

May 13, 2021

The Graham City Council met in REGULAR SESSION in the Council Chambers at 9:00 a.m. on Thursday, May 13, 2021 with the following members present:

MEMBERS:	Mayor:	Neal Blanton
	Mayor Pro-Tem:	Shana Weatherbee-Wolfe
	Council Members:	Alex Heartfield
		Jack Little
		Randy Cantin
	City Manager:	Brandon Anderson
	City Secretary:	Sharon McFadden
	City Attorney:	Dan De La Cruz
	Municipal Judge:	Teresa Bishop (absent)
	Police Chief:	Brent Bullock
	Fire Chief:	Jim Don Laurent

VISITORS: Thomas Wallner, Randall Dawson, Kelli Shifflett, David Aleshire, Sarah Lundgren, Grant Ingram, Joel Williams, Jimmy McLeroy, Julie Rainwater, Krisa De La Cruz, Kathy Blanton, Lisa Little, Rebecca Cantin, Coby Leach, Robert Houser, and Dennis Fellows.

ORDER: Mayor Blanton called the meeting to order and opened with prayer.

PUBLIC FORUM: Mayor Blanton asked if anyone would like to speak in the public forum. No comments were made.

**OATH OF OFFICE:**

City Secretary, Sharon McFadden, provided the Statement of Officer (Form #2201) and the Oath of Office (Form #2204) for Jack Little and Randy Cantin to sign. After signing, the Oath of Office was conducted for Council Member Randy Cantin, Place Four (4) and Council Member Jack Little, Place Three (3)

**CONSIDER AND ACT ON APPOINTMENT OF MAYOR PRO-TEM:**

Randy Cantin stated he would like to nominate Shana Weatherbee-Wolfe as Mayor Pro-Tem. Alex Heartfield seconded, and Shana Weatherbee-Wolfe was appointed as Mayor Pro-Tem by a unanimous vote of 4-0.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

Minutes from the Regular Session Council meeting held on Thursday, April 29, 2021 were considered. Brandon recommended Shana Weatherbee-Wolfe and Alex Heartfield made the motions since they attended the meeting. Shana Weatherbee-Wolfe made the first motion and Alex Heartfield seconded. The minutes were unanimously approved 4-0.

**AUDIT PRESENTATION BY VALERIE HALVERSON OF MWH GROUP, P.C.:**

Mayor Blanton called on Valerie Halverson to present the audit. Ms. Halverson reviewed the contents of the audit. Revenues increased from previous years. Expenses increased this year but not as much as revenues increased. Mayor Blanton informed the new Council Members that there was recently paid off debt for the back arena. Ms. Halverson continued to present additional contents of the audit. Ms. Halverson offered to answer any concerns. Brandon said the timing of the audit and last year's election being held in November, none of the present Council Members were involved. Brandon said audits of governmental entities differ from those in other industries. Brandon recommended Council Members review the audit after the meeting and reach out to either Sharon McFadden or himself with questions. Brandon asked if Valerie would be willing to participate at a meeting in late June as budget meetings begin. Ms. Halverson said she is willing to revisit with Council later to address concerns. Ms. Halverson continued providing additional details of the audit. Jack Little said he noticed in the audit there was mention of the auditors encountering difficulties in obtaining reports from Municipal Court. Valerie Halverson stated there were issues obtaining reports from Municipal Court which caused the audit to be delayed. Alex Heartfield asked if that was at the time Council approved the request for Brandon to manage Municipal Court. Brandon said that was part of the problem and that there is a transition in process. Brandon said the Municipal Judge is retiring and there are some software questions being addressed through Incode (computer program). Brandon said City Council will soon be (likely next Council meeting on May 27, 2021) appointing a new Municipal Judge and the day-to-day management will continue with Brandon supervising. Brandon said he needs to meet with the current Municipal Judge. Brandon said he has some other ideas to present, and that position was reduced to part-time position. Brandon said in the next three weeks, there will be a lot of transition in that department. Brandon said he plans to request an Executive Session on Personnel Matters and how Council wants to move forward. Also discuss opportunities available and staff recommendations will be presented. Ms. Halverson reviewed the compliance section of the audit and stated the audit findings. Valerie Halverson suggested the City (of Graham) hire a consultant to assist in closing the books at year-end and it is common practice for cities. Ms. Halverson said she is willing to return and meet in a more casual environment to discuss the audit with Council Members. Brandon stated this is the third year for MWH to conduct the annual audit. Brandon said the previous auditor had been reviewing the City for many years and that hiring MWH was necessary. Brandon said there has not been employee turn-over the past two years and it is important to have a good working relationship with the auditor. Brandon said he is hoping Valerie Halverson provides recommendations for hiring a consultant to assist the City (of Graham). Brandon said there will always be some form of findings because that is the purpose of an audit. Brandon said he looks forward to continuing a relationship the next few years until change becomes necessary. Brandon requested Council Members to direct audit concerns to he or Sharon. Brandon thanked Valerie Halverson for her time.

