Coggin and Village Administrator*)

Village Administrator Ferguson and Mayor Pro-tem Coggin spoke of their discussions with a vendor who can provide a demonstration for an odor control elimination system at a cost of \$7,500, which includes installation and chemicals. Mayor Pro-tem Coggin said the vendor will leave the system in place for one month, then the Village can decide whether or not to purchase the system. He noted positive references from the cities of Pflugerville and Lakeway and provided details on the system and chemicals. If the demo is successful, the Village would pay \$22,000 for permanent set-up of the system, plus \$6,000 per year for chemicals at each lift station. He noted that this is significantly less costly than a previously considered system at just one lift station. Consensus was reached to present a formal proposal to the Board at its next meeting.

Adjournment

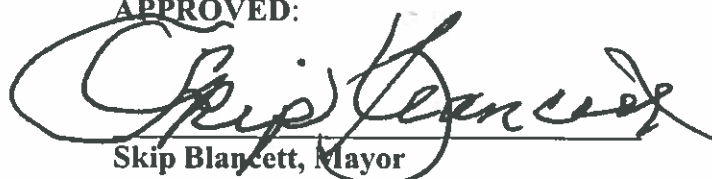
Alderman Bell moved to adjourn. Aldermen Dankert seconded. Mayor Pro-tem Coggin called the meeting adjourned at 8:10 p.m.

Recorded by:

Cara McPartland

These minutes approved on the 5th of November, 2020.

APPROVED:


Skip Blancett, Mayor

ATTEST:


Cara McPartland, City Secretary

