

CITY OF NATALIA

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**PUBLIC HEARING ON PROPOSED ANNUAL BUDGET
PUBLIC MEETING ON PROPOSED TAX RATE
REGULAR CITY COUNCIL MEETING
CITY HALL COUNCIL CHAMBERS
2078 STATE HWY 132 NORTH, NATALIA, TEXAS
18 SEPTEMBER 2023 at 6.45 P.M.**

MINUTES

ROLL CALL: Mayor Samuel Bluemel – Present
Alderman Mike Fernandez – Present
Alderman Tommy Ortiz – Present

Mayor Pro-Tem Sam Smith – Present
Alderman Darin Frazier - Present
Alderman Selica Vera – Present

1. CALL TO ORDER:

Mayor Bluemel opened the Public Hearing to receive citizens' comments on the proposed 2023-2024 Annual Budget. – No citizen comments, Closed at 6:50pm.

2. Mayor Bluemel opened the Public Hearing to receive citizens' comments on the proposed 2023-2024 Tax Rate and announced the City Council will vote on the tax rate on Monday, September 18, 2023 at 7:00pm, at City Hall Council Chambers, 2078 State Highway 132, Natalia Texas. – No comments, Closed at 6:55pm.

REGULAR MEETING –

3. **CITIZENS TO BE HEARD:** There were no citizens to be heard.

4. CITY COUNCIL COMMENTS:

Alderman Ortiz stated that he appreciated the police departments effort in keeping up with the loose dogs and nuisance violations throughout the city. Alderman Fernandez requested that Nichole contact TXDOT about large potholes at the base of the overpass on the IH-35 access road area. Nichole stated she would contact TXDOT but also have the city utility workers fill in the holes in the meantime. Alderman Fernandez questioned the police departments recent water usage and Nichole reported there was a leak in the restroom. Art stated that it was repaired after the last meter readings were done in August. Alderwoman Vera stated that the clean up throughout the city is looking good, however we still have some residents putting items out after the bulk/brush pick up was completed. Nichole stated that she and Blake had discussed this on Thursday and STRD will pick the items up but the police department will also be addressing the issue with the residents. Alderwoman Vera stated the 18-wheeler parking is still an issue around Love's. Alderman Fernandez stated he noticed citations are being given for the violation. Nichole stated that companies that own the trucks pay the citations.

5. CONSENT AGENDA:

All of the following items are considered to be routine by the City Council, there will be no separate discussion on these items and will be enacted with one motion; unless removed by any Council Member to discuss and consider separately by making such request prior to a motion and vote.

- a) Approval of the Minutes: 21 August 2023 Regular Meeting
28 August 2023 Special Meeting
- b) Approval of the Financial Activity Report: August 2023
- c) Approval of the Utility Department Activity Report: August 2023
- d) Approval of the Municipal Court Activity Report: August 2023
- e) Approval of the Police Department Activity Report: August 2023

f) Approval of the Police Code Enforcement Activity Report: August 2023

Action: Alderman Smith made a motion to approve the consent agenda. Alderman Fernandez seconded the motion. Motion carried; 5-0.

6. INFORMATIONAL ITEMS:

- a) City Administrator/Secretary, Nichole Bermea reported that the sprinkler system has been installed at the Veterans Monument. The contractor meant with Alderman Ortiz and Art Smith last week to go over instructions on how to program it. Nichole reported that the city of Natalia will be hosting the Go Medina meeting at the First Baptist Church on October 24th. Bulk/brush pick up was completed last week. There are a few residents that put out additional items and Blake has agreed to have the regular trash guys pick those items up on this week's trash day. Donations are requested for soda for National Night Out to be held on Tuesday October 3rd. Items can be brought to city hall. , Bulk/brush
- b) Utility Director – Art Smith reported that the Quest contractors are still working. He hopes they will be finished in the next couple of weeks. Art had nothing else to report.
- c) NMDD – Ruby Vera reported that the sprinkler system has been installed and thanked Alderman Ortiz who continues to care for the landscaping at the monument. Ruby requested help for set up and tear down for NNO. Ruby reported the Veterans Day ceremony will fall on Saturday, November 11th. Your support will be greatly appreciated. Ruby is working on the program. There are nine new names being added this year. Ruby is still looking for a keynote speaker currently. Alderman Frazier asked Ruby if Congressman Gonzales had confirmed he would attend and be the keynote speaker. Rubey stated she has not received a response on his attendance The MDD will be hosting a Trunk or Treat in October the date is yet to be determined, a Fall Fest and Craft Day on November 18th, Christmas in Natalia on December 5th and an Easter Egg Hunt on March 23rd. More information will follow on all events. The next MDD meeting will be held on September 25th at city hall at 6:30pm. All are welcome to attend.
- d) Mayor- Mayor Bluemel reported that he received several compliments of the homecoming decorations at city hall. Our new officer Helen McClary was introduced.

