

**CITY COUNCIL SPECIAL CALLED MEETING  
November 14, 2023  
4:30PM, Municipal Court Room in the Temple Gym  
MINUTES**

**Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order by Mayor Michael Johnson at 4:30PM.  
All Council Members are present: Richard Bracknell, Alexis Boles, Casey Russom, Howard Walden, Tom Wallace

**Approve the published agenda of this date's Special Called Meeting:**

There was a motion to approve the agenda by Council Member Walden, second by Council Member Wallace. Vote 5-0.

1. Set the dates for the City Council's regular voting meeting in December and for the series of City Council committee meetings, to be held during the last week of November.....Mayor Michael Johnson  
After a brief discussion, it was determined that we will stay with the regular schedule for the upcoming monthly meetings. The next Council Committees Meeting will take place on November 27<sup>th</sup>

2. Final review and discussion concerning the City of Temple's proposed Capital Fund budget for the 2024 fiscal year, with the first public hearing on the proposed Capital Fund budget to be held in conjunction with the series of City Council committee meetings during the last week of November and with the second public hearing and then adoption of the Capital Fund budget to occur during the City Council's regular meeting on Monday, December 4.

Financial Consultant Rick Hartley explained that the biggest change is that we increased the amount of new equipment for the Police Department from \$72,000 to \$125,000. The City is also applying for grants with Norfolk Southern so that may reduce those numbers. We removed the ATV purchase for the Sewer Department, it was already in the 2023 budget and that was approved at the last meeting. The total capital budget is \$3.236 million; the majority of that will come out of SPLOST 2021 which is \$2,907,000. The other largest part will come out of the water fund. The biggest portion of that is the Sage St. and E. Johnson St. water line project which is \$950,000, the other is the \$47,000 that is in there for the accounting software. It is estimated that there will be about 2.8 million in SPLOST at the end of December 2024 and we will use about 2 million of that, approximately \$790,000 will be remaining.

3. Continuing discussion of the City of Temple's draft Operating Fund budget for the 2024 fiscal year, with additional discussion and the first public hearing to occur during the City Council Budget and Finance Committee meeting during the last week of November and with the second public hearing and then adoption of the Operating Fund budget to occur during the City Council's regular meeting on Monday, December 4

Financial Consultant Rick Hartley explained that the 2023 budget has gone from 5.3 million to close to 5.4 million for 2024. The increase is only \$58,000. A separate department was added for Community Development. Mr. Hartley met with each department director and they were able to cut expenditures by \$193,000. This is a balanced budget. We are not expecting to dip into reserves and we should end up with a budget of 5.4 million for 2024. He explained that we did increase the revenue transfer from the water fund to the general fund by \$50,000. We were at \$150,000 for several years, but because of the cost of everything going up, this transfer amount was increased. Vacation, sick and holiday pay are now all showing in the regular employee lines.

It was determined that the Community Development Director's salary was left out of the budget; this will be updated. There was also a question about Shop With a Cop. It was explained that this is a separate account with only one withdrawal per year. Mr. Hartley will be working on the salaries and making some updates to the proposed budgets and hopes to have an updated copy to everyone later this week. A continuation of the budget discussion will take place at the committees meeting at the end of the month.

4. Review and discuss options for City of Temple water rates and sewer rates for the next 12-month period, with any change in rates to take effect on December 1

Mayor Michael Johnson explained that at the last meeting, everyone was given the rates of other local cities to review and compare. This is an opportunity for discussion. Council Member Walden stated that he realizes the need to increase the water rates from time to time and it helps with the bond rating and keeping the debt service ratio up, but he is not comfortable with going up on rates with our consistent loss of water that we are buying from the Carroll County Water Authority and that we can't account for. He thought when we put in new water meters that would help. He stated we still have commercial meters to put in and maybe that will help. We are currently losing 24% of water a month that we can not account for. He said on a positive note, the water we were losing in the wastewater treatment plant is way down.

City Administrator Bill Osborne explained that he understands what Mr. Walden is saying and that it is a concern. We hope to find the answer of that. He wanted to remind the Mayor and Council if they decide not to do anything on rates at this time, in February there is the 1.5% inflationary increase unless they choose not to proceed with that. Council Member Bracknell asked if there was a way that they could look at repealing the ordinance which imposes the 1.5% inflationary increase in February. He stated he may be the only one, but he does not want to deal with water rates twice a year. He said he is certainly not supporting raising water rates twice a year. Mayor Johnson said unless staff knows we should consult with the City Attorney to see what the process would be to repeal the ordinance. City Administrator Bill Osborne stated his assumption is the same way they voted the ordinance in, they can vote it out. This will be verified with the City Attorney.

Council Member Bracknell asked if there was any plan to deal with the 24% water loss. City Administrator Bill Osborne stated that all of us thought once the new water meters were installed that would make a big difference and apparently it has only made a slight difference, therefore there must be leaks in our pipes. Council Member Russom asked if there was any way we can isolate different parts of the City to narrow down where we might be losing the most water. Public Works Director Joshua Smith explained that part of the water meter upgrades should help with a lot of that. Part of the issue is a lot of the infrastructure is old. In some places we have three different sized mains in one area. The majority of the issue with the mains is typically the old galvanized lines. He stated he is looking into different vendors that claim to be able to assist with pin pointing water leaks using various technology. They are going to step up the investigating and are going to start with looking at the ditch lines.

Assistant City Administrator Lisa Jacobson reminded everyone that Turnipseed did a water sewer capacