

**MINUTES
OF
CITY OF WHARTON
SPECIAL CITY COUNCIL MEETING
JULY 20, 2020**

Mayor Tim Barker declared a Special Meeting duly open for the transaction of business at 6:00 P.M. Public Works Director John Plaia led the opening devotion.

Councilmembers present were: Via Zoom: Mayor Tim Barker and Councilmembers Clifford Jackson, Terry Freese, Alice Heard-Roberts and Steve Schneider.

Councilmembers absent were: Russell Machann and Don Mueller.

Staff members present were: Via Zoom: City Manager Andres Garza, Jr., Finance Director Joan Anandel, Community Development Director Gwyn Teves, EMS Director John Kowalik, Finance Accountant London Davis, Assistant to the City Manager Brandi Jimenez and Emergency Management Coordinator Steve Johnson.

Visitors present were: Executive Director of the Wharton Chamber of Commerce Ron Sanders, Debra Medina, with the Wharton Downtown Business Association, Christine Stransky with SPOT, Barry Hodges with Friends of Wharton Animal Control, Darve Smith, Executive Director of the Wharton Plaza Theater and Albert Villegas with the Wharton Journal Spectator and Natalie Frels-Busby, Editor in Chief with The County Gin.

City Manager Andres Garza, Jr. stated that in an effort to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 by avoiding meetings that bring people in a group setting, and in accordance with the Texas Governor's Declaration of Disaster enacted March 13, 2020 and subsequently renewed monthly, the City of Wharton City Council was participating remotely in compliance with the Texas Open Meetings Act, as temporarily modified by Governor Abbott.

City Manager Garza gave the following statement:

Members of the public may participate by joining via Zoom, at the link provided on the agenda posted at the City of Wharton Website and instructions including how to access the meeting, using Zoom or telephonically, were posted on the City of Wharton's website at www.cityofwharton.com.

City Manager Andres Garza, Jr. would be the host for the Special City Council Meeting on the 20th day of July, 2020 and Zoom Teleconferencing software was being utilized for the electronic meeting. All members of the City Council have the ability to communicate during the meeting through the platform, and the public had access to listen.

All attendees must remember that it was a requirement of the Texas Open Meetings Act that, in order to lawfully participate in a teleconference, your camera must be engaged at all times, even if you step away from your computer.

The City Council should refrain from using the chat function, unless they are experiencing technical difficulties and it was necessary to send a message to the City staff, or if they need to indicate that they would like to make a comment or ask a question, and cannot otherwise signify their intent to the Mayor. Any chat messages sent would be recorded.

All votes taken during this meeting would be done by a show of hands, with a roll call vote to be taken, if necessary. Should the meeting be interrupted by technical difficulties, it will be restarted as soon as technical difficulties are resolved.

Roll Call and Excused Absences.

After some discussion, Councilmember Terry Freese moved to excuse Councilmember Russell Machann and Councilmember Don Mueller. Councilmember Clifford Jackson seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

Public Comments.

Community Development Director Gwyn Teves stated that if any member of the public viewing the meeting who desired to address the City Council regarding an item on the agenda for this open meeting would be allowed to do so at this time. Mrs. Teves said that if anyone desired to address the City Council, to please indicate their desire by raising their hand in the Zoom application. She said those who have raised their hand would be admitted to the meeting one at a time to make their comments to the City Council and prior to being admitted, the host for the meeting will ask – via the chat function – those who have raised their hand to identify the agenda item upon which they would like to make comment.

No comments were given.

The first item on the agenda was to review and consider a resolution of the Wharton City Council authorizing an agreement between the City of Wharton and Oakbend Medical Group for COVID-19 Testing and authorizing the Mayor of the City of Wharton to execute all documents related to said agreement. City Manager Andres Garza, Jr. stated the City of Wharton had received funding through the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES Act) for COVID-19 expenditures. City Manager Garza said the City Staff had been in negotiations with Oakbend Medical Group for COVID-19 testing and developing criteria for testing. He said Oakbend representatives would meet with the City Staff on July 21, 2020 to discuss a potential contract and a resolution would allow the City Staff to pursue these negotiations. After some discussion, Councilmember Alice Heard-Roberts moved to approve City of Wharton Resolution No. 2020-68, which read as follows:

CITY OF WHARTON RESOLUTION NO. 2020-68

A RESOLUTION OF THE WHARTON CITY COUNCIL AUTHORIZING AN AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE CITY OF WHARTON AND OAKBEND MEDICAL GROUP FOR COVID-19 TESTING AND AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR OF THE CITY OF WHARTON TO EXECUTE ALL DOCUMENTS RELATED TO SAID AGREEMENT.

WHEREAS, The City of Wharton has received funding through the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES Act) for COVID-19 expenditures; and,

WHEREAS, The City of Wharton wishes to utilize some of the funds for COVID-19 Testing for the City of Wharton residents; and,

WHEREAS, The City Staff has been in negotiations with Oakbend Medical Group for developing criteria for a potential contract; and,

WHEREAS, Some of the criteria for testing will be as follows:

1. Testing will only be for City of Wharton residents.
2. Identification must be provided prior to testing.
3. Testing will be for anyone with or without symptoms.
4. The type of test that will be utilized is the Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR) test.
5. The City of Wharton has allocated \$100,000.00 for testing.
6. Testing results will be provided to the patient within the hours specified in the agreement.