REGULAR SESSION

- 7. Blake Ceasar solid waste disposal updates for the city. Blake stated that he enjoys working in the city and has a great relationship with the staff and citizens. He is very impressed with the residents giving the drivers snack and drinks during trash pick up and it is appreciated. Blake reported that an annual increase will go into effect in the coming weeks, and he will get the information to Nichole, typically this information is submitted in late July or August. Blake will be giving a \$200 donation for National Night Out. Blake also reported that some residents did not bag trash and left cans, and debris on the curb for his guys to hand clean. He requests that we remind residents to bag all trash and debris.
- 8. Discuss/Consider annual renewal of the Natalia Little League 2023-2024 Lease Agreement. Jaime Gomez stated that the little league board continues to have a great working relationship with the city, and they are very happy with how things have gone across the board. They had the highest sign-up numbers this year. They are awaiting quotes on shade covers and are hoping to have them installed prior to the new season starting. They also applied for a grant for new score boards. Alderman Fernandez asked if the outstanding electric bills have been paid and Nichole stated that they have not been paid but they are not the little leagues responsibility at the fields were rented by a private party on an off season/no contract term. Alderwoman Vera asked if the leasing parties are required to submit proof of liability insurance and Jaime stated all parties must provide insurance. Alderman Fernandez reminded Jaime that non little events must have security and must be reported to Nichole at city hall so security can be arranged and if not with a Natalia officer, then Medina County should be contacted. Nichole reported that Bobby Contreras contacted her about the board going to hold a trunk or treat and vendor day on October 29th. The board has requested that the members of city council and Nichole judge the costume contest and vehicle decorations. Alderman Frazier made a motion to engage in an

annual renewal contract with Natalia Little League. Alderman Smith seconded the motion. Motion carried; 5-0.

9. Discuss/Consider a Resolution, designating an official newspaper for all city publications for fiscal year 2023-2024. Alderman Fernandez asked if the city is charged for publications and Nichole stated that we are, but most publications are required by law. Alderman Fernandez made a motion to adopt the resolution designating the Devine News as the official newspaper for all city publications. Alderwoman Vera seconded the motion. Motion carried; 5-0.

10. Discuss/Consider a Resolution; Adopting the Natalia Municipal Development District Proposed Budgets for Fiscal Year 2023-2024. Alderman Fernandez made a motion to adopt the resolution, adopting the Natalia Municipal Districts proposed budget for the 2023-2024 fiscal year. Alderwoman Vera seconded the motion. Motion carried; 5-0.

11. Discuss/Consider Ordinance; postponement, or adoption of Fiscal Year 2023-2024 Final Budgets. Alderman Smith made a motion moving that we adopt the budgets for the fiscal year 2023-2024. Alderman Fernandez seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Record Vote:

Mayor Samuel Bluemel – No Vote

Mayor Pro-Tem Sam Smith – Yes

Alderman Mike Fernandez – Yes

Alderman Darin Frazier - Yes

Alderman Tommy Ortiz – Yes

Alderman Selica Vera – Yes

12. Discussion/Consider Ordinance, Ratifying the Adoption of the City of Natalia's Municipal Fund Budgets for Fiscal Year 2023-2024. Alderman Frazier made a motion moving that we adopt the ordinance ratifying the adoption of the 2023-2024 budget, this budget will raise more total property taxes than last year's budget. Alderman Fernandez seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Record Vote:

Mayor Samuel Bluemel – No Vote

Mayor Pro-Tem Sam Smith – Yes

Alderman Mike Fernandez – Yes

Alderman Darin Frazier - Yes

Alderman Tommy Ortiz – Yes

Alderman Selica Vera – Yes

13. Discussion/Consider Ordinance; Levying Ad Valorem Taxes for Tax Year 2023-2024 of a Tax Rate of \$0.5737 on each \$100 valuation of property; apportioning tax to the specific purpose; establishing due and delinquency dates; assessment of penalties and interest; and providing for a record vote. Alderman Frazier made a motion moving that we adopt the property tax rate for the year 2023 set at \$0.5737, which will raise more taxes for maintenance and operations than last year's tax rate. Alderman Smith seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Record Vote:

