

**MINUTES: August 31,1999**

**CITY COUNCIL  
TAX RATE HEARING, AUGUST 31,1999  
MINUTES**

This called meeting of the Ransom Canyon City Council was set for August 31, 1999 at 7:00 P.M. at the Ransom Canyon Fire Station, 1 Ridge Road, a public building within the city limits of Ransom Canyon, at a time convenient for the public to attend. This meeting is held in accordance with the Tax Code of the State of Texas, and the only item on the agenda was the tax rate for the City of Ransom Canyon. Mayor Whetzel called the meeting to order, and all council members attended: Steven Oldham, David Peterson, Sandy Jones, Inez Speed and Robert Englund. After a brief silent meditation, the council discussed the tax rate.

About fifteen people attended the meeting.

Mayor Whetzel explained that the tax rate is the same as it was last year, 59 cents per \$100 valuation. The taxable base in the city has increased by two million dollars, and because this ratio raises more money than last year, the tax law that applies to 1999 taxes states that a public hearing must be held to inform the public. The tax rate is scheduled to be adopted after the budget is adopted at the regular September 14, 1999 council meeting.

Mayor Whetzel had prepared overheads of the 99-00 budget, and he explained the budget and the changes from last year. The budget is very conservative, with concentration on priorities, and attention to trends in revenue and expenses that had been previously identified. Mayor Whetzel believes the city wants low taxes and a good quality of life.

Operating Revenue is normal as expected, given the slight increase in property tax. The major consideration is observed in the Capital Improvement Fund. Year two of the CIP calls for \$325,000 to replace the water line for the city water supply. This is a six-inch line that has had twenty breaks in the last two years. It is old, dating to 1965. This line runs from the water tanks west through Arrowhead Drive, the West behind the homes on Comanche Lane to a point that meets with Ransom Road; then the line runs west through Buffalo Lake to a point that connects with the point of delivery from the City of Lubbock, somewhat shy of 1792.

The council believes the replacement of this line is a priority and to that end, some \$92,000 will be set into the CIP fund next year, with actual expense to be in budget year two, or 2001.

With a few questions from the audience on line items, the mayor detailed the budget revenue and expenditures. There are no new sources of revenue, but increased activity calls for new line items. The scholarship fund appreciated wonderful donations last year. Also, the scholarship fund is paying for LD Prices daughter to attend Texas Tech this semester, per the original intent of the fund, as it was established in 1987.

The State of Texas has been sending grant money for the past few years that is to be dedicated exclusively for police education. This funding from TCLEOSE will be given a line item in the budget next year. There were questions from the public about budgeting for mosquito spraying concerning frequencies. The council stated that spraying is done on an as needed, as possible basis.

Legal fees will be higher to tend to the caboose and the front road issues. In the police budget, \$1000 is budgeted for a youth program that will be run by the police department. Chief Rawls explained this is a program to keep the 13-16 year olds occupied with organized games, work details, sports, etc. It will assist the police in getting to know our young residents.

Roads and Grounds money was used this year for a major project, and this money will be replaced into the Reserve Fund in this 99 budget. Road Street Sweeping will be contracted. Our sweeper is a rare antique. Streets will be swept monthly.

Water expense is normal, but Lubbock is going up 3% on the purchase price, so this increase will be passed along to Ransom Canyon residents.

\$92,000 is set aside for the CIP and \$63,100 is set aside for the Reserve Fund. Mayor Whetzel explained that the Lake Dredging project was six years into the CIP, and given information available at this time for projected funding, cost estimates, problems in obtaining permits, Mayor Whetzel stated that the probability of accomplishing this project was low. Optimism was limited.

Allan Butler discussed this project at length with the council, and agreed to serve as committee chair for this project. Much information is needed in the way of engineering, legal permits, cost estimates, and funding solutions. The committee will be appointed at the September 14 council meeting.

A two-bay shop is under construction, and the funds for this project are in this year's CIP. CIP funding was \$80,000, the shop is costing \$22,000.

No further business on the tax rate hearing to be brought before the council, David Peterson moved to adjourn, Sandy Jones seconded the motion, and the Tax Hearing was adjourned.

#### **TOWN HALL MEETING.**

A Town Hall Meeting had also been scheduled for this evening, and the council convened immediately.

Walt Clark asked if studies had been made about the rate of silting into the lake, the original condition of the land, ownership of the land, the engineering needed to dredge the lake, etc. There was considerable more discussion of the lake-dredging project, and the Mayor answered again, that we don't know the equation.

Allan Butler asked if the Building Control Committee had recommended a cut and fill ordinance yet. The council will ask the Committee to continue work on this ordinance.

Donna Ricks asked if the police could watch the no-wake zones on the lake. Generally, the crowd expressed much support for the work the police had done this year in supervising activity on the lake.

The fishing club will meet again. The minnow project was a rousing success. Many minnows are now in the lake, and the catfish look healthy and well fed now. We had a great shad spawning. All the activities had helped the fish population. They will wait one full season, and then will stock the lake with game fish. TTU wildlife biology classes will tell them if our lake can support them.

Walt Clark wants the city to include Brookhollow in their projects. Mayor Whetzel stated a Brookhollow project would benefit a limited number of homeowners since there is no public access to the creek. David Peterson stated that the only feasible way to fix Brookhollow's problem is with manual labor. It was mentioned that prison labor could be used for this project.

There was some discussion about the possibility of getting the ISO rating lowered. The fire department said until the city passes an ordinance that outlaws wood roofs, the fire department couldn't realistically go back to the ISO for another inspection. The fire department will conduct public education to try to help change the 61% wood roof make up of the roofs in town. Mayor Whetzel asked if an article could be put in the ECHO, that we wanted to avoid another flap in the city over roofs, and some people feel really strongly about their wood roofs.

No further topics were brought before the council, so the meeting adjourned.

Melissa Verett, City Secretary