



# September 15, 2020 Council Meeting

## Agenda Attachment with Recommendations

### **Agenda Item 10:** Update on Hurricane Laura & Budgetary Impact

Laura became a named storm two days after our last meeting, and has dominated the City Operations throughout the period. Planning for utility restorations began on Monday, August 24, and continued until very early in the morning on the storm struck in the early hours of Thursday, August 27. City Management was in contact with five separate contractor groups in preparation for the storm, but we were unable to assess damages and get the appropriate response in place until about 9am on the day of Laura. Listed from the highest level of expense to the least, we had access to three from independent storm contractors, contract crews who could be borrowed from Bryan Texas Utilities as well as two crews who were direct force account labor of the City of Seguin, Texas.

As the morning progressed it was clear we were not going to get a high level of catastrophic damage, and we were able to limit ourselves to using the crews from the City of Seguin. Although they experienced some trouble on the roads getting to town, Seguin arrived the evening after the storm ready to start work the next morning at first light which they did under direction of our Lineman Supervisor, Robert Lakey. Our crew had spent the time immediately after the storm spotting, and listing the repair work which needed to be done as soon as we had the extra help.

We had approximately 250 services out across town with south and east areas experiencing the most damage. The most severe local outages by loss of snapped utility poles was in the City Lake area with further issues in Magnolia Park and back in the Rocky and Bierhalter areas. There were of course spotty outages all over town, and most of the service was initially out due to problems outside town in areas nearer to the center of the storm. Generation and transmission to the City was completely disrupted for the day.

With few exceptions, the plan we had in place worked well. We kept Seguin busy for four days, and allowed the other crews available to go to places in more dire need of help. Indeed, when finished in San Augustine, Seguin departed town to assist the Newton area where several hundred poles had been snapped. Since then City crews have been revisiting any outages that occurred after the fact, and the Street Department is still working today to clear vegetative Debris.

There will be no FEMA assistance since our area was only declared a FEMA disaster for category B damages. This is the category for barricades for which we have no costs. We may be able to make another try at some state level assistance, but this will have to wait until all the costs are tabulated. A gross estimate is in the area of \$50K, but the billing from the City of Seguin is not yet completed. Management has been in close contact with their Utility Director on this issue to control the impact as much as possible, but we will have to reimburse them, and fairly so. In the end we should be able to cover this by moving money around within projects in the approved budget. This can be updated at the next Council meeting.

The communications facility we maintain in the firehall and the call center we use worked perfectly to let us keep up with information. Under the old system it would have been impossible to answer every call and document outages in a complete fashion that could then be passed onto the linemen as lists by area. There is literally no way for calls to outstrip our ability to answer and record them, although we are not, and never will be, able to call everyone back. This caused some friction with residents, but this will always be unavoidable in mass power outages no matter what system we use.

Much gratitude is owed the City of Seguin, Bryan Texas Utilities and the Texas Public Power Association of which the City is a member. They all were integral in making the plan work to both get ready for, and then respond to the storm in exactly the most expedient and cost-conscious way possible.

*Late addition: On Friday when I had just written this, I got a call from TDEM, and they want an estimate of damages to find out if additional localities such as SA can qualify for more FEMA assistance. I will be talking to them next week, possibly before our meeting. I might have an update at that time.*

#### **Agenda Item 11: Adopt Property Tax Rate**

By law we may not adopt a rate to do anything other than raise the money we budgeted for in the approved current budget. This amount is \$345,000, and the resulting tax rate is 0.600305. At the time of the budget we thought it not the time to attempt any increase in light of the current economic conditions in the nation and in town. Senate Bill 2 changed the name of this rate from the "Effective Rate" to the "No-New-Revenue Tax Rate". There were many other changes per SB 2, none of which are good for small towns, but we will not trigger any elections and are unaffected at this time. Management intends to work on an extension budget to change the budget cycle from July-June to October-September. This would allow us to make tax adjustments at the same time we are approving budgets. Doing an extension is something we don't want to attempt while recovering from a storm.

**Recommended Motion:** I motion we adopt the No-New-Revenue Tax Rate of 0.600305.

#### **Agenda Item 12: Award Banking Services Contract**

This was pushed from last month's meeting. We are actively in talks with institutions and should have a recommendation by meeting time.

**Recommended Motion:** I motion we award the banking contract to (xxx bank).

#### **Agenda Item 13: Hurricane Harvey CDBG MIT Grant Scoping**

Although we estimate we qualify for approximately \$3,472,500 in a likely grant, the scope we can pursue is different than originally available. This is because the money will have to equally benefit everyone in town. This is shifted us to major upgrades in the water system. Danny Hays from KSA will be at the meeting to detail the direction. This is not unlike the application process we recently went through on sidewalks. We must tailor the work and application to maximize the successful acquisition of the funding.

**Recommended Motion:** No motion is recommended at this time.


#### **Agenda Item 14: Alderman Pay**

This is an item on the agenda at request Alderman Liepman. Current rate is \$100 per month. Other Cities are widely varied.

**Recommended Motion:** TBD

**Agenda Item 15:** City Officers Term of Office

This is an item on the agenda at request Alderman Fussell. It always possible in any given year, the entire Council could turn over. This would be a detrimental effect on City governance by any standard. Since this was originally done to avoid election costs it was suggested we stagger the terms to some which alternate with the general election. This could be done by random means such as a coin flip. As an example either A1, A3 & A5 get elected in even years or A2, A4 and the Mayor get elected in even years. A permutation of this is depicted in the chart below, and obviously as a result of the same choosing be it random or not, a certain three positions would either term early or late by a year.

		Officer 					
County	Year	A1	A2	A3	A4	A5	Mayor
1&3	2020	✖	✖	✖	✖	✖	✖
	2021	✖		✖		✖	
2&4	2022		✖		✖		✖
	2023	✖		✖		✖	
1&3	2024		✖		✖		✖
	2025	✖		✖		✖	
2&4	2026		✖		✖		✖
	2027	✖		✖		✖	
1&3	2028		✖		✖		✖
	2029	✖		✖		✖	
2&4	2030		✖		✖		✖

In this representation the County Commissioners elected in the various years are shown by precinct at far left for comparison. We are addressing this issue with TML for direction as well as the City Attorney to be sure it can be done, but as of this writing we do not have the answer. All positions being coterminous is definitely a weakness.

**Recommended Motion:** TBD

**Agenda Item 16:** Junk Vehicles

Previous intentions to get vehicles together have been slowed by the fact the City does not hold clear title to some vehicles. We are working to resolve this with the State. However, for vehicles where this is not an issue and where the vehicle has been cannibalized or is otherwise useless and not worth any substantial value, we want the permission of the Council to dispose of them as scrap with proceeds placed in the applicable department under vehicles. We have worthless hulks of vehicles and implements literally in the weeds in some places that just need to go. They are not worth pulling out

and mechanically evaluating for sale. This does not include running vehicles that have any remaining value as transportation.

**Recommended Motion:** I motion we approve disposal of junk vehicles by the City Manager or his delegate, and further that eligibility of a junk implement or vehicle be at the discretion of same.

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