**CONSIDER AND ACT ON ACCEPTING THE AUDIT REPORT FOR THE 2019-2020 FISCAL YEAR:**

Alex Heartfield made the first motion. Shana Weatherbee seconded, and the audit was unanimously accepted 4-0.

**CONSIDER AND ACT ON THE QUARTERLY INVESTMENT REPORT AS PRESENTED BY THE CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER OR HER DESIGNEE:**

Sharon McFadden explained the First Quarter (January to March 2021) Investment Report. Sharon explained the withdrawal of \$10,000 in the Park Improvement Fund to clear debris at the edge of the creek in Fireman's Park. Mayor Blanton referred to the Cemetery Endowment account. Sharon stated the balance of the Cemetery

Endowment account as \$5,341. Sharon referred to the second page of the Investment Report that identifies all transactions for the quarter exceeding \$10,000. Alex Heartfield asked how often the EMS payment is made. Sharon said two payments each year for \$17,500. Alex Heartfield asked if that was for services. Brandon said that is a line-item budgeted and Young County provides the same for EMS services. Brandon said the City does not specially designate spending of the funds but likely goes toward purchases of ambulances. Sharon said it is under an Interlocal Agreement and financial statements are required to be provided annually in June. Shana Weatherbee-Wolfe made the first motion and Alex Heartfield seconded. The investment report was unanimously accepted by a vote of 4-0.

**CONSIDER AND ACT ON BUDGET AMENDMENTS BY ORDINANCE # 1109:**

Brandon said the expenditures were approved previously in Council meetings but need to be approved through an ordinance. Brandon said the Municipal Court awning needed repairs due to water running into the office during rain. The Airport truck was originally approved during last year's budget through an amendment by adding \$25,000 to the general fund. Brandon said the former animal control truck was modified by adding flatbed. Rather than spending \$25,000 on a new truck, only \$3,140.60 was spent to make the truck serviceable. The next items are for the Airport and have GEIC next to them. Brandon said previous discussions have taken place on the TxDOT Aviation total remodel of the airport which is a \$1.5 million project. The project is a 90/10 split with the City (of Graham) required to pay ten percent of those funds. GEIC previously committed to paying the funds for the City (of Graham) portion. The City (of Graham) will bill GEIC for \$126,350. The next two items (Misc. Rev. GEIC, TxDOT Aviation) were approved by the Airport Board and then requested GEIC to assist in the funding. GEIC will pay \$47,000. The Library roof needed repair and the funds will come from the Library Fund. Animal Control budgeted for a new truck and it was not received until after the close of last fiscal year. Loan proceeds from last year in the general fund are being forwarded to this fiscal year. Water Fund Engineering is for the project, hopefully through the Texas Water Development Fund. That is for the badly needed alternate line to town. The Sewer Fund Engineering fees is to redo the Tackett Lift Station which has been a needed the last three (3) to four (4) years. Brandon said the City (of Graham) will be using CARES Act funding from the State (of Texas) soon. Alex Heartfield asked if the donor for the library roof had a problem with the contractor selection. Mayor Blanton said that concern has been addressed. Alex Heartfield made the motion to approve Ordinance #1109. Randy Cantin made the second motion, and the budget amendments were unanimously approved 4-0.

**DISCUSS THE SALES TAX REPORT FOR MARCH 2021 RECEIVED MAY 2021:**

Brandon said it is exciting to see a 38.11 percent increase over this same month (May 2020) last year. Brandon explained that businesses were given the option to defer their February 2021 tax payments. Last month only had a 5.81 percent increase. Brandon thoroughly explained the sales tax report, the funds provided to GEIC, and where the City (of Graham) stands on sales tax revenue. Brandon mentioned the comparisons of communities in our area. Mayor Blanton stated we (referring to the City of Graham) have a positive outlook on the economic situation of the community.

