

**SPECIAL MEETING AND PUBLIC HEARING  
OF THE GOVERNING BODY OF  
THE CITY OF BLANCO**

**Meeting Minutes  
August 14, 2023**

A special meeting and public hearing of the governing body of the City of Blanco was held on August 14, 2023, at 6:00 pm at the Byars Building, 308 Pecan Street, Blanco, Texas.

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 pm by Mayor Arnold, followed by roll call announcing a quorum was present. The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Mayor Arnold. Council members present: Mayor Arnold, Mayor Pro-Tem Thrailkill and Council Members Smith, Swinson, and Moses. Council Member McClellan was absent (medically excused by Mayor Arnold).

City staff present: Warren Escovy, Sasha Ricks, Laurie Cassidy, and Police Chief Scott Rubin.

**Announcements from the Mayor:**

- Council Member McClellan is still in the hospital undergoing treatment and is in good spirits.
- Memorial service for Judy Dorsett, pillar of our community and co-founder of KBB, to be held Friday September 8, 2023 at 10:00 am
- Mike Young, investor for Milam Greene passed away.

**Public Comments:**

- None

**PUBLIC HEARINGS:**

1. Public Hearing on the adoption of the proposed Fiscal Year 2023-2024 Municipal Budget. This budget will raise more revenue from property taxes than last year's budget by an amount of \$255,339 which is a 26.1% tax increase from last year's budget. The property tax revenue to be raised from new property added to the tax roll this year is \$44,848.

Public Hearing Opened at 6:03 pm – closed 6:07 pm.

- Kenneth Welch, Blanco County resident spoke regarding the proposed budget. Revenue for the city must come from city taxes and fees that residents pay. Citizens write their check for property taxes to the county. The most important governmental body is the one closest to where we live. The citizens must protect the needs of the local government first. The council must pass the budget and taxes to pay for it.

- Retta Martin, Blanco city residents spoke of the passing of Judy Dorsett. She was one of the founding leaders of KBB, as well as a landscape designer. For over 24 years she worked on KBB. She also worked on the Rock Wall and historic preservation. The Rock Wall needs to be addressed to keep the building from falling down.

Public Hearing Closed 6:07 pm.

2. Public Hearing on the adoption of the proposed 2023 ad valorem tax rate and levy not to exceed the proposed rate of \$0.3532 of all taxable property within the corporate city limits of the City of Blanco, Texas.

Public Hearing Opened at 6:07 pm.

- Marissa Mensik submitted comments to the city to be read at the meeting. She applauded the council's courage in making difficult decisions for our community regarding raising city taxes. For some time, the State has taken more in taxes than needed from our citizens, leading to a historic surplus. The legislature has recently corrected this, offering a significant tax break to home and business owners while increasing the homestead exemption significantly. This is an opportunity for the city to funnel a very small percentage of the state tax cuts into our local community. It can be argued that the tax cuts were not only a relief for homeowners, but also small towns throughout our state that are struggling with dated and failing infrastructure, and a greater need for emergency services. As citizens of Blanco, we will see less money going to the state government and a small increase going to our local needs. From here, we citizens can hold our city to a high level of fiscal transparency. We can encourage city staff to invest in ways that will not only improve our community, but also put money back into our local economy. Once again, thank you for making the hard decisions. This is what good leadership looks like.

Public Hearing Closed at 6:09 pm.

**Presentation:**

1. OJ Armstrong, Chair, CIAMAC, discussed the proposed new utility rates.

**Consent Agenda:** *The following items may be acted upon in one motion.* No separate discussion or action is necessary unless requested by the Mayor or a Councilmember, in which those items will be pulled for separate consideration.

1. Approval of City of Blanco Holiday Schedule 2024.

**A motion was made by Council Member Smith to approve consent agenda item #1 as presented, seconded by Mayor Pro-Tem Thrailkill, all in favor, motion carried unanimously.**

**New Business: Consider, discuss, and take appropriate action on the following:**

1. Consideration, Discussion, and Take Possible Action on Approval of Amendment to Resolution 2023-R-007 Designating Persons Authorized to Sign on the City's Depository Accounts as the Official Signatories of the City of Blanco.

**A motion was made by Mayor Pro-Tem Thrailkill to add Council Member Smith as a designated person authorized to sign on the city’s depository accounts, seconded by Council Member Swinson, all in favor, motion carried unanimously.**

2. Consideration, Discussion and Take Action on the Approval of Ordinance 2023-O-011 of the City of Blanco, Texas, Setting and Approving the Municipal Budget for the 2023-2024 Fiscal Year; Funding Municipal Purposes; Authorizing Expenditures; Providing for: Findings of Fact; Enactment; Filing of Budget; Repealer; Severability; Effective Date; and Proper Notice and Meeting. Warren Escovy, City Administrator, recapped proposed budget. Staying with the 6% ad valorem increase, keep officer, remove planner at \$25,000, remove US 281 overlay backbone code at \$10,000, reduce street maintenance from \$110,000 to \$40,000 to cover maintenance/mowing row, rock asphalt to fill potholes. No changes to enterprise fund other than possible utility rate increase. The council discussed and pointed out \$75,000 in revenue from current fiscal year investments and four departments with budget decreases. They discussed adding the planner at a reduction to 3 hours per week at \$15,000 annually. The council discussed the state “This budget will raise more revenue from property taxes than last year’s budget by an amount of \$255,339 which is a 26.1% tax increase from last year’s budget”. Sasha Ricks, Finance Director, explained this is the amount of increase from last year’s revenue. **A motion was made by Council Member Smith, to Approved Ordinance 2023-O-011 of the City of Blanco, Texas, Setting and Approving the Municipal Budget for the 2023-2024 Fiscal Year; Funding Municipal Purposes; Authorizing Expenditures; Providing for: Findings of Fact; Enactment; Filing of Budget; Repealer; Severability; Effective Date; and Proper Notice and Meeting, seconded by Mayor Pro-Tem Thrailkill, motion carried 3-1 with Council Member Moses opposed.**

