

The City of Hilshire Village

TUESDAY, September 21, 2010

REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING

6:00 P.M.

1. CALL TO ORDER: Mayor Robin Border called the City of Hilshire Village Council Meeting to order at 6:10 P.M. at 8301 Westview, Houston, Texas 77055.

Invocation was given by Council Member Shannon Whiting.

1.2 Present: were Mayor Robin Border, Mayor Pro Tem Connie Castro and Council Members Shannon Whiting, Stephanie Post, Edward Davis and Bill Bristow. Also present were Chief Gary Finkelman, Spring Valley Police Department, Chief Berousek, Village Fire Department, Efrain Him, P.E., Claunch & Miller, Inc., Engineer for the City, Manisha Patel, City Treasurer and Ted Lazarides, Building Official. David Olson, City Attorney, Olson & Olson was absent.

Mayor Border introduced Interim Fire Chief Dave Berousek. Chief Berousek reported on changes he has made since becoming the Interim Fire Chief. He stated the VFD did not have a formal mission statement. The Department worked together to achieve this so the VFD would have a specific direction. Chief Berousek also stated he created an open door policy with personnel. The Chief said some procedures were changed. The ladder truck will no longer go with every ambulance call and they have created software to measure in seconds the response time instead of by minutes. Chief Berousek said that the Village Fire Department needs to change the culture and philosophy of the department and they need to support the employees and train them to be successful and all this can be done by leadership. He believes the next chief will be able to offer the needed leadership. Chief Berousek agrees that the department has more supervisors than needed. He believes all the problems that the audit found can be solved with good leadership. Mayor Border asked if Chief Berousek thought the budget might offer a surplus with new management. Chief Berousek said he and the upcoming Chief have discussed a curve in structure of personnel and their supervision and that could change the budget.

2. CITIZENS COMMENTS: None

3. REPORTS TO COUNCIL:

3.1 Police: Chief Finkelman said during the month of August there was one (1) burglary on Ridgeley, near Wirt Road, where the thieves did enter the house and stole several items. He also

said a yard crew in Spring Valley was robbed by gun point. A resident took a picture of the car and Spring Valley was able to trace the car and posted the information with other law enforcement agencies. Due to an off duty Memorial Village Officer seeing the bulletin and the assistance of other law agencies the men were arrested. Chief Finkelman also stated that everyone needs to program their cell phones with Spring Valley's telephone number 713-465-8323.

OUT OF ORDER

3.5 Treasurer's Report: Manisha Patel presented the financial statements. Council did not have any questions for the Treasurer.

3.2 Fire Commissioner: Mayor Border reported that Chief Berousek already gave the report.

3.3 City Secretary: City Secretary Blevins addressed the complaints and issues and stated the home owner at 8014 Burkhart would remove the tree in the ravine. She also stated the tree limb over the stop sign at Glourie and Pine Chase had been removed. City Secretary Blevins stated there was a resolution in the Consent Agenda that needed to be approved for the CDBG Grant. Mayor Border said the resolution states that contractors working for the City will need to make sure they hire any underemployed residents to do the work but he did not believe the City had any to employ.

3.4 Building Official: Ted Lazarides stated there were five (5) permits issued and twenty-four (24) inspections completed in the month of August. He stated the Ye Darm Church presented plans to build a new building. He turned down the plans because of a zoning issue where the building was too close to a residence. They re-submitted the plans but he turned them down again due to the fact that they would no longer have enough parking per the ordinance. The Church then presented a letter from the adjoining Church stating they could use their parking and they were told they would need to seek a variance from City Council.

3.6 Engineer's Report: Efrain Him of HDR/CMI stated he contacted Mr. Doug Rowell again to inquire on the status of the City's HMGP application to fund the Pine Chase and Glourie Drives Paving & Drainage Improvements Project. Mr. Rowell stated he still had not received any notification from FEMA.

Efrain said he confirmed the location of the generator with Mayor Border and that Dabhi Engineering had resumed preparing the specs for the generator. Mayor Border asked when the City would have a generator. Efrain said within two (2) months.

