



The City of Liberty City Council

Special Called Meeting

~ Minutes ~

1829 Sam Houston
Liberty, TX 77575
www.cityofliberty.org

April Gilliland
City Secretary
936-336-3684

Tuesday, August 27, 2024

6:00 PM

City Council Chambers

I. CALL TO ORDER

This meeting was called to order on August 27, 2024 in the City Council Chambers, 1829 Sam Houston Street, Liberty, Texas at 6:00 p.m. by Mayor John Hebert.

A.	Attendee Name	Present	Absent	Late	Arrived
	Mayor John Hebert, Jr.	X			
	Mayor Pro Tem Libby Simonson	X			
	Council Member Dennis Beasley	X			
	Council Member Tommy Brents	X			
	Council Member Ed Seymour	X			
	Council Member Ross Ward	X			
	Council Member Debbie Dugger	X			

II. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF GUESTS AND VISITORS / PUBLIC COMMENT

Public Comment is reserved for members of the public who would like to address the City Council regarding agenda and non-agenda items. Please be aware that, under Texas Law, the Council may not deliberate or take any action during Citizen's comments for items not on the agenda. In some situations, City Staff may be able to respond to the public comment with a factual statement or clarification. The City Council may have the item placed on a future agenda for action or refer the item to Management and Staff for study or conclusion.

Mayor Hebert welcomed guests and visitors, opening the floor for public comment to those individuals wishing to address the Council. Mychal English requested to speak to the Council regarding the condition of Lee Tims Road and the repairs needing to be done. City Manager Tom Warner introduced Sean Stockard with the Dayton Chamber of Commerce and the plans to rename the Chambers to better suit South Liberty County and all the communities it now serves including Liberty.

III. REGULAR AGENDA

A. Regular Session

1. TEXAS MUNICIPAL LEAGUE INTERGOVERNMENTAL RISK POOL BOARD OF TRUSTEES ELECTION.

This is the official ballot for the election of Places 11-14 of the Board of Trustees for the Texas Municipal League Intergovernmental Risk Pool. Each Member of the Pool is entitled to vote for Board of Trustee members. Please record your organization's choices by placing an "X" in the square beside the candidate's name or writing in the name of an eligible person in the space provided. You can only vote for one candidate for each place.

The officials listed on this ballot have been nominated to serve a six-year term on the TML Intergovernmental Risk Pool (Workers' Compensation, Property and Liability) Board of Trustees. The names of the candidates for each place on the Board of Trustees are listed in alphabetical order on this ballot.

Ballots must reach the office of David Reagan, Secretary of the Board, no later than September 30, 2024. Ballots received after September 30, 2024, cannot be counted. The ballot must be properly signed, and all pages of the ballot must be mailed to: Trustee Election, David Reagan, Secretary of the Board, P.O. Box 149194, Austin, Texas 78714-9194. If the ballot is not signed, it will not be counted.

A motion was made by Council Member Simonson to elect Randy Criswell for place 11, Allison Heyward for place 12, Harlan Jefferson for place 13, and Mike Land for Place 14 respectively. The motion was seconded by Council Member Dugger. The motion passed 7 to 0 with all present voting yes.

2. A RESOLUTION BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF LIBERTY, TEXAS, A HOME RULE MUNICIPALITY EXISTING UNDER THE LAWS OF THE STATE OF TEXAS, NOMINATING A CANDIDATE FOR THE LIBERTY COUNTY CENTRAL APPRAISAL DISTRICT BOARD OF DIRECTORS.

It is time again for the voting taxing units within the Liberty County Central Appraisal District to select Appraisal District directors. These directors will serve for either a one-year term or a three-year term beginning January 1, 2025.

An Appraisal District director must reside in the Appraisal District for at least two years immediately preceding the date he or she takes office. A person may serve on the governing body of a taxing unit in the Appraisal District (i.e. City Councilman, School board trustees, County Commissioner, etc.) and still be eligible to serve as director. An employee of a taxing unit is not eligible to serve as a director unless he is also an elected official. Property Tax Code Section 6.035 prohibits a Board Member from serving if the member is related within the second degree of consanguinity or affinity to a person who is in the business of appraising property or represents property owners in proceedings in the Appraisal District. Under Section 6.036, a person is also ineligible if he, or a business that he has a substantial interest in, enters into a contract with the Appraisal District or a taxing unit in the district. Also, Section 6.035 of the Texas Property Tax Code may prohibit a person from serving if they owe delinquent taxes.

Each voting taxing unit is entitled to nominate one candidate for each of the five positions on the board. Thus, your taxing unit may nominate one to five candidates. To guarantee a position, a director must receive at least 834 votes out of 5,000 total votes.

Please submit the name(s) of your nominees by written Resolution by October 15, 2024. Only the name(s) of the nominees received by the deadline of October 15, 2024 will be included on the official ballot which will be mailed to each voting taxing unit by October 30, 2024.