a. Roll Call Vote

Mayor Pro Tem Thrailkill	<u>  X  </u>	for	_____	against	_____	abstain	_____	absent
Council Member McClellan	_____	for	_____	against	_____	abstain	<u>  X  </u>	absent
Council Member Smith	<u>  X  </u>	for	_____	against	_____	abstain	_____	absent
Council Member Swinson	<u>  X  </u>	for	_____	against	_____	abstain	_____	absent
Council Member Moses	_____	for	<u>  X  </u>	against	_____	abstain	_____	absent

3. Consideration, Discussion and Take Action on approval of Resolution 2023-R-012 of the City of Blanco, Texas, Ratifying expenditures; filing of budget; repealer; severability; effective the Municipal Budget for Fiscal Year 2023-2024; funding municipal purposes; authorizing date; and proper notice. **A motion was made by Council Member Smith to Approve Resolution 2023-R-012 of the City of Blanco, Texas, Ratifying expenditures; filing of budget; repealer; severability; effective the Municipal Budget for Fiscal Year 2023-2024; funding municipal purposes; authorizing date; and proper notice, seconded by Mayor Pro-Tem Thrailkill, motion carried 3-1 with Council Member Moses opposed.**

a. Roll Call Vote

Mayor Pro Tem Thraillkill	<u>  X  </u>	for	_____	against	_____	abstain	_____	absent
Council Member McClellan	_____	for	_____	against	_____	abstain	<u>  X  </u>	absent
Council Member Smith	<u>  X  </u>	for	_____	against	_____	abstain	_____	absent
Council Member Swinson	<u>  X  </u>	for	_____	against	_____	abstain	_____	absent
Council Member Moses	_____	for	<u>  X  </u>	against	_____	abstain	_____	absent

4. Consideration, Discussion and Take Action on Approval of the 2023 maintenance and operating tax rate not to exceed the proposed rate of \$0.2026 to fund the 2023-2024 Budget. **A motion was made by Mayor Pro-Tem Thraillkill to approve the 2023 maintenance and operating tax rate not to exceed the proposed rate of \$0.2026 to fund the 2023-2024 Budget, seconded by Council Member Smith, motion carried,3-1 with Moses opposed.**
5. Consideration, Discussion and Take Action on the Approval of the 2023 debt tax rate not to exceed the proposed rate of \$0.1506 to fund the 2023-2024 debt obligation. **A motion was made by Mayor Pro-Tem Thraillkill to approve the 2023 debt tax rate not to exceed the proposed rate of \$0.1506 to fund the 2023-2024 debt obligation, seconded by Council Member Smith, motion carried,3-1 with Council Member Moses opposed.**
6. Consideration, Discussion and Take Action on the approval of Ordinance 2023-O-012 of the City of Blanco, Texas, Setting and Approving the 2023 ad valorem tax rate and levy not to exceed the proposed rate of \$0.3532 cents per one hundred dollars of assessed valuation of all taxable property within the corporate city limits of the City of Blanco, Texas. **A motion was made by Council Member Smith, to approve the property tax rate be increased by the adoption of a tax rate of \$0.3532 cents per one hundred dollars of assessed valuation, which is effectively a six percent increase in the tax rate, seconded by Mayor Pro-Tem Thraillkill., motion carried 3-1 with Council Member Moses opposed.**

b. Roll Call Vote

Mayor Pro Tem Thraillkill	<u>  X  </u>	for	_____	against	_____	abstain	_____	absent
Council Member McClellan	_____	for	_____	against	_____	abstain	<u>  X  </u>	absent
Council Member Smith	<u>  X  </u>	for	_____	against	_____	abstain	_____	absent
Council Member Swinson	<u>  X  </u>	for	_____	against	_____	abstain	_____	absent
Council Member Moses	_____	for	<u>  X  </u>	against	_____	abstain	_____	absent

Closed regular session at 6:41 pm and convened into executive session.

**Executive Session in accordance with Texas Government Code:** in accordance with the authority contained in the Texas Government Code, Section 551.071.

1. Texas Government Code Sections 551.071 (Consultation with City Attorney) and Section 1.05, Texas Disciplinary Rules of Professional Conduct; Confer with City Attorney regarding quality control processes and procedures.

**Closed executive session at 7:11 pm and convened into regular session.**


**Executive Session, Item 1: No Action Taken**

**Adjournment:**

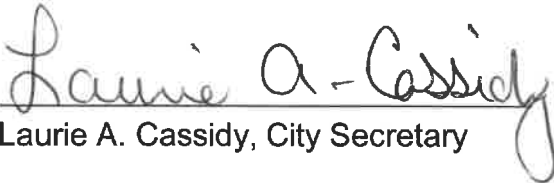
**A motion was made by Council Member Smith to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Mayor Pro-Tem Thrailkill, all in favor.**

**The meeting was adjourned at 7:11 pm.**

Respectfully submitted,

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Mike Arnold, Mayor

ATTEST:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Laurie A. Cassidy, City Secretary

These minutes were approved on the 12 day of September, 2023.

