

Oscar Leeser
MAYOR

TOMMY GONZALEZ
CITY MANAGER



CITY COUNCIL
PETER SVARZBEIN, DISTRICT 1
ALEXSANDRA ANNELLO, DISTRICT 2
CASSANDRA HERNANDEZ DISTRICT 3
JOE MOLINAR, DISTRICT 4
ISABEL SALCIDO, DISTRICT 5
CLAUDIA L. RODRIGUEZ, DISTRICT 6
HENRY RIVERA, DISTRICT 7
CISSY LIZARRAGA, DISTRICT 8

**SPECIAL CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
MAIN CONFERENCE ROOM
JULY 06, 2021**

The City Council met at the above place and date. Meeting was called to order at 10:26 a.m. Mayor Oscar Leeser was present and presiding. The following Council Members answered roll call: Peter Svarzbein, Alexsandra Annello, Cassandra Hernandez, Joe Molinar, Isabel Salcido, Claudia Rodriguez, Henry Rivera, and Cissy Lizarraga. Early departure: Claudia Rodriguez at 5:35 p.m.

.....
AGENDA

- 1. For discussion and action: FY 2021 – 2022 Budget as presented by the City Manager.**

Discussion and action may include, but not limited to operating, capital and debt budgets and all possible funding sources.

Please note: Copies of all presentations are available at the City Clerk's Office.

- **City Manager Overview**

Mr. Tommy Gonzalez, City Manager, introduced the item, and provided a brief explanation of the budget process and the priorities for the upcoming budget year.

- **Safe and Beautiful Neighborhoods**

Ms. Dionne Mack, Deputy City Manager, provided an overview of the presentations for Goals 2, 7, and 8 which include budgets for 10 departments.

Some of the presentation highlights focused on public safety with priority on reopening the City while reducing health risks related to COVID-19. This included fund allocation for Police overtime and the opening of a temporary Municipal court to alleviate the case backlog and increase revenue recovery as a result of the pandemic. Another area of importance in the coming year is the need to increase access to public transit, the restoration of unfunded positions, and the Fire and Police Departments collective bargaining agreements.

- **Goal 2 – Public Safety (Police, Fire and Municipal Court)**

Chief D'Agostino presented Council with a list of priorities for FY022 and summarized the current year's accomplishments such as efforts to mitigate the pandemic by way of

immunizations and community infectious control, the integration of the Fire and Health Departments, the reduction of Municipal Court trial hearings and the 2020 Traffic Safety Initiative Award bestowed to Municipal Courts.

- **Goal 7 – Infrastructure (Capital Improvement, Sun Metro, Streets & Maintenance)**
- **Goal 8 – Healthy Community (Environmental Services, Animal Services, Community Development, Public Health)**

Ms. Ellen Smyth, Director for the Mass Transit and Environmental Services Departments, presented the budget for Goals 7 and 8. Key accomplishments like the installation of clear air technology with temperature scanners at several City facilities, installation of plexiglass at workstations, the creation of a fogging team responsible for sanitizing buildings, and the excellent management of the COVID Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and cleaning supply inventory were highlighted.

Ms. Smyth also covered accomplishments at Sun Metro and Streets such as the completion of the Montana Brio and the Eastside Transfer Center as well as advances on the fleet replacement plan. As far as Animal Services, there was an increase in live release rates and a decrease in pet intakes resulting in the decrease of animal euthanasia. The Community and Human Development Department continued civic empowerment work with the amendment of the Fair Housing Ordinance to add protections for the LGBTQI community, and the first ever virtual Neighborhood Leadership Academy.

Notable achievements at the Public Health Department included successful flu and COVID vaccination campaigns, the implementation of a database for infectious disease reporting, and partnerships with long-term care and elderly facilities as part of the outreach to the vulnerable population.