**CONSIDER AND ACT ON ORDINANCE #1110, A REQUEST FROM THE ROBERTSON'S TO REMOVE AND ABANDON A UTILITY EASEMENT LOCATED AT 1520 MIMOSA CIRCLE:**

Brandon said Debbie Robertson has sold this property as part of her father's estate. Per the City of Graham Charter, a unanimous vote must take place or must be heard in three (3) readings. The request is for abandonment of an easement from an old plat and old easement. The easement was never utilized (Brandon referred to the map in the

Council packet). The original intent was to service three (3) properties with water and sewer. Instead of doing a replat, the three (3) lots were built over. There are no utilities in the easement and Brandon recommended abandoning the easement. Brandon asked Council to approve Ordinance #1110 and authorize the City Manager to sign a waiver of the easement in the closing documents (of the property sale). Alex Heartfield made the first motion. Jack Little provided the second. The motion was unanimously approved 4-0.

**CONSIDER AND ACT ON A PLAT APPROVAL OF .695 ACRE TRACT BEING WITHIN THE B.F. DUDNEY SURVEY, ABSTRACT NO. 1406, AND BEING ALL OF TRACT "C" AS DEPICTED ON THE PLAT OF TANGLEWOOD ESTATES:**

Brandon said this is the final approval of this plat at Pine Tree and Normandy. The approval to rezone has already been approved by the Planning and Zoning Board (P & Z) and through City Council for the zero lot lines of this property. Brandon said he recommends approval by City Council. Brandon said there are committees willing to serve and recommends support of the boards most of the time. Randy Cantin asked who sits on the P & Z board. Brandon said Cam Bennett, Cory Gober, Randall Dawson said Colby Kramer, Muriel Stephens. Mayor Blanton stated the board members serve two (2) year terms. Brandon said there is a maximum of three (3) terms. Randy Cantin asked who appoints board members. Mayor Blanton said City Council appoints board members. Jack Little asked if any of the board members benefit on this decision. Mayor Blanton said no board members will benefit and that is followed very closely. Brandon said Rick Moore owns this lot and has proposed this change. Jack Little made the first motion and Alex Heartfield seconded. The plat change was unanimously approved 4-0.

**CONSIDER AND ACT ON A REQUEST FROM KNOX BISHOP ON BEHALF OF GRAHAM'S 2021 "RED, WHITE, AND YOU" PARADE COMMITTEE FOR USE OF THE CITY SQUARE FOR THE PARADE AND OTHER ASSOCIATED EVENTS ON SATURDAY, JULY 3, 2021:**

Brandon said use of the square must be made by a formal presentation, approved by staff, and then presented to City Council. Brandon said Knox Bishop is very professional and has led this event for many years. Brandon said the event was cancelled by Mr. Bishop last year because he did not want his group in military attire tainted by wearing masks. Brandon said he has a lot of respect for Knox Bishop and recommended approval. Jack Little made the first motion. Randy Cantin made the second motion. The request was unanimously approved 4-0.


**REPORTS:**

- Police Chief Brent Bullock introduced himself and stated he has been with the City of Graham for nearly 26 years. Ten (10) years Chief Bullock has served as Assistant Police Chief and the Police Chief two (2) years as of next month (June 2021). The police department is doing good and encounters same issues as other departments. Testing for Academy cadets took place last week. There were six (6) applicants.