This item is being tabled until the September 10, 2024, meeting to bring back nominee names.

3. A RESOLUTION BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF LIBERTY, TEXAS, A HOME RULE MUNICIPALITY EXISTING UNDER THE LAWS OF THE STATE OF TEXAS, APPROVING OFFERS FOR THE PURCHASE OF DELINQUENT TAX TRUST PROPERTY.

A tax foreclosure was done on the following property:

Property	Offeror	Offer Amount	CAD Value	Taxes Owed	City to Receive
Tract 33 out of Lot 1, Outer Block 31	Jose Luis Hernandez	\$3,000	\$32,736.00	\$7028.26	\$338.10

A motion was made by Council Member Simonson to approve Mr. Hernandez' offer to purchase delinquent tax trust property. The motion was seconded by Council Member Seymour. The motion passed 7 to 0 with all present voting yes.

4. A RESOLUTION BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF LIBERTY, TEXAS, A HOME RULE MUNICIPALITY EXISTING UNDER THE LAWS OF THE STATE OF TEXAS, AWARDED THE FY 2024-2025 EMPLOYEE HEALTH INSURANCE TO UNITED HEALTHCARE AND THE DENTAL, VISION, AND LIFE INSURANCE TO MUTUAL OF OMAHA.

On August 15, 2024, the City received proposals for Employee Health, Vision, Dental and Life Insurance for FY 2024-2025. The City of Liberty currently offers health insurance through Blue Cross Blue Shield of Texas (BCBS) and dental, vision and life insurance through Principal. The following is a summary of the current coverage with final, negotiated renewals from the current carriers:

Medical Plans:

- BCBS of Texas offered the City an 8% increase in their initial renewal offer.
- After negotiations, BCBS agreed to a flat renewal.
- United Health Care (UHC) is offering the City a similar plan for an annual savings of \$78,285. Along with the overall savings, UHC's plan has many favorable benefits over BCBS.
 1. The family deductible with BCBS is \$9,000 vs. \$6,000 with UHC.
 2. The maximum out of pocket with BCBS is \$8,150 vs. \$7,150 with UHC.
 3. The doctor's office copay with BCBS is \$35 vs. \$10 with UHC.
 4. The specialist copay with BCBS is \$70 vs. \$80 for a non-preferred specialist or \$40 for a preferred specialist with UHC.
 5. Lab and x-rays associated with an office visit are covered with the BCBS office visit copay, but UHC will charge an additional \$40 copay for these services.
 6. Complex imaging with BCBS is subject to the \$3,000 deductible and coinsurance, while it is a \$500 copay with UHC.
 7. Urgent care visits are \$75 with BCBS vs. \$25 with UHC.
 8. Emergency room visits are subject to a \$500 copay, deductible and coinsurance with BCBS, while ER visits are subject to a \$300 copay, deductible and coinsurance with UHC.
 9. Pharmacy copays are subject to a 6-tier copay system with BCBS, but a 3-tier system with UHC.

The following quotes were received for dental, vision, and life insurance from the following carriers:

- Principal-current carrier renewal
- BCBS
- Guardian
- Mutual of Omaha
- United HealthCare

Dental Plans:

- The Principal dental renewal keeps the plan design the same and is priced at a 7% increase.
- Mutual of Omaha matched the Principal rates and plan design.
- If the City adds BCBS's dental package, it would generate net savings of \$6,254, but the orthodontia benefit would drop from \$3,000 to \$2,000.
- None of the other dental carriers offered competitive pricing.

Vision Plans:

- The Principal renewal maintains the same plan design and there is no change in premium.
- Mutual of Omaha matched the Principal rates and plan design.
- None of the other vision offers are competitive with Principal.

Group Term Life Plans:

- The current Principal plan was renewed at flat rate initially, but after negotiations the rate dropped \$1,396 per year or 5%.
- The Mutual of Omaha plan mirrors the Principal plan and saves the City \$8,703 per year.

Overall Analysis:

The following carriers submitted declinations:

- Medical
 1. Aetna
 2. Allstate Benefits
 3. Cigna
 4. TML Health
- Dental/Vision/Life
 1. Lincoln Financial
 2. SunLife

Keeping BCBS and Principal as the current carriers would increase overall annual costs by \$2,310 for the entire group for all benefits. There are a couple of advantages to staying with BCBS and Principal for more than one year. Those include:

- The employees seem to be happy with the current carriers, with very few complaints.
- Less disruption to employees and covered members
- Stronger carrier history when looking towards future renewals

Moving to UHC and Mutual of Omaha would provide an annual savings for the City of \$83,282 compared to the 2023-2024 plan price. The UHC plan would also provide employees with some additional out-of-pocket savings. The Mutual of Omaha plans are identical in plan design.