- **Update on Street Operations, Neighborhood Traffic Management Program, Intersection Safety Improvement Program and Vision Zero.**

Mr. Richard Bristol, Streets and Maintenance Director, continued with the Street Operations portion of the presentation, which included an update on pothole repairs, striping, and streetlights.

Ms. Olivia Montalvo-Patrick, Streets Lead Planner, provided a presentation on the Neighborhood Traffic Management Program containing general information such as the type of services provided, the application process, funding sources, the number of requests handled, and the current list of active projects.

Ms. Hanna Williams-Allen, Traffic Engineering Associate, concluded the Streets presentation with information on the development of the Vision Zero Program whose main goal is eliminating roadway injuries and fatalities.

Motion made by Representative Rivera, seconded by Representative Molinar, and unanimously carried to **TABLE** Item 1 to take Items 2 and 3.

Motion made by Representative Rivera, seconded by Representative Salcido, and

unanimously carried to **TAKE ITEM 1 FROM THE TABLE** and continue with the presentations.

- **Exceptional Recreational, Cultural and Educational Opportunities**
 - **Goal 4 – Quality of Life (Library, Museums, Parks, Zoo)**

Ms. Tracey Jerome, Deputy City Manager, presented the budget for the departments listed under Goal 4 highlighting the citizen demand to resume services and programs that remain closed mainly due to facility renovations or the pandemic.

Mr. Ben Fyffe, Director of Cultural Affairs and Recreation, shared departmental accomplishments such as the opening of facilities, the graduation of 18 high school students enrolled in the Libraries Career Online Program, trainings for small businesses, Museum funding to artists and nonprofit art organizations, the reactivation of the Downtown Market, infrastructure improvements to Parks facilities, accessibility of WIFI centers benefitting citizens during these hard times, and the Botanical Garden certification of the Zoo.

- **Vibrant Regional Economy**
 - **Goal 1 – Economic Development (Airport, Bridges, Economic Development, Destination El Paso)**
 - **Goal 3 – Visual Image (Planning & Inspections)**

Mr. Cary Westin, Senior Deputy City Manager, presented the budget for Goals 1 and 3 noting the City's assistance to small businesses through the use of American Rescue Plan (ARPA) funding, sales and marketing efforts made by Destination El Paso to increase regional investments, and the hiring of four economists.

Mr. Sam Rodriguez, Director of Aviation, provided a briefing on the restoration and addition of new non-stop flights, enhancements to the airport's terminal and landscape, and the reopening of the Butterfield Golf Course.

As far as the Planning and Inspections Department, efforts to provide timely customer service resulted in a 35% increase in revenue and preparation of the upcoming redistricting process is underway. The International Bridges Department has opened two new truck routes with Police assistance aimed at traffic control along with the expansion of toll booth schedules to help reduce southbound wait times.

Mr. Rodriguez also spoke about the recovery efforts to increase hotel occupancy, the opening of four new waterparks, and the use of the Convention Center as an alternate COVID-19 station for vaccination and infusion treatment.

- **High Performing Government**
 - **Goal 5 – Communication (Information Technology)**

Ms. Araceli Guerra, Information Technology Director, presented the budget for Goal 5 and included accomplishments such as continuous workforce training on security awareness

which is critical with so many employees telecommuting, the expansion of electronic forms, expansion of wireless internet in seven locations, video programming and media training for employees, public outreach for vital programs and services; and an update on the timeline for the development of the new Customer Relationship Management System.

- **Goal 6 – Sound Governance (City Attorney, City Manager /Audit /OMB /PIO /Performance Office, Human Resources, City Council, City Clerk, Non-Departmental, Comptroller, Purchasing, Tax)**

Mr. Robert Cortinas, Chief Financial Officer, presented the Goal 6 budget while highlighting accomplishments such as the successful management of the 2020 General and Run-off Elections, the first electronic Pension Fund Trustee Election, the adoption of the first Animal Grooming Ordinance (first in the nation), an effective tax season with the implementation of a Social Distant Mobile Bank and an additional payment drop box at the Central Appraisal Department. Additional key accomplishments were the collection of Hotel Occupancy Tax Delinquent Payments and the City's external audit review resulting in the fifth consecutive year without any financial audit findings.

Mr. Cortinas also provided improvements in the Human Resources Department such as new digital Employee Performance Evaluation forms, the deployment of EPLearners.com, and a process improvement in the Tuition Assistance Program. He also spoke about two pilot programs focused on youth programming and senior population engagement.

It was also noted that budget variances were mainly attributed to the increase in the number of software licenses required, compensation and equity increases and restoration of unfunded positions.

Mayor Leeser and Representatives Svarzbein, Annelo, Hernandez, Molinar, and Rodriguez commented and asked questions throughout the meeting.

In addition to the City staff members that presented the following employees were available to provide comments and answered questions posed by Council:

- Mr. Tommy Gonzalez, City Manager
- Police Chief Greg Allen
- Ms. Nicole Cote, Office of Management and Budget Director
- Ms. Norma Martinez, Libraries Director
- Mr. Joe Montisano, Zoo Director
- Mr. Philip Etiwe, Planning and Inspections Director
- Ms. Karla Nieman, City Attorney

NO ACTION was taken on this item.

.....
The meeting was **RECESSED** at 2:20 p.m.

The meeting was **RECONVENED** at 2:38 p.m.

-
2. Presentation and discussion on the proposed FY 2022 Issuance for the City's Capital Improvement Plan.

connectivity, and site demolition at such buildings and facilities; (e) constructing, acquiring and improving municipally owned public art projects; and (f) the acquisition of any necessary rights of way and/or land in connection with any of the projects described in clauses (a) through (e);

(ii) the purchase of materials, supplies, equipment and machinery, to wit: the purchase and installation of information technology equipment, including hardware, software, network, and Wi-Fi; and

(iii) professional services rendered in connection with (a) such projects and purposes and the financing thereof and (b) a future land use masterplan and street pavement condition study.

Such certificates to be payable from ad valorem taxes and a limited pledge of the net revenues of the City's water and sewer system. The notice hereby approved and authorized to be published shall read substantially in the form and content of **Exhibit A hereto** attached and incorporated herein by reference as a part of this resolution for all purposes.

SECTION 2: The City Clerk shall cause the aforesaid notice to be published (i) in a newspaper of general circulation in the City, once a week for two consecutive weeks, the date of the first publication to be at least forty-six (46) days prior to the date stated therein for the passage of the ordinance authorizing the issuance of the certificates of obligation and (ii) continuously on the City's website for at least forty-five (45) days before the date stated therein for the passage of the ordinance authorizing the issuance of the certificates of obligation.

SECTION 3: It is officially found, determined, and declared that the meeting at which this Resolution is adopted was open to the public and public notice of the time, place, and subject matter of the public business to be considered at such meeting, including this Resolution, was given, all as required by Texas Government Code, Chapter 551, as amended.

SECTION 4: This Resolution shall take effect and be in full force and effect from and after the date of its adoption, and it is so resolved; and all resolutions of the City Council of the City in conflict herewith are hereby amended or repealed to the extent of such conflict.

EXHIBIT A

NOTICE OF INTENTION TO ISSUE CITY OF EL PASO, TEXAS, CERTIFICATES OF OBLIGATION

TAKE NOTICE that the City Council of the City of El Paso, Texas, shall convene at 9:00 o'clock A.M. on August 24, 2021, at its regular meeting place on the first floor of City Hall, 300 N. Campbell, El Paso, Texas. The meeting will also be available by video conference and any necessary teleconference number for the meeting will be available on the City's website at least 72 hours before the start of the meeting. During such meeting, the City Council will consider the passage of one or more ordinances authorizing the issuance of certificates of obligation in one or more series in a principal amount not to exceed \$96,000,000 for the purpose of paying contractual obligations to be incurred for (i)

the construction of public works, to wit: (a) constructing, resurfacing, and improving various streets, roads, bridges, overpasses, thoroughfares, sidewalks, pathways and related municipal facilities within the City including lane markings, street drainage, street lights, ADA accessibility, traffic signals, signal system synchronization, loop detectors, transit tunnel reconstruction, lighting, signage, streetscaping, relocation of fiber optics and landscaping related thereto; (b) constructing, improving and equipping municipal park and recreational facilities, including athletic field lighting, athletic playing fields, playgrounds, and any associated demolition, drainage and necessary infrastructure improvements; (c) constructing, improving and equipping library facilities, museums, and cultural center projects; (d) renovating, improving and equipping existing City administrative buildings, the animal shelter and other municipal facilities, including roof improvements, HV AC and electrical supply repair, ADA improvements, information technology improvements to install and/or enhance fiber optic connectivity, and site demolition at such buildings and facilities; (e) constructing, acquiring and improving municipally owned public art projects; and (t) the acquisition of any necessary rights of way and/or land in connection with any of the projects described in clauses (a) through (e); (ii) the purchase of materials, supplies, equipment and machinery, to wit: the purchase and installation of information technology equipment, including hardware, software, network, and Wi-Fi; and (iii) professional services rendered in connection with (a) such projects and purposes and the financing thereof and (b) a future land use master plan and street pavement condition study. Such certificates to be payable from ad valorem taxes and a limited pledge of the net revenues of the City's water and sewer system. In accordance with Texas Local Government Code Section 271.049, (i) the current principal amount of all of the City's outstanding public securities secured by and payable from ad valorem taxes is \$1,444,835,000; (ii) the current combined principal and interest required to pay all of the City's outstanding public securities secured by and payable from ad valorem taxes on time and in full is \$2,134,552,267; (iii) the estimated combined principal and interest required to pay the certificates of obligation to be authorized on time and in full is \$179,710,333; (iv) the maximum interest rate for the certificates may not exceed the maximum legal interest rate; and (v) the maximum maturity date of the certificates to be authorized is August 15, 2047. The certificates are to be issued, and this notice is given, under and pursuant to the provisions of Texas Local Government Code, Subchapter C of Chapter 271, as amended.

Mr. Robert Cortinas, Chief Financial Officer, presented a PowerPoint presentation (copy on file in the City Clerk's Office).

Mayor Leeser and Representative Svarzbein commented.

Mr. Tommy Gonzalez, City Manager, commented.

1ST MOTION

Motion made by Representative Hernandez, seconded by Representative Rivera and carried to **APPROVE** the Resolution.

AYES: Representatives Svarzbein, Annello, Hernandez, Salcido, Rivera and Lizarraga.

NAYS: Representatives Molinar and Rodriguez.

2ND MOTION

Motion made by Representative Hernandez, seconded by Representative Salcido and unanimously carried to **RECONSIDER** the item.

AYES: Representatives Svarzbein, Annello, Hernandez, Molinar, Salcido, Rodriguez, Rivera, and Lizarraga.

NAYS: None

3RD AND FINAL MOTION

Motion made by Representative Hernandez, seconded by Representative Rivera and carried to **APPROVE** the Resolution.

AYES: Representatives Svarzbein, Annello, Hernandez, Salcido, Rivera and Lizarraga.

NAYS: Representatives Molinar and Rodriguez.

.....
ADJOURN

Motion made by Representative Rivera, seconded by Representative Salcido, and unanimously carried to **ADJOURN** this meeting at 5:57 p.m.

AYES: Representatives Svarzbein, Annello, Hernandez, Molinar, Salcido, Rivera, and Lizarraga.

NAYS: None

NOT PRESENT FOR THE VOTE: Representative Rodriguez

.....
APPROVED AS TO CONTENT:

Laura D. Prine, City Clerk