

The City of Hilshire Village

Special Council Meeting, September 27, 2010
MONDAY, September 27, 2010
SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING
6:00 P.M.

1. CALL TO ORDER: Mayor Robin Border called the City of Hilshire Village Special Council Meeting to order at 6:00 P.M. at 8301 Westview, Houston, Texas 77055.

1.2 Present: were Mayor Robin Border, Mayor Pro Tem Connie Castro and Council Members Shannon Whiting, Stephanie Post, Edward Davis and Bill Bristow.

2. CITIZENS COMMENTS:

Grady Farris, 1138 Glourie, stated he had not received the information he had requested regarding the building of City Hall and its expenses.

3. DISCUSSION:

3.1 The City's Proposed 2010 Total Rate: Mayor Border stated that Council discussed changing the proposed tax rate from \$0.15 to \$0.08 per \$100 evaluation over rollback rate. He asked for discussion.

Council Member Whiting stated she reviewed more information and studying what the City need in each coffers. She feels that the City should increase the coffers at a slower rate. Council Member Whiting thought that a \$0.04 to \$0.05 would be a better solution. She said that \$0.04 would put approximately one month of expenses into the account.

Council Member Post said that Council needed to take into consideration Spring Valley and the City of Houston's tax rates. She felt that \$0.08 was a legitimate number but a \$0.05 over rollback rate would contribute to building the general fund back and would not be such a strain on the residents.

Mayor Border stated he was also concerned that our tax rate would be unattractive to new comers. He stated that he wanted to make sure that everyone understood that Spring Valley and City of Houston have both larger residential and commercial tax bases.

Council Member Davis said that if Council votes for a tax over a rollback rate it does not mean they will ask for another increase next year. He felt the rate could go down next year but there was no way to tell at this time. Council Member Davis asked the question if the City does not increase the taxes and the City runs out of money, what is the City going to do. He stated that Hilshire Village was a unique Village; we do not have a base

for tax other than residential.

Council Member Bristow said he was in favor of the rollback rate not an increase over the rate. He said he would like to hear from the residents as to their ideas for a solution without going up on the tax rate.

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Council Member Post said it was an asset to the City that we are surrounded by Churches. She said she feels Council does need to increase the taxes, that they need to take the responsibility and do so. The question is what is the rate of the increase that the Citizens can tolerate?

Mayor Border stated that the City is mandated to advertise the original proposed rate regardless of the changes that Council has discussed.

The City Secretary stated on October 7th the City was having another Public Hearing so Council could vote on the tax rate on the 12th if the paper publishing the ad; otherwise, the meeting will either have to be on the 14th or the 19th.

FYE 2011 BUDGET: Mayor Border stated that revenue for taxes shows the \$0.08 over rollback rate. Garbage Fees were put in the revenue and the same number in fees. Legal Services are the same as last budget. Mayor Border said that the contingency line was left in it. The City Secretary stated the miscellaneous line was for items that do not have a separate line item. Mayor Border stated that the line for the generator was moved from the Metro account. Mayor Border stated the budget shows the money the City will be spending on their portion of the CDBG Grant money. He said the City will spend approximately half of the Utility Fund and the rest of the funds will come out of the Metro account.

The City of Houston has had two increases and Hilshire Village has not changed the billing rate which is contributing to the lesser amount of money the City is netting.

Mayor Border said the City has 3 or 4 residents who defer their taxes so the City does not get that revenue.

Council Member Whiting wanted to discuss the 5% increase. If she was an outsider looking in she would be questioning the 5% increase. She then acknowledged the City had done away with the Treasurer's position and was charging the City Secretary with those duties. Mayor Border also pointed out that all the other Villages provide full benefits to their employees and those benefits went up in cost so their raises would not be as large. He also brought out the fact that the City does not get volunteers like they use to.

Steve Tacconelly said it would be nice if the City had a projector and showed the budget on the wall. Mayor Border asked if anyone had one to contribute to the City; otherwise, we could not spend the funds on one at this time. Mr. Tacconelly also stated Council needed to cut expenses from the budget. The Mayor said that 72% of the budget was police, fire and trash. He also said that an audit was required and that cost was approximately \$15,000. Mayor Pro Tem Castro said that cutting every dime possible could that she could only come up with \$10,000 out of \$787,000 budget. Council Member Whiting said that Council did shop the services and the residents said they

wanted the Village Fire Department and Spring Valley Police Department.

Mayor Border said one of the avenues he was checking into was the Specific Use Permits to see if an expiration date could be added.

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Council Member Post asked the questions again how fast did the City want to re-coup the General Fund account.

4. ACTION ITEMS (CONSIDERATION AND POSSIBLE ACTION):

4.1 A motion was made by Council Member Whiting to approve a proposed 2010 tax rate of \$0.530475 per \$100 evaluations, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Castro. Mayor Pro Tem Castro stated she thought the \$0.08/\$100 would achieve the dollar amount in the General Fund in two (2) years. Mayor Border stated if you had the responsibility of the finances you would want a three (3) month reserve but he was also a tax payer. Council Member Whiting said that if you drop to \$0.06/\$100 you might not ever get to a three (3) month reserve. Council Member Post asked what goes up 8% every year. Mayor Border stated that it varies from year to year (legal, building, police, fire, trash).

Council Member Post wanted to know when the City prices themselves out of the market.

Mayor Pro Tem Castro stated she could not possibly base her decisions on rather or not there was going to be an election. She had to make the decision on what was best for the City, giving the City some type of reserve wheher that means an election or not. "It would be irresponsible to do anything else."

The City Secretary stated no matter what the City votes on tonight the original proposed tax rate will be continued to be published. However, she thought the City needed to inform the residents that the City was no longer contemplating the \$0.15 increase over the rollback rate and give them a new number. The Mayor said that the Council knows the \$0.15 increase is not a good number. Council Member Post said the number was between \$0.05 and \$0.08.

Council Member Whiting made a motion to table the motion to approve a proposed 2010 tax rate, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Castro. A vote was taken to table the motion to approve a proposed 2010 tax rate. The vote passed unanimously.

4.2 A motion was made by Council Member Whiting to approve a trash fee of \$37.30 per household per bi-monthly billing period effective October 1, 2010, seconded by Council Member Post. A vote was taken to approve the motion to approve a trash fee of \$37.30 per household per bi-monthly billing period effective October 1, 2010. The vote passed unanimously.

5. ANNOUNCEMENT: None

Grady Farris, 1138 Glourie, stated the City needed to get more information out to the

public. Council Member Davis stated the City has had six (6) meetings on the budget and the attendance has been very low. Council Member Post stated she thought the
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City needed to let the public know that the new rate under consideration was
\$0.08/\$100.

6. ADJOURNMENT: Council Member Davis moved to adjourn, seconded by Council Member Post. The meeting was adjourned at 7:22 P.M.

Mayor Robin Border

ATTEST:

Susan Blevins, City Secretary