- Fire Chief Jim Don Laurent introduced himself and stated he has been with the City of Graham for eight (8) years. He was Assistant Fire Chief for five (5) years and Fire Chief for six (6) months. He brought Assistant Chief and EMS Coordinator, David Aleshire to the meeting. Chief Laurent said he has been blessed with a great department and great administration too. Brandon Anderson said he requested all the department heads to attend the Council meeting and introduce themselves.
- Public Works Director Randall Dawson introduced himself and stated he has been the Public Works Director for one-and-a-half years. He will be with the City of Graham for 17 years in June 2021. Randall introduced Dennis Fellows, the Water Treatment Plant Supervisor. Randall introduced Robert Houser, Supervisor over Utilities, Wastewater Collection, and Water Distribution. Randall introduced Coby Leach, Parks and Cemeteries Supervisor. Jack Edwards in not at the meeting (attending a class) but he is the Streets Supervisor. Randall said Justin Howard is the Sewer Plant Supervisor and is not attending the meeting due to a field trip with his children. Randall said Joel Williams, Supervisor of the Convenience Station, was attending the meeting but had to step away. Randall introduced BJ Cook as the Code Enforcement Officer.
- Water Plant Superintendent Dennis Fellows was offered to speak by Mayor Blanton. Dennis said the lake is 100 percent full and all the clarifiers are running. Dennis said he is anxious for the installation of the alternate line.
- Krisa De La Cruz, CEO of the Chamber and CVB, introduced herself and has been with the Chamber six (6) years. Krisa said she wanted to thank City (of Graham) leaders that helped during the carnival. The You Lead class runs the funnel cake booth and there was a shortage of volunteers. Chief Bullock, Chief Laurent, Sharon McFadden, and Brandon Anderson all helped at the funnel cake booth. Krisa apologized if she missed mentioning anyone who assisted. It says a lot when City (of Graham) leaders will step-up and serve in that way. You Lead graduation will take place on Tuesday, May 18, 2021. Tucker May, recipient of the 2021 You Lead Scholarship, will be speaking. There are still seats available for the You Lead Graduation. Preparation and planning for the Food Truck Championship and the Possum Pedal is taking place. Randy Cantin asked where the You Lead Graduation was taking place. Krisa said it is taking place at NCTC at 11:45 a.m. and is being catered by 526. City Manager Brandon Anderson informed Council that Lisa Kinkead is the Chamber Manager. Grant Ingram is currently the CVB Manager and after the Food Truck Championship concludes, he will move to the Economic Development Corporation (EDC) as unanimously appointed by the GEIC and GIA board. Brandon said Grant was on his way to the meeting. Brandon said Sharon McFadden is the City Secretary and CFO (Financial Director). Brandon introduced Grant as he walked into the meeting. Grant will assume his EDC role after the Food Truck Championship event. Brandon said he intends for the Chamber side of building (608 Elm Street) to be a "one-stop shop" for anyone coming to town whether visiting, planning an event, or establishing a business. Brandon is pleased to have Grant (for EDC), regrets taking him from Krisa De La Cruz, and hopes to find a good replacement for the CVB. Brandon said he has a very capable staff, runs well, is very satisfied with the new City Hall, and everything is working out well. Brandon said he is officially welcoming Council and acknowledged there is an entire new Council. We (the City of Graham) have a new Mayor from what it was when he (Brandon) started almost six (6) years ago (as of June 15, 2021). Brandon said he is open and transparent in the reports presented. Brandon said between now and next meeting (May 27, 2021), the Charter says Council meets not less frequently than once every two weeks. Brandon said since he has been here the Council meeting has always taken place every-other Thursday at 9:00 a.m. Previously, the time was 9:30 a.m. Brandon said the Council and Mayor would need to determine if a time change is appropriate for everyone's schedule. Brandon said he always hears from citizens that they are not able to attend our (City Council) meetings to voice our (citizen's) opinion. Brandon stated he has been in this business (City management) long enough to know if the Council meetings are moved to 6:00 p.m., citizens will not attend at that time either. Opinions are voiced in other areas and Brandon said he would like to see more citizens attendance at the Council meetings for the good of Graham. What Brandon has found from experience, is moving a meeting (Council) after 6:00 p.m. or prior to 8:00 a.m., unfortunately people (citizens) do not attend. Brandon said that is his opinion and his experience. Brandon recommended Council members visit with Neal (Mayor Blanton) prior to the next meeting (Council, May 27, 2021). If there is a need to change, that would need to take place by ordinance.
- Mayor Blanton said he is continually impressed with the professionalism of our staff, what they do, and the changes that have occurred over, like Brandon said, basically turning over a complete City (of Graham) staff and leadership in the past six (6) years. Mayor Blanton said they (staff) do a really good job and should be commended for what they (staff) do.
- Council Member Jack Little said he would like to add a comment to what was just said (referring to Mayor Blanton's comments). He tends to agree and although just being sworn into office today, through the article in the paper (Graham Leader), people have contacted him to express opinions and ideas. Jack Little has done numerous ride arounds looking. Jack agrees with the 9:00 a.m. or 9:30 a.m. Council meeting times. People that have opinions or disgruntled are going to contact of them (Council members).

## ADJOURNMENT:

Mayor Blanton stated with there being no further business to discuss, he requested a motion to adjourn. Jack Little made the motion to adjourn.

  
 Neal Blanton, Mayor

ATTEST:

  
 Sharon McFadden, City Secretary