



**CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION MINUTES  
CITY OF ODESSA, TEXAS**

**July 19, 2022**

On July 19, 2022, a work session meeting of the Odessa City Council was held at 3:00 p.m., Council Chamber, fifth floor, City Hall, 411 W. 8<sup>th</sup> St., Odessa, Texas.

City Council present: Mayor Javier Joven; Council members: Mark Matta, District One; Steven P. Thompson, District Two; Detra White, District Three; Tom Sprawls, District Four; Mari Willis, District Five; and Denise Swanner, At-Large.

Others present: Michael Marrero, City Manager; Norma Aguilar-Grimaldo, City Secretary; Cindy Muncy, Assistant City Manager; Phillip Urrutia, Assistant City Manager; and other members of City staff.

A quorum being present, Mayor Joven called the meeting to order, and the following proceedings were held:

Council member Swanner gave the invocation.

**Discuss a Public Improvement District and presentation from Betenbough Homes.** Mr. Urrutia stated that the Public Improvement District (PID) was to construct parks. The proposed policy would be for new development related to the parks and future development. The PID was operated, maintained improvement, and was governed by an advisory board. The policy included park trails, recreation, sidewalks, street cleaning and off-site parking. Chris Berry, Betenbough, provided Betenbough's history on park development through PIDs. The park would be assessed and built before it was turned over to the City. He stated that there would be three pocket parks and one-acre park on its new developments in Odessa. It would be within the Parks Master Plan guidelines. The parks would include fencing, landscape, seating and age appropriate playground. The park would not be restricted as it would allow public access. Council member Thompson stated that the park would only be built on new development and it would help with green space. Council member Swanner stated that it would enhance the area that included walking trails and hills. Mr. Urrutia stated that the PID was not mandatory but voluntarily on future development. Mr. Berry stated that the PID Advisory Board would advise the City Council on the park. He explained the process to dissolve a PID that required 50% of the total homeowners to sign a petition to dissolve the PID. He stated PIDs helped the community. Council had a consensus to move forward with the PID.

**Discuss a specific use permit to allow a dance hall/night club.** Randy Brinlee, Director of Development Services, stated that there was opposition from a same type of business that was next door. The owner has an agreement with Oncor to use the right-of-way for additional parking. There was no impact on the shopping center and met requirements.

**Discuss bid award for golf course maintenance equipment replacement at Ratliff.** Mr. Urrutia stated that two gators and one sprayer would be purchased for \$85,606.82. The delivery was between six to twelve months.

**Discuss a resolution to accept a donation from ConocoPhillips Company and appropriate funds to OFR.** Saul Ortega, Assistant Fire Chief, stated that the donation was from Conoco Phillips for \$45,000 to be used for fire retardant uniforms.

**Discuss a proposal to purchase four BRX51622 Ford F 550 ambulance units.** Rodd Huber, Assistant Fire Chief, stated that four ambulances would be purchased for \$1,884,760. Next year funds would be used for the purchase as there was a 24 - 25 months for delivery.

**Discuss a proposal to purchase a 2023 Fire Battalion Tahoe for OFR.** Assistant Fire Chief Ortega stated that a purchase of a Tahoe would be for the added battalion at the new fire stations. The cost was \$98,769.25 that included the computer and radio. Delivery time was 12 - 16 months.

**Discuss authorizing OPD to apply for, accept, amend budget and appropriate 2022 JAG grant funds and Ector County interlocal agreement for division of 2022 JAG grant funds.** Mike Gerke, Police Chief, stated that the grant would be applied and accepted for \$87,373. The Ector County agreement was for the Sheriff's portion of 15%. The Police Department would receive \$76,014.

**Discuss authorizing OPD to apply for, accept, amend budget and appropriate grant funds from Walmart.** Chief Gerke stated that the Police Department would apply and accept a Walmart grant for community events that would be used for block parties. The block party would be held where there was crime. The total grant was \$4,000 with no cash match.

