

**City of Wortham, meeting held at 107 S. 2nd, Wortham, Texas**

Minutes of Public Hearing and Regular Council Meeting on Tuesday, September 9, 2025

**Council Present:** Mayor Patty Jones, Mayor Pro-tem Michael Busby, Deborah Evans, Patrick Evans, and Cliff NeSmith

**Council Absent:** Jeff Carr

**Staff Present:** Tonya Rissmiller, Waylon Gierisch, and Kelly Craig

**Others Present:** Billy and Melissa Perez, Heath McCoslin, Kerri Butler, Brandy Hughes Chenault, Karen NeSmith, and Caroline Samford

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At 6:22 p.m., Mayor Jones announced a quorum was present and Councilmember P. Evans gave an invocation.

**Public Hearing**

1. Mayor Jones opened the public hearing to receive comments on the proposed 2025-2026 budget, WEDC budget, and proposed 2025 tax rate.

Billy Perez asked for an explanation for the increase in the proposed 2025 tax rate. Mayor Jones stated that the 2025 tax rate includes a debt service component comprised primarily of the certificates of obligation for the City Hall renovation. No other citizens present chose to speak.

At 6:29 p.m., the public hearing was closed.

**Informal Citizen Comments (open for 15 minutes only) - None.**

\*Councilmember NeSmith joined at 6:29 p.m.

**Regular Session**

**1. Citizen Participation:**

- A. Heath McCoslin was present to renew the July 8, 2025, request by Heath and Mollie McCoslin for a water tap, sewer tap, and water meter at their property located on CR 1000, which original request had been tabled to allow discussion by the McCoslins with other property owners along CR 1000 interested in cost-sharing for access to water services. Heath McCoslin stated that he has not heard of any such interested owners, and believes it would be more efficient for the McCoslins to connect to water services at the west side of their property.
- B. Shannon Zalela was not present to request a water tap, sewer tap, and water meter on her property on Riley St.

2. Councilmember Busby made the motion to table the request by Heath and Mollie McCoslin for a water tap, sewer tap, and water meter at the west side of their property on CR 1000 until further discussions with the City of Mexia have been made regarding adding additional water taps to the City's water infrastructure. Seconded by Councilmember D. Evans. The vote was 4 to 0. Motion to table was carried.
3. Councilmember P. Evans made the motion to table the agenda item for Shannon Zalela, who was not present to request a water tap, sewer tap, and water meter on her property on Riley St. Seconded by Councilmember Busby. The vote was 4 to 0. Motion to table was carried.
4. Billy Perez of Fairfield EMS provided information about Fairfield EMS' emergency management and ambulance services and requested the City of Wortham consider using Fairfield EMS as the City of Wortham's primary emergency management and ambulance provider in place of the City of Mexia EMS. After discussion, Councilmember P. Evans made the motion to table Fairfield EMS' request to allow the City of Wortham to review the service provided by City of Mexia EMS for one year. Seconded by Councilmember NeSmith. The vote was 4 to 0. Motion to table carried.
5. **Consent Agenda** - Councilmember P. Evans made the motion to approve the following consent agenda:
  - A. Approve minutes of August 12, 2025, and August 18, 2025.Seconded by Councilmember Busby. The vote was 4 to 0. Motion carried.
6. After discussion, Councilmember NeSmith made the motion to approve Ordinance No. 767-0925 amending and increasing the minimum monthly charge for water services to remove the first 1,000 gallons of water usage that had been included in the minimum monthly charge, with the effect that (a) the minimum monthly charge for water services is payable by each City customer whether or not any water is used, and (b) the additional \$10.60 for each 1,000 gallons of water used will continue, but will begin with the first 1,000 gallons of water usage. Seconded by Councilmember P. Evans. The vote was 4 to 0. Motion carried. No changes were made to wastewater fee and charges.
7. Councilmember P. Evans made the motion to approve the Wortham Economic Development Corporation 4A and 4B 2025-2026 budget. Seconded by Councilmember NeSmith. The vote was 4 to 0. Motion carried.

