

City Council March 14, 2006 Minutes

Ransom Canyon City Council Minutes

March 14, 2006, 7:00 P.M., 1 Ridge Road, Ransom Canyon, Texas 79366

This meeting of the Ransom Canyon City Council was called for March 14, 2006. Mayor Robert Englund called the meeting to order. Aldermen Earl Starks, Donna Clarke, Dick Hulslander and Ron Cox were present. City Attorney John Sims was also present, in addition to city department heads and a number of guests. Mayor Englund called for a moment of silent meditation.

2. MINUTES: Dick Hulslander asked to change page 3, fourth full paragraph to read, "Earl Starks expressed concern that the sale had not been a market value transaction." With this change, Dick Hulslander moved to approve the Minutes; Ron Cox seconded the motion, and all approved.

3. FINANCIAL REPORT: Motion to approve the report from Donna Clarke, second from Dick Hulslander, all voted aye.

4. ROOSEVELT SCHOOL BOND ELECTION: Berhl Robertson, Roosevelt ISD school superintendent discussed the upcoming school bond election.

A community committee was formed last fall to discuss the needs and priorities, and to help detail the items for the bond, which will be on the May 13 ballot. Berhl addressed the racial makeup of the 1150 member student body, 48% white, 45% Hispanic, 6% Black. 70% are economically disadvantaged. He described the school's outstanding educational standing in the community in the face of these odds.

In the last few years property values have increased. Per the Texas School funding formula, when property values increase, the state contribution decreases. Roosevelt had more money from the local taxpayers, but less money from the state. Roosevelt eliminated a 20% optional homestead exemption, which increased the taxes that Roosevelt ISD tax payers had to pay, even above any valuation increase that may have come from the Appraisal District. So the school has complicated financial challenges that are made more so by the school funding formula.

The school has infrastructure needs.

The electrical system, the HVAC system, restrooms all need repair. There is no fire sprinkler system, no paved roadways, and poor storm water drainage. After these items are addressed, the committee states that attention will be paid to the press box, the gyms, etc. The \$9,750,000 Bond election will create a tax increase of 18.5 cents per thousand dollars of valuation. The average homestead in the Roosevelt School district is \$41,000. This would create a tax increase of \$76.50 for the average district home. The average homestead in Ransom Canyon, however, is \$151,000. This will create an increase of \$279.37 for the Ransom Canyon homeowner.

At this time Roosevelt has no debt, only a maintenance and operations tax rate of \$1.50. \$20,000 - \$30,000 per year is assigned each year from this budget toward improvement projects, but this is not enough to accomplish the infrastructure improvements that have been identified.

First Southwest Company will be handling the bond sales, and the School Bond Rating will be the highest because school bonds are secured by the state.

The Lubbock water issue is not in the proposal. Superintendent Robertson states that this project will be funded by other sources.

5. COLON CANCER AWARENESS: The City Council passed a Resolution to Proclaim and Dedicate the year 2006 as "Colon Cancer Prevention and Awareness year." This action was taken on a motion from Dick Hulslander and second from Donna Clarke. All approved.

Dr. Davor Vugrin, Chairman of the taskforce, addressed the audience in a discussion of the condition of colon cancer and the need for awareness and preventive colonoscopy.

6. ATMOS Franchise contract. The council voted to keep the current 3% franchise rate. This action was taken on a motion from Earl Starks, second from Dick Hulslander. Ron Cox, Earl Starks and Dick Hulslander voted in favor of the motion. Donna Clarke voted against. Motion passed.

7. South Lake Shore Drive Street Parking. A request was made for the Council to declare that a stretch of South Lake Shore Drive should be made a "No Parking on Street" zone. The area under discussion has a street width of 37 feet, as opposed to most of the city streets that are 27 feet wide. There was no motion to approve a no parking zone.

8. Building Review Committee. The building review committee approved a new garden home on West Lake Shore Drive.

Request for Boat Dock Cover Variance: The council considered a request to rebuild a dock cover for a boat dock on East Lake Shore Drive. The council discussed that they passed the no-dock-cover regulation in order to prevent 2-story party decks. Earl Starks made a motion to approve the variance request. Dick Hulslander asked if Earl would consider amending his motion to approve the variance as a replacement for the existing dock. Earl said the motion as it stood was practical and reflected reasonable flexibility. Reasonableness is the key. Dick Hulslander said the motion lacked specificity. Earl withdrew his original motion, but no other councilman made a motion to approve the variance. So Earl Starks made a motion to approve the variance as a replacement for an existing dock. Donna Clarke seconded the motion, all approved.

9. Operations: Harold Needham reported to the council that he was concerned about the increasing water quality control regulations from the TCEQ, and the possible need that Ransom Canyon would have to chlorinate water, as it goes through our water system.

There was some discussion about the beacon light and a water measurement device on the tower. Contracts for the ground tank repair are being drawn up by the engineers.

Harold reported to the council that efforts to install a water sewer tap for a new home under construction on South Lake Shore Drive had been unsuccessful, because it appears that there are no existing lines to serve this lot. Installation of service lines will require going under the street, and this will be costly. Harold wanted to notify the council of this expense, should the council take the position that it is the city's responsibility to construct new service lines for this property. The council discussed the city's responsibility to deliver water and sewer service to platted lots. The council agreed that the city, not the homeowner, would be responsible to pay for the street cut and trench work that would be necessary to make this installation.

10. Police Report: Police Chief Wayne Rawls reported that the boat registration is beginning for this year. He also reported on a fish kill, which could be attributed to the expected shad turnover, but other fish types such as catfish, crappie and bluegill have also been sighted. This may be due to Golden Algae. Buffalo Lake had Golden Algae last year, but the temperature of Ransom's lake kept it from our waters. Hopefully the lake water temperature will continue to get warmer, quicker, and a major kill will be avoided. The fish and Wildlife Biologists are being called in to investigate. The Algae bloom stops at 60 degrees. The warm spring days will help the fish population.

11. Fire Department: Fire Chief Rand McPherson reported that the burn ban is still in effect. Engine one is back home, repaired, and the pancake breakfast was a big success. March 23 Ransom will host a severe weather storm spotter school for the National Weather Service. The Lubbock Fire School is April 3-6. Norm Michaels will teach a Red Cross disaster service class, and the EOC is invited, April 8 or 15. Sometime in May there will be an evening cookout. The FEMA fire service grant is ready, and Rand commented that perhaps the other grants have not been successful because the Volunteer Fire Department Charter number was not included. This current grant application is for a brush truck, \$63,000. 10% will be the city's part, if the grant is awarded.

12. Library: The library has been without water for three weeks.

13. The POA is still working on the property issue that was discussed last month.

There was no further business on the agenda, so the meeting adjourned on a motion from Donna Clarke, second from Dick Hulslander. All approved.

Melissa Verett