**Discuss awarding a professional services agreement for a comprehensive classification and compensation study.** Mr. Marrero recommended a professional services agreement with Evergreen Solutions for a comprehensive compensation study. The study would analyze all positions utilizing the job descriptions. The cost was \$111,500 and would be completed by the end of the year. The study could start with the Fire and Police departments with the opportunity for Council to consider adjustments while the other jobs were being completed. Austin Shaffer stated that the loss of Fire Rescue employees were due to severely being under paid. Odessa was the busiest department in the State with its calls per year and changes were needed. He stated that the salary survey was not needed as it would delay the problem. Josh Herron stated that the department was struggling with the turnover rate. The six pick cities were fire service only and Odessa was Fire and EMS in which 75% of calls were EMS. He passed out a salary survey with cities listed in which employees left for employment. Zackary Webster reviewed the personnel roster with 177 on staff and 99 employees had less than five years of service. Firefighters and paramedics decide at the five-year mark to stay or leave the City with many leaving because of compensation. Fire employees were dedicated to the job, citizens and Ector County and showed their hard work through the pandemic. Tyler Houchin commended the crew. Fire personnel stepped up during COVID but were leaving and needed to be shown their worth. Council member Swanner has not seen a survey. Mr. Marrero stated that there was a survey conducted in 2019 that analyzed Lubbock and Midland. The results indicated that the appropriate total compensation was appropriate. Assistant Fire Chief Ortega explained the added pay with certifications. Assistant Chief Huber stated that the base pay was the issue. Assistant Chief Ortega explained the step raises that was received every two years. There was a concern with employees leaving to the City of Pecos as its starting pay was more. He stated that employees get the training and once a paramedic then they could go anywhere in the State. Assistant Chief Ortega explained the cadet program and firefighter base salary and certificates. Mr. Herron explained the certification cards that needed renewal as it was an out of pocket expense. He reviewed the base pay among the cities listed on the survey. Approximately 35 Fire employees left last year with two to four years of employment. The employees train in Odessa, obtain certificates and leave to another city. He stated that the base pay needed to be increased to retain employees. Mr. Herron stated that the contractor would not understand the mechanics of Fire Rescue. The employees

were behind about \$10,000 from other cities. The replacements were cadets. Mr. Webster stated that Station 7 was the busiest as it served West Odessa and the experienced employee was working on training other employees. The experienced employees were being lost to the rest of the State. He stated that 70% to 80% were emergency medical calls. Council member White had a concern with compression. The contractor would review the compression issue. Mr. Herron provided a breakdown of the reasons for Fire employees leaving the department. Mr. Marrero stated that the study would analyze and review the other incentives. Mayor Joven stated that an assessment would be made after the data was received from the survey. Travis Jones asked why another study since the six pick cities were not the cities that the employees were leaving. Council member Thompson stated that the study was three years old and updated information was beneficial and Evergreen had fire experience. Nick Schrock stated that the turnover affected the Insurance Services Office rating that was currently a 2 rating. Mr. Marrero stated that the identified cities from the survey could be incorporated with the survey. Assistant Fire Chief Ortega stated that more EMTs were needed and the issue was to hire and retain employees. Mr. Schrock stated that Odessa was a training ground, employees leave to other cities, and the issue was retainment. Andrew McElroy stated that employees wanted to stay in Odessa but there was a need of a successful pay for the future. Assistant Fire Chief Ortega appreciated the City's match on its pension. Ben Marts stated that the City contributed 26% of pension and provided a history on the pension. Council member White stated that the own contribution was paid out in seven years. Council member Willis recommended making public safety a priority for the survey. Council member Swanner asked about giving the 17% to Fire employees. Mrs. Muncy provided the payroll budget and overtime numbers for Fire Rescue. Council member Thompson stated that with an increase in only base pay, it would be approximately \$7 million. Mayor Joven asked if the Fire Association would participate in the discussions for the salary survey assessment. Mr. Shaffer agreed. Mayor Joven appreciated the sacrifice made by the Fire Rescue personnel. The survey would provide data for the Council to review and make an educated and thorough decision to be good stewards with the funds. The audience agreed with proceeding with the salary survey.

**Discuss a lease settlement agreement with UTPB for the playground and splashpad area.** Mr. Marrero stated a settlement agreement was negotiated for the Jurassic Jungle spray ground for a two-year period. The appraisal market for that area was \$78,000 annually. It would be offset with the credit of the sports funding that was given. The cost may increase after the two-year term that included operation and maintenance expenses. The funds were significant to relocate. Ms. Brooks stated that UTPB believed that the playground and splashpad were on in their property.

**Discuss calling the 2022 General Municipal Election.** Mrs. Grimaldo stated that the governing body shall call the General Municipal Election that will be held on November 8, 2022. Districts Three, Four and Five would be on the ballot. The City would be in a joint election with the County and split the cost.

Motion was made by Council member Sprawls and seconded by Council member Swanner to adjourn the meeting. The motion was approved by the following vote:

Aye: Joven, Matta, Thompson, White, Sprawls, Willis, and Swanner  
Nay: None

The meeting adjourned at 5:43 p.m.

ATTEST:

APPROVED:

Norma Aguilar-Grimaldo, TRMC, CMC  
City Secretary

Javier Joven  
Mayor