8. Councilmember Busby made the motion to approve the contract labor line item for the 2025-2026 budget for the City of Wortham enterprise fund. Seconded by Councilmember P. Evans. The vote was 2 to 1. Motion carried.

|               | <b>FOR</b> | <b>AGAINST</b> | <b>ABSTAIN</b> | <b>ABSENT</b> |
|---------------|------------|----------------|----------------|---------------|
| Michael Busby | ✓          |                |                |               |
| Jeff Carr     |            |                |                | ✓             |
| Deborah Evans |            | ✓              |                |               |
| Patrick Evans | ✓          |                |                |               |
| Cliff NeSmith |            |                | ✓              |               |

9. Councilmember NeSmith made the motion to approve the 2025-2026 budget for the City of Wortham, excluding the enterprise fund. Seconded by Councilmember Busby. The vote was 4 to 0. Motion carried.

|               | <b>FOR</b> | <b>AGAINST</b> | <b>ABSTAIN</b> | <b>ABSENT</b> |
|---------------|------------|----------------|----------------|---------------|
| Michael Busby | ✓          |                |                |               |
| Jeff Carr     |            |                |                | ✓             |
| Deborah Evans | ✓          |                |                |               |
| Patrick Evans | ✓          |                |                |               |
| Cliff NeSmith | ✓          |                |                |               |

10. Councilmember P. Evans made the motion to approve the 2025-2026 budget for the City of Wortham enterprise fund, excluding the contract labor line item. Seconded by Councilmember Busby. The vote was 4 to 0. Motion carried.

|               | <b>FOR</b> | <b>AGAINST</b> | <b>ABSTAIN</b> | <b>ABSENT</b> |
|---------------|------------|----------------|----------------|---------------|
| Michael Busby | ✓          |                |                |               |
| Jeff Carr     |            |                |                | ✓             |
| Deborah Evans | ✓          |                |                |               |
| Patrick Evans | ✓          |                |                |               |
| Cliff NeSmith | ✓          |                |                |               |

11. Councilmember NeSmith made the motion to approve raising more revenues from property taxes for fiscal year 2025-2026 than in the prior year by the adoption of a tax rate of \$0.581698/\$100, which is effectively (a) a 22.78% increase in the tax rate over the prior year adopted tax rate and (b) a 29.91% increase over the 2025 no new revenue tax rate. Seconded by Councilmember Busby. The vote was 4 to 0. Motion carried.
12. Councilmember P. Evans made the motion, in the form of the statement below (read aloud), to approve Ordinance No. 766-0925 adopting the voter-approval tax rate of \$0.581698/\$100 for use in the City of Wortham's 2025-2026 budget:

“I move that the property tax rate be increased by the adoption of the 2025 voter-approval tax rate of \$0.581698/\$100, which is effectively a 22.78% increase over

the prior year adopted tax rate, and a 29.91% increase over the 2025 no-new-revenue tax rate.”

Seconded by Councilmember Busby. The vote was 4 to 0. Motion carried.

|               | <b>FOR</b> | <b>AGAINST</b> | <b>ABSTAIN</b> | <b>ABSENT</b> |
|---------------|------------|----------------|----------------|---------------|
| Michael Busby | ✓          |                |                |               |
| Jeff Carr     |            |                |                | ✓             |
| Deborah Evans | ✓          |                |                |               |
| Patrick Evans | ✓          |                |                |               |
| Cliff NeSmith | ✓          |                |                |               |

13. Councilmember NeSmith made the motion to take no action on Resolution No. 843-0925 authorizing the nomination of individuals for the Board of Director Members of the Freestone County Appraisal District. Seconded by Councilmember Busby. The vote was 4 to 0. Motion carried.

14. Councilmember Busby made the motion to approve the engagement letter from Donald L. Allman, CPA, PC for the audit of the City of Wortham’s financial statements for the year ended September 30, 2025. Seconded by Councilmember P. Evans. The vote was 4 to 0. Motion carried.

#### **MONTHLY STAFF REPORTS - August 2025**

The following were reviewed:

- Finance Department - monthly financial report.
- Public Works - monthly activity.
- Police Department - monthly activity.
- Fire Department - monthly activity.
- WEDC - monthly activity.

**Adjournment:**

At 8:05 p.m., Councilmember P. Evans made the motion to adjourn; seconded by Councilmember Busby. The vote was 4 to 0. Motion carried.

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Patty Jones, Mayor

ATTEST:

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Tonya Rissmiller, City Secretary