Mayor Samuel Bluemel – No Vote

Mayor Pro-Tem Sam Smith – Yes

Alderman Mike Fernandez – Yes

Alderman Darin Frazier - Yes

Alderman Tommy Ortiz – Yes

Alderman Selica Vera – Yes

14. Mayor's Proclamation; Proclaiming Tuesday, October 3, 2023, as National Night Out in the City of Natalia, Texas; calling upon all citizens to help make the community a safer and more enjoyable place to live, work and play. Mayor Bluemel read the proclamation proclaiming Tuesday, October 3, 2023 as National Night Out Natalia. Alderman Frazier noted that the Fernandez family needs to be recognized and thanked for all the years they have organized and dedicated their time for National Night Out. Without their continued support it would not be possible to have such a great evening for our community year after year. No action.

15. Discuss/Consider voluntary dismissal of F-5 appeal status change. Nichole reminded the city council of the expense budget that was discussed and given by the city attorneys for the handling of a F-5 appeal.

Alderman Frazier made a motion to convene into closed session pursuant to Section 551.074 Personnel Matters, of the Texas Government Code, to discuss the F-5 appeal of a former employee and possible voluntary dismissal; Alderman Fernandez seconded the motion to convene into closed session at 7:49 pm. Motion carried; 5-0. The City Council re-convened in open session at 8:10 pm. No action.

16. Discuss/Consider resolution declaring property surplus. Nichole reported that the utility department has a dump truck that is no longer being used and the police department has several dash cameras not being used. Alderman Frazier asked if we had any other older equipment and suggested that the golf cart also be included in surplus. Alderman Smith made a motion to adopt a resolution declaring certain city vehicles and equipment surplus property and authorizing the liquidation of said surplus property. Alderman Fernandez seconded the motion. Motion carried; 5-0.

17. Discuss/Consider Ordinance; Budget amendments for FY 2022-2023. Nichole went over the budget amendments for the FY 2022-2023 Budget, explaining that unforeseen emergency repair and maintenance expenses in the utility fund and excess unforeseen revenue in the general fund were cause for amendments. Nichole explained line items were revised and reallocated to better balance the budget and avoid pulling funds from reserves for the utility department. The road project on El Paso was discussed and Nichole will get the cost for materials and repairs. Alderman Frazier made a motion to adopt the ordinance amending the fiscal year 2022-2023 adopted municipal budget. Alderman Fernandez seconded the motion. Motion carried; 5-0.

Record Vote:

Mayor Samuel Bluemel – No Vote

Mayor Pro-Tem Sam Smith – Yes

Alderman Mike Fernandez – Yes

Alderman Darin Frazier - Yes

Alderman Tommy Ortiz – Yes

Alderman Selica Vera – Yes

18. Discuss/Consider approving purchase of new police unit. Alderman Fernandez asked why we are considering a new unit when we just purchased two last year. Nichole explained that we are having mechanical issues with both units. One has been taken to the dealer multiple times for the brakes and we are being told there is no fix. Nichole stated she would rather get rid of the unit and replace it as soon as possible than to continue to spend money on repairs, especially when we have excess funds that could support a vehicle purchase if additional funds are needed after the sale of a Tahoe. Alderman Fernandez stated he didn't like the idea of a V6 explorer. Alderman Frazier made a motion to reallocate funds for a vehicle, purchase to replace one of the Tahoe's to start and eventually replacing at least one other one due to the mechanical issues we've been experiencing. Alderman Fernandez seconded the motion. Motion carried; 5-0.

19. **ADJOURNMENT**

Alderman Smith made a motion to adjourn at 8:39 pm. Alderman Fernandez seconded the motion. Motion carried; 5-0.

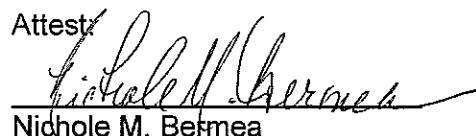
Passed and Approved this 16th day of October, 2023.

Approval:



Samuel Bluemel, Mayor /or/
Sam Smith, Mayor Pro-Tem

Attest:



Nichole M. Bermea
Interim City Administrator/Secretary