A motion was made by Council Member Simonson to approve the resolution awarding the FY 2024-2025 Employee health insurance to United Healthcare and Dental, Vision, and Life Insurance to Mutual of Omaha. The motion was seconded by Council Member Ward. The motion passed 6 to 0 to 1 with Mayor Hebert abstaining.

5. Presentation of Proposed Fiscal Year 2024-2025 Budget.

City Manager Tom Warner presented the budget presentation for the 2024-2025 Fiscal Year. Mr. Warner started the presentation with the 2024-2025 proposed local tax rates. Then Mr. Warner went over the 2024/2025 taxable value comparisons, the 2024/2025 average homestead taxable values, the fiscal year 2024-2025 budget summary, the 2024-2025 major line items, unfunded capital projects, fleet request, non-capital and capital request and proposed fee changes for the 2024-2025 budget. Mr. Warner also discussed the Cambridge Fund Budget.

6. A RESOLUTION BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF LIBERTY, TEXAS, A HOME RULE MUNICIPALITY EXISTING UNDER THE LAWS OF THE STATE OF TEXAS, SETTING A PUBLIC HEARING ON THE PROPOSED FISCAL YEAR 2024 – 2025 CITY BUDGET.

The governing body of a municipality is required to hold a public hearing on the proposed budget. The hearing must be at least fifteen days after the date the proposed budget is filed with the City Secretary and prior to the date that the Council passes the tax levy ordinance. The budget must be passed before the tax levy ordinance can be passed. (LGC §102.006). Any person may attend and/or participate in the hearing.

A motion was made by Council Member Simonson to approve the resolution setting a public hearing on the proposed fiscal year 2024-2025 city budget for September 10, 2024 at 6:00 pm. The motion was seconded by Council Member Seymour. The motion passed 7 to 0 with all present voting yes.

7. A RESOLUTION BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF LIBERTY, TEXAS, A HOME RULE MUNICIPALITY EXISTING UNDER THE LAWS OF THE STATE OF TEXAS, SETTING THE DATE, TIME AND LOCATION FOR A PUBLIC HEARING ON THE 2024 TAX RATE.

Tax payers must be provided the opportunity to express their views regarding the proposed tax rate. A public hearing on a tax rate may not be held before the 7th day after the date the notice of a public hearing is given. The public hearing on setting the proposed tax rate is scheduled for September 10, 2024.

A motion was made by Council Member Simonson to approve the resolution setting the date, time and location for a public hearing on the 2024 tax rate for September 10, 2024, at 6:00 pm. at the Liberty City Hall. The motion was seconded by Council Member Dugger. The motion passed 7 to 0 with all present voting yes.

8. A RESOLUTION BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF LIBERTY, TEXAS, A HOME RULE MUNICIPALITY EXISTING UNDER THE LAWS OF THE STATE OF TEXAS, SETTING THE PROPOSED TAX RATE FOR FISCAL YEAR 2024 – 2025.

The City's current tax rate is \$0.6204 and staff is recommending a tax rate of \$0.6139 for Fiscal Year 2025. Truth in Taxation requires that we have one Public Hearing on the proposed tax rate.

A motion was made by Council Member Ward to approve the resolution setting the proposed tax rate for fiscal year 2024-2025 to \$0.6139. The motion was seconded by Council Member Beasley. The motion passed 6 to 1 with all Members Hebert, Simonson, Seymour, Beasley, Dugger and Ward voting yes and Member Brents voting No.

B. Executive Session

At 9:14 p.m., Mayor Hebert closed the open meeting and opened the Executive Session as authorized by Title 5, Chapter 551 of the Texas Government Code.

1. Texas Government Code §551.071 - Private Consultation with Attorney.

Discussion with attorney regarding contemplated/pending litigation and/or regarding matters protected by attorney/client privilege.

2. Texas Government Code §551.072 - Deliberation Regarding Real Property.

Discussion regarding real property.

3. Texas Government Code §551.074 - Personnel Matters.

To deliberate the appointment, employment, evaluation, reassignment, duties, discipline, or dismissal of a public officer or employee.

4. Texas Government Code §551.087 - Deliberation Regarding Economic Development Negotiations.

Discussion regarding economic development negotiations.

C. Reconvene into Regular Session

At 9:41 p.m., Mayor Hebert closed the Executive Session and reconvened the open meeting.

1. Consider and take possible action on legal matters discussed in executive session.

No action was taken.

2. Consider and take action on real estate matters discussed in executive session.

No action was taken.

3. Consider and take possible action on personnel matters discussed in the executive session.

No action was taken.

4. Consider and take possible action on economic development matters discussed in executive session.

No action was taken.

IV. ADJOURNMENT

A. Motion To: Adjourn

With no further business to discuss, Mayor Hebert adjourned the meeting at 9:42 p.m.

John Hebert, Jr., Mayor

ATTEST:

April Gilliland, City Secretary