

Public Hearing Meeting Minutes—City of Plantersville
November 20, 2023
Proposed Budget 2023-2024

The Board of Aldermen of the City of Plantersville, Grimes County, Texas, adjourned to Public Hearing for the City of Plantersville 2023 – 2024 at 6:17 p.m. on Monday, November 20, 2023, in Town Hall, 11335 Lodge Lane, Plantersville, Texas.

Members Present:

Karen Hale, Mayor
Kim Allphin, Alderman, Mayor Pro-Tem
Marilyn Bettes, Alderman, Secretary

Frank Dean, Alderman
Carolyn Kurten, Alderman

Absent at 6:00 p.m.: Otis Greenwood, Alderman

Arrival at 7:00 p.m.: Otis Greenwood, Alderman

Visitors: Joseph Ellis, CPA Partner, McCall Gibson Swedlund Barfoot PLLC; Andrea Chan, City Attorney
Representative for Art Pertile, Charles Collins, Trena Collins, Jessica Bomar, R Deen Miller

Public Hearing of Proposed Budget for the City of Plantersville 2023 – 2024 was called to order by Mayor Hale at 6:17 p.m. Quorum established.

Agenda Item 5 – Public Hearing Proposed Budget for 2023-2024

The Public Hearing for City of Plantersville Proposed Budget for 2023-2024 called to order at 6:17 p.m. by Mayor Hale. Mayor Hale reviewed the attached Proposed Budget for 2023-2024 with statement of financial condition regarding property taxes. The City of Plantersville levies no taxes on property, therefore, there is no revenue for this item.

She advised the State of Texas requires the municipality to post and list the tax rate even if the tax rate is zero.

The Proposed 2023-2024 Budget reflects the tax rate of \$0.00. The City of Plantersville has no municipal debt. The notice of Public Hearing has been announced and posted as required for citizen participation, discussion, and review.

Discussion:

Alderman Kurten stated that the entry for City Secretary was not needed at this time as there is no revenue being collected. Also, the rental budget entry for office space should not be listed as funds have accumulated for purchase and construction of city hall at some point in time.

Mayor Hale advised the required city operations with reports, audits, and additional obligations will require assistance in the future. The current demand is becoming more time sensitive and the need to have someone available during normal business hours to complete city duties in addition to the mayor's contribution.

Alderman Kurten stated that she and other aldermen would assist if asked. Mayor Hale appreciates this effort, however, those on the board with additional jobs and businesses cannot assist with the needs during business hours required with standard 9 am to 5 pm duties. Also, citizens do not want to drive to Anderson to vote in elections and someone is needed to be able to work in that capacity. The city has Alderman elections every year and only in the situation of no opposing candidates is an election not needed. The prior elections with through the Grimes County Voting process is becoming more difficult to utilize with expense charged for elections.

Alderman Kurten advised that she could assist with financials, reports, and other matters. Alderman Bettes remarked the assistance with normal work schedules and commitments would not be realistic at this point.

Alderman Allphin discussed the need of additional clerical work that would provide basic assistance to the mayor with day-to-day operations with initial part time activity. In the situation of the city election costing approximately \$10,000.00 the funds would be better spent on a secretary that would be paid as part of salary. If this can be accomplished with the additional aide/secretary and secure grant funds available for

small towns/cities for this position. It would be a benefit to the aldermen and the mayor with additional communication resources for information to be provided much more efficiently and timely regarding important matters. Alderman Allphin supplied additional information that the Texas Municipal League instructed, recommended, and suggested that a budget proposal should include amounts to allocate for expenses. These funds did not have to be spent; however, it was a better business procedure to have this in place and not to have additional steps of amending budgets.

Alderman Kurten stated that she did not agree with this expenditure.

Alderman Dean inquired about the communication budgeted expense listed. The explanation provided this was included in this budget and prior budget for a dedicated city phone line instead of personal line. Currently the mayor uses her personal line and has not felt the need to acquire a separate line. Alderman Dean asked that the sign budget expense be set at \$1,000.00 instead of zero \$0.00. Also, to be recorded for the minutes in the proposed budget Alderman Dean advised that he would vote against the budget and demonstrate the incompetency of placing the clerical/city secretary and office rental on the proposed budget.

Mayor Hale asked that the proposed budget for line-item CPA Annual Audit expense be increased to allow for the 2022-2023 audit to be completed. It is currently \$8,000.00 Alderman Dean suggested increase to \$15,000.00.

Alderman Allphin asked that consideration be given to having part time assistance as the city does have revenue being received from sources and a small portion could be allocated to allow for this expense. The efficiency and preparation of multiple state and federal forms on a continual basis would be better handled with dedicated assistance. Also, with the conservative and frugal spending, the hope is that a city hall, park, and facilities be provided for the citizens and visitors with purchase of property and construction without debt.

Alderman Kurten stated that she agreed that the future vision is to have a facility and place for the City of Plantersville.

Alderman Bettes advised that she felt clerical assistance, and an office location is a legitimate need as the business of the city continues to progress and grow.

Mayor Hale asked the audience if they had any additional questions or concerns regarding the proposed budget for the City of Plantersville. None were voiced.

No action was taken during the Public Hearing.

Mayor Hale adjourned the Public Hearing at 6:41 p.m.

Approved

Attest

Karen Hale, Mayor

Marilyn Bettes, Secretary

Date: _____

Date: _____