WHEREAS, The Wharton City Council wishes to engage the services of Oakbend Medical Group to provide COVID-19 testing to the citizens of the City of Wharton; and,

WHEREAS, Oakbend Medical Group wishes to provide said services for the City of Wharton; and,

WHEREAS, The City of Wharton and Oakbend Medical Group wishes to be bound by the conditions of said services agreement; and,

WHEREAS, The Wharton City Council wishes to authorize the Mayor of the City of Wharton to execute the agreement after approval by the City Attorney.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF WHARTON, TEXAS as follows:

Section I. The Wharton City Council hereby authorizes the Mayor of the City of Wharton to execute a services agreement with Oakbend Medical Group for COVID Testing for the City of Wharton after approval by the City Attorney.

Section II. The City of Wharton and Oakbend Medical Group are hereby bound by the conditions as set forth in the agreement.

Section III. That this resolution shall become effective immediately upon its passage.

Passed, Approved, and Adopted this 20th day of July 2020.

CITY OF WHARTON, TEXAS

By: _____
TIM BARKER
Mayor

ATTEST:

PAULA FAVORS
City Secretary

Councilmember Terry Freese seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

The second item on the agenda to review and consider was the City of Wharton 2020-2021 Fiscal Year Budget:

A. Funding Request:

1. Women's Crisis Center.

Joan Anandel made a presentation for the Crisis Center and stated they had requested \$5,000 from the City of Wharton for the Crisis Center. After some discussion, no action was taken.

2. Wharton Chamber of Commerce.

Mr. Ron Sanders, Executive Director of the Wharton Chamber of Commerce, made a presentation regarding the services being provided by the Chamber of Commerce to the City and made the request for \$58,000 from the City of Wharton's Hotel Motel Fund, which he stated was the same from the previous year. After some discussion, no action was taken.

3. SPOT

Christine Stransky with SPOT made a presentation on behalf of SPOT and requested \$3,000 from the City of Wharton. After some discussion, no action was taken.

4. The Plaza Theatre.

Darve Smith, Executive Director with the Plaza Theatre made a presentation regarding the theatre and requested funding from the City of Wharton in the amount of \$5,225. After some discussion, no action was taken.

5. Friends of Wharton Animal Control.

Barry Hodges with Friends of Wharton Animal Control made a presentation regarding the Friends of Wharton Animal Control and requested funding from the City of Wharton in the amount of \$3,000. After some discussion, no action was taken.

6. Wharton Downtown Business Association.

Debra Medina with the Wharton Downtown Business Association made a presentation regarding the Wharton Downtown Business Association and requested funding from the City of Wharton in the amount of \$10,000. After some discussion, no action was taken.

B. Five-year Vehicle & Equipment Capital Needs:

1. Code Enforcement Department.
2. Parks & Facilities Department.
3. Airport Department.
4. Fire Department.
5. Emergency Medical Services Department.
6. Emergency Management Department.
7. Police, Animal Control & Communications Departments.
8. Municipal Court.
9. City Secretary.
10. Civic Center.
11. Community Development.
12. Central Services.

City Manager Andres Garza, Jr. stated each Department Head had presented their five-year Capital Needs requests for the City of Wharton. Finance Director Joan Andel made the presentations.

C. Five Year Capital Infrastructure Improvement Program:

1. Transportation Systems.
 - A. Streets.
 - B. Major Thoroughfares.
 - C. Sidewalks.
2. Drainage System.
3. Flood Reduction Project-Levee.
4. Water and Sewer Utility System.

- D. General Fund.
- E. PEG Fund.
- F. Hotel Motel Fund.
- G. Narcotics Seizure Fund.
- H. Debt Fund.
- I. Capital Improvement Fund.
- J. Water & Sewer Fund.
- K. Solid Waste Fund.
- L. Emergency Medical Services Fund.
- M. Civic Center Fund.
- N. Airport Fund.

Finance Director Joan Andel and City Manager Andres Garza, Jr. presented information regarding the proposed 2020-2021 fiscal year budget. Finance Director Joan Andel presented the needs of the

City of Wharton
City Council Budget Meeting
July 20, 2020

departments. City Manager Garza said the presentation would give the City Councilmembers a view of what department future needs would be. He said the City Staff would review the requests and by the next budget workshop present a draft budget that would be balanced. After some discussion, no action taken.

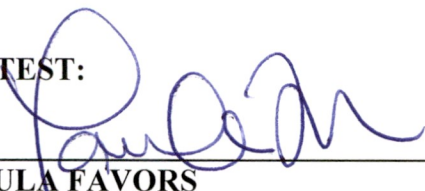
Adjournment.

There being no further discussion, Councilmember Terry Freese moved to adjourn. Councilmember Steve Schneider seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

The meeting adjourned at 7:26 p.m.

CITY OF WHARTON, TEXAS

By: 
TIM BARKER
Mayor

ATTEST:

PAULA FAVORS
City Secretary