Efrain stated after reviewing the agreement between the state and the City under TDRA's Hurricane Ike Disaster Recovery Program (\$204,682 grant), an amendment was sent to GrantWorks who then presented it to the state. Mayor Border confirmed with Efrain that approval has been given to commence work on this project. Efrain stated the City could start the engineering work but could not go out for bids until the City has completed an environmental study. Council Member Post asked for clarification of the two (2) grants. Efrain said the \$200,000 grant is for drainage improvements, ditch cleaning, re-grading and replacement

culverts for the 1200 block of Pine Chase. The \$2,500,000 is for paving Pine Chase/Glourie Loop along with Anadell and Bromley. Council Member Post asked if the utilities would be replaced. Mayor Border stated the utilities would be done the same as the Ridgeley project. Mayor Border will have the engineers look to see if there is merit in lowering Pine Chase using Metro money when the drainage improvements are being done.

Efrain stated the City is still waiting on the execution of the agreement by the state regarding the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant.

Efrain stated he was still working with Severn Trent on the water valves. He was still missing the locations of a few valves and the GPS information.

Efrain said he was currently trying to receive a waiver from TCEQ on the EPP requirements because it will be a burden to the City to conform to their requirements. The City of Houston is also trying to receive a waiver which will include Hilshire Village.

4. DISCUSSION ITEMS:

4.1 The drainage guidelines for existing homes: Mayor Border said the way he understands it you cannot dig a ditch to drain your own property without a permit or inspection. He said drainage issues have become a nightmare. Efrain Him said the City's guidelines state for new construction and re-development you must present a drainage plan for approval. He said that building a swale you do not have to have a permit but if they install drains or if they change or tie into the City's right-of-way the resident must have a permit and plans must be approved. The problem is there is no front ditch at 1011 Ridgeley.

5. ACTION ITEMS (CONSIDERATION AND POSSIBLE ACTION):

5.1 A motion was made by Council Member Davis to approve a variance for 1011 Ridgeley regarding the requirements necessary for the drainage permit, seconded by Council Member Bristow. Beth Cambre said the address is the old farm house. In the back yard there is a drainage problem and she had a professional irrigation company look at the problem and she was told she should not add dirt to the situation; she would need a drain system to take the water to the front. To install the system it would be \$3,450. If she had to have a system engineered it would cost her up to \$12,000. Mayor Border wanted to know where the water is going to flow. She said there was a culvert that runs in front of Ridgeley. Efrain said there was a catch basin she could tap into. Efrain said he was under the assumption that there was going to be work in the City's right-of-way. City Secretary Blevins said any underground drainage system has to be approved and permitted. Mayor Border said the drainage plan that was presented did not appropriately show where the water was draining and that was why it was so confusing. Mayor Border said this issue was not something that Council should decide but should be approved by the drainage engineer. **A motion was made by Council Member Davis to retract the motion, seconded by Council Member Bristow.**

The City Engineer was excused at this time.

5.2 A motion was made by Council Member Bristow to approve the parking pad at 1125 Ridgeley, seconded by Council Member Davis. Mayor Border said he was not in favor of the ordinance that does not allow parking pads. Council Member Davis said he felt this location needed a parking pad because it was at a narrow restrictive place on a curve and it was a safety issue. Mayor Pro Tem Castro said in section 7.4 of the ordinance it states no blockage of drainage is allowed. She fails to see how material that is pervious used adjacent to the street blocks drainage. Mayor Pro Tem Castro felt the ordinance needs to be amended. Mayor Pro Tem Castro said she was opposed to culverts lining the ditches. She stated that there needs to be guidelines to follow for parking pads. Council Member Bristow wanted to see this issue on the agenda next month. Ted Lazarides said he had no problem with parking pads as long as they were made of pervious material. **A vote was taken to approve the motion approving the parking pad at 1125 Ridgeley. The vote passed unanimously.**

The Building Official was excused at this time:

5.3 A motion was made by Council Member Whiting to approve a Water Meter Replacement Policy, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Castro. Mayor Border stated there was not a replacement policy at this time. He had talked to Severn Trent to find out when a meter should be replaced. Mayor Border was told that a meter with a reading over a million should be replaced. Council Member Post inquired how much water was not being accounted for at this time. Mayor Border said it was approximately a million which is approximately \$5,000 a year. He said the money would come out of the Utility Account not the General Fund. Council Member Post felt that there should not be any money spent at this time. **A vote was taken to approve the motion approving a Water Meter Replacement Policy. The vote failed unanimously.**

Council recessed the Council Meeting at 7:50 P.M.

Council reconvened the Council Meeting at 7:55 P.M.

5.4 A motion was made by Council Member Davis to approve the City of Hilshire Village to join the Village Fire Department's Insurance Cooperative allowing the City Secretary to have Life Insurance and LTD, seconded by Council Member Post. Mayor Border said approving this will cost the City \$371 a year. **A vote was taken to approve the motion approving the City of Hilshire Village to join the Village Fire Department's Insurance Cooperative allowing the City Secretary to have Life Insurance and LTD. The vote passed unanimously.**

5.5 CLOSED EXECUTIVE SESSION: NONE

6. DISCUSSION ITEMS:

6.1 Proposed Tax Rate: Mayor Border said that another budget with a different tax rate will be presented at the next public hearing on October 7th. Mayor Border said the City will be out of money in the General Fund unless the City increases taxes over the roll-back rate. He stated Council needs to figure out how long it should take to replace the funds. Mayor Border said in personal business people normally keep three (3) months of expenses in savings. Mayor Border stated the question is not if Council should propose a tax rate over the rollback rate but how

much over the rollback rate Council will propose. Mayor Border said he hopes the room is full at the next public hearing. He believes the City needs to make the tax increase large enough so that an increase will not have to be repeated. Council Member Post said that originally Council had talked about a \$0.15 increase in which the trash fee would be taken care of in the taxes and they are now talking about a \$0.05 increase and charging the residents a trash fee. Mayor Border said all he has heard from residents was why the City is charging for trash instead of covering it in the taxes. Mayor Pro Tem Castro said the trash fee should be equal to everyone and not based on the cost of one's house. Council Member Bristow asked about entities that did not pay property taxes. City Secretary Blevins stated the non taxable entities that have their trashed pick-up by the City are charged for those services.

6.2 McGrath Audit of the Village Fire Department: Mayor Border said there is a good deal of room for personnel changes. He believes this will create a reduction in cost.

7. REPORTS TO COUNCIL:

7.1 Mayor and Council:

Mayor: NONE

Whiting:

Bridle Spur: NONE

Ridgeley Improvement Committee: None

8. CONSENT AGENDA:

8.1 A motion was made by Council Member Whiting to accept the Consent agenda, including Minutes of the Council Meeting of August 17, 2010, Minutes of the Special Council Meeting of September 1, 2010, a Proclamation for Texas Night Out, a Proclamation for Halloween Night, and a Resolution of the City of Hilshire Village adopting Section 3 of the Local Opportunity Plan for its Texas Community Development Block Grant and to exclude the Building Officials invoice from the disbursements, seconded by Council Member Davis. Council Member Bristow stated he was refunding the City \$65.00 for an inspection that was made at his residence in regards to a permit that he had pulled. City Secretary Blevins stated that since the check was made out to the City the Building Officials invoice should be paid in full. **A vote was taken to approve the motion accepting the Consent agenda, including Minutes of the Council Meeting of August 17, 2010, Minutes of the Special Council Meeting of September 1, 2010, a Proclamation for Texas Night Out, a Proclamation for Halloween Night, and a Resolution of the City of Hilshire Village adopting Section 3 of the Local Opportunity Plan for its Texas Community Development Block Grant. The vote passed unanimously.**

9. ADDITIONAL CITIZENS COMMENTS:

Alan Wolfe, 1314 Pine Chase Drive, did not understand why CenterPoint was cutting trees down and leaving them in the City's right-of-way. He hated to see the City picking and choosing who could have a parking pad. He believes the ordinance needs to be re-addressed. Mr. Wolfe would rather have the garbage fee as a tax instead of a fee and would like to see the City address cutting the cost of trash pickup by not allowing the yard men to bag and leave the debris. He said not every house is appraised correctly and the City needs to manage new growth.

Robert Wolf, 1205 Pine Chase, spoke in length to the arborist for CenterPoint. There are cases where they do not remove the debris after cutting down a tree. CenterPoint said they do not clean all the easements and ravines, they only come out every three (3) years to do major work. City Secretary Blevins stated CenterPoint's policy is if they are in the neighborhood trimming trees they remove the debris, if a resident or the City calls CenterPoint out to address a specific tree, they will cut the tree down and stack the debris.

10. ANNOUNCEMENTS: None

11. ADJOURNMENT: Council Member Bristow moved to adjourn, seconded by Council Member Davis. The meeting was adjourned at 8:44 P.M.

Mayor Robin Border

ATTEST:

Susan Blevins, City Secretary