



# The City of West University Place

*A Neighborhood City*

## **CITY COUNCIL**

Bob Higley, Mayor  
Kevin Trautner, Mayor Pro Tem  
John P. Barnes, Councilmember  
Lauri Lankford, Councilmember  
Ed Sobash, Councilmember

## **STAFF**

David J. Beach, City Manager  
Alan Petrov, City Attorney  
Thelma Gilliam, City Secretary

## **CITY COUNCIL MINUTES**

The City Council of the City of West University Place, Texas, met in a workshop and regular session via on **Monday, June 8, 2020**, at **4:00 p.m.** in the Council Chambers in the Municipal Building, 3800 University, West University Place.

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Agenda items were as follows:

### **1. Call to Order**

Mayor Higley called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m. All members of Council were present. City Manager Beach and City Secretary Gilliam were also present.

### **2. Convene into Executive Session**

Matters related to legal services.

At 4:00 p.m., Councilmember Sobash moved to convene into Executive Session in accordance with Sections 551.071 and 551.074 of Chapter 551 of the Texas Government Code. Councilmember Barnes seconded the motion. **MOTION PASSED.**

### **3. Adjourn Executive Session**

Mayor Higley adjourned the Executive Session at 5:10 p.m. and granted a 5-minute recess before calling the Workshop to order.

## **WORKSHOP (5:00 PM)**

### **4. Call Workshop to Order**

Mayor Higley called the Workshop to order at 5:15 p.m. All members of Council were present. City Manager Beach, City Secretary Gilliam and HR Director Urban were also present.

Joellen Cademartori with GovHR USA attended via teleconference.

### **5. Compensation Study and Personnel Policies and Employee Handbook**

Matters related to the 2020 compensation study and the City's Personnel Policies and Employee Handbook. *Recommended Action: Discuss and take any desired action. Mr. James Urban, HR Director*

City Manager Beach stated that the Workshop was to present Council with the results of the recently completed 2020 Compensation Study and to review recommended changes to the City's Personnel Policies and Employee Handbook.

Mayor Higley summarized his understanding of the basics related to the compensation study as follows:

- The consultants polled 24 cities that are arguably comparable to West U.

- 18 responses were received.
- Positions from those 18 cities were compared to positions in West U.
- West U arbitrarily determined that it wants to be in the top quarter with respect to pay.
- Consultant derived an estimate of what the City service model cost is going to be in the next budget.

HR Director Urban confirmed the mayor's understanding of the basics relating to the process.

Councilmember Lankford said she was surprised that staff selected the comparable cities instead of the consultants selecting them. Mr. Urban responded that staff used the same cities used for the 2017 study and so if the cities changed the City would not be comparing apples to apples from 2017 to 2020.

When asked why the City of Southside Place was not included in the comparisons, Mr. Urban responded that the City would not be able to match a lot of the positions included in the study because Southside does not have most of those positions due to them not offering some of the services the City offers.

Mr. Urban stated that most of our pay plans are accurate and relatively good. He said we are in the market range and that the biggest changes will be in the police and fire departments and would require some adjustments. He said other than that, most of the grades were right where we should be.

Councilmember Sobash said he observed that the lower limit of the 75 percentile is above what the City's current market rate was when the City hired two key positions. He said he has a hard time understanding that right now and that the study left him with more questions than answers.

After some technical difficulties, Ms. Cademartori with GovHR USA joined the conversation via teleconference and answered some of Council's concerns regarding the study.

Ms. Cademartori said she was able to hear the discussion up to this point and she addressed the concerns raised regarding the selected cities, proposed ranges, cost-of-living adjustment (COLA), and the cities that responded.

In response to a question about the 75 percentile, Ms. Cademartori explained that 75 percentile means 25% of the communities surveyed pay more for a position and 75% pay less.

Councilmember Lankford asked Mr. Urban is it his recommendation that the City adopt this study or are any of the shortfalls noted in the report going to be corrected. Mr. Urban said he feels the shortfalls have been addressed.

Councilmember Lankford also requested that more information be included in the Personnel Policies and Employee Handbook regarding performance reviews.

Councilmember Lankford said regarding the difficulty of hiring officers, she noticed that according to the survey only 4 out of the 18 respondents had 12-hour shifts for their police officers. She said she was told that the City might have trouble hiring because of the 12 hour shifts because other cities have 8 or 10 hour shifts.

Chief Walker said he has put out feelers recently in the department and not one officer showed interest in changing the schedule. He said a newly hired officer chose West U because of the 12-hour shifts and the ability to have every other weekend off with his family. Chief Walker said he doesn't work 12-hour

shifts so if his officers want to change it and it's within reason or doesn't degrade the department's ability to provide service, he'd change it in a heartbeat. He said until that time, he's not inclined to change it.

Regarding benefits, Mr. Urban and Ms. Cademartori said for the most part the City's benefits are pretty much on par.

Mayor Higley asked what do people value other than compensation. Ms. Cademartori said time-off, flexible work schedules and benefits with options even if it costs a little more.

Mayor Pro Tem Trautner asked what municipalities are doing over the next year in regards to compensation given the current market in Texas as a result of the virus and the oil crash. Ms. Cademartori said it depends on the City's revenue structure and how much of it is elastic. Mayor Pro Tem Trautner confirmed with Ms. Cademartori that what she is seeing is that if the structure is stable the cities will continue with their usual course of business.

In terms of the percentage of premiums paid for by the City, Mayor Pro Tem Trautner said he noticed that West U is on target with the average, a little less on the PPO, but that the HSA contribution is much more generous. He asked Ms. Cademartori her thought on the percentage paid for by West U for its employees and whether it is in the ballpark, too high or too low. She said she feels the City is on par and would have pointed it out if she thought there was a big disparity.

Councilmember Sobash stated that acceptance of the compensation study is on tonight's regular meeting Consent Agenda and he wanted to confirm if accepting it means it becomes policy. City Manager Beach said if there are more questions, Council can table the item and not accept it.

Councilmember Barnes said he is concerned that the study is based on a model that might not be totally accurate based on the selection criteria.

Councilmember Sobash said he likes the consolidation of the grades and likes some of the work that was done but can't say overall he likes the results of the study. He said he likes what he saw with Public Safety but other areas is a mixed bag. He said he agrees with Councilmember Barnes that the study started with a model that he doesn't fully understand and doesn't think is a good model to start with.

Regarding cost-of-living-adjustments, Councilmember Barnes said there has to be adjustments made in comparing the cities where people want to live and work if comparing apples to apples otherwise the model driving the 75 percentile is flawed.

City Manager Beach said there will not be enough time to make it through the Personnel Manual and because it is not time sensitive staff will bring it back to Council. In the meantime, he said he will solicit questions and concerns individually from Council regarding the compensation study and address those questions and concerns at a future meeting.

Councilmember Sobash moved to adjourn the Workshop at 6:20 pm. Councilmember Barnes seconded the motion. **MOTION PASSED.**

**Ayes:** Higley, Trautner, Barnes, Lankford, Sobash  
**Noes:** None  
**Absent:** None

## 6. Adjourn Workshop

## **REGULAR MEETING (6:30 PM)**

### **7. Call Regular Meeting to Order**

Mayor Higley called the Regular Meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

### **8. Roll Call**

All members of Council were present.

City Manager Beach, City Secretary Gilliam, HR Director Urban, Fire Chief Taylor, and Police Chief Walker were also present. City Attorney Petrov attended via teleconference.

### **9. Pledge of Allegiance**

Councilmember Lankford led the Pledge.

### **10. Proclamation for Dr. Evelyn Carson**

Matters related to a proclamation recognizing Dr. Evelyn Carson for her 100<sup>th</sup> Birthday. *Recommended Action: Read proclamation. **Mayor Bob Higley***

Mayor Higley read a proclamation recognizing Dr. Evelyn Carson's 100<sup>th</sup> Birthday and her contributions to the community.

### **11. Public Comments**

This is an opportunity for citizens to speak to the Council relating to agenda and non-agenda items.

City Secretary Gilliam received and read emails received from residents. The emails have been summarized as follows:

**David Winks**, 3805 Villanova, requested a response from City Council regarding an incident report filed with the Police Department.

**Ken Hoffman**, 4212 Ruskin, requested Council establish a moratorium on gas blowers for the next several months.

### **12. Information and Updates related to COVID-19**

Matters related to COVID-19. *Recommended Action: Discuss and take any desired action. **Mr. Dave Beach, City Manager and Mr. Aaron Taylor, Fire Chief and Emergency Management Coordinator***

Fire Chief reported following on COVID-19:

- The City now has access to COVID-19 information regarding active cases. He said the total number of cases in West U is currently 22 with 14 being active, 8 recovered and 0 deaths. Since the last Council meeting there has been 9 additional cases added to the list.
- The City has implemented its Phase II plans to reopen City buildings to the public, which has gone well so far.
- Colonial Park pool opened today at 50 percent occupancy and as of this afternoon staff reported that operating at this level was comfortable to manage and the groups were self-distancing from each other.
- State and regional data is showing a slight increase in cases and staff will continue monitoring.
- Year-to-date the City has spent \$26,003 on supplies related to COVID-19.

In response to a question by Councilmember Sobash, Chief Taylor said the Recreation Pool is open and close distances is restricted by lanes.

Mayor Pro Tem Trautner asked Chief Taylor if he is concerned that there are 9 new cases in West U since the last report. Chief Taylor said one day's data brought in 8 new cases and though there is concern staff doesn't want to base any action off of one day's data.

### 13. Consent Agenda

All Consent Agenda items listed are considered to be routine by the City Council and will be enacted by one motion. There will be no separate discussion of these items unless a Council member requests in which event the item will be removed from the Consent Agenda and considered in its normal sequence on the agenda.

#### A. City Council Minutes

Approve the City Council Meeting Minutes of May 18, 2020.

#### B. Council Rules of Procedure

Matters related to an ordinance adopting revisions to Council's Rules of Procedure. *Recommended Action: Adopt ordinance on the first of two readings. Mr. Dave Beach, City Manager]*

#### C. Acceptance of Compensation Study

Matters related to accepting the City's 2020 Compensation Study. *Recommended Action: Accept the City's 2020 Compensation Study. Mr. James Urban, HR Director*

Councilmember Sobash requested that Item C be removed from the Consent Agenda. Councilmember Sobash then moved to table acceptance of the Compensation Study. Councilmember Barnes seconded the motion. **MOTION PASSED.**

**Ayes:** Higley, Trautner, Barnes, Lankford, Sobash

**Noes:** None

**Absent:** None

Mayor Higley requested that Item A be removed from the Consent Agenda.

Councilmember Lankford moved to approve Item B on the first of two readings. Mayor Pro Tem Trautner seconded the motion. **MOTION PASSED.**

**Ayes:** Higley, Trautner, Barnes, Lankford, Sobash

**Noes:** None

**Absent:** None

Regarding the Minutes (Item A) changes were made as follows:

- On Page 2, the paragraph in which Mr. Wilson states "some amount of light on a property is going to illuminate a neighbor's property regardless of what type of there is" should state "...what type of **glare** there is."
- On Page 3, Item 3, "Regulate the equipment instead of noise" should read "Regulate the decibel of the equipment rather than that of the noise."
- Page 9, second paragraph, should read prevent somebody "from" speaking instead of "for" speaking.
- Page 9, second paragraph, "statue" should be "statute."

Councilmember Sobash moved to approve the Minutes with the revisions. Mayor Pro Tem Trautner seconded the motion. **MOTION PASSED.**

**Ayes:** Higley, Trautner, Barnes, Lankford, Sobash  
**Noes:** None  
**Absent:** None

**14. Recess Regular Meeting to Convene Workshop**

Matters related to a modeling study on the City's storm water drainage system. *Mr. Gerardo Barrera, Public Works Director*

City Manager Beach removed this item from the agenda.

**15. Adjourn Workshop and Reconvene Regular Meeting**

Not applicable as workshop did not convene.

**16. Adjourn Regular Meeting**

With no other matter before the council, the meeting will adjourn.

Councilmember Lankford moved to adjourn the meeting at 6:55 p.m. Councilmember Sobash seconded the motion. **MOTION PASSED.**

**Ayes:** Higley, Trautner, Barnes, Lankford, Sobash  
**Noes:** None  
**Absent:** None

*Audio of this Council Meeting is available on the City's website or contact the City Secretary's office for a copy.*

Prepared by: City Secretary Thelma A. Gilliam

Approved by City Council on: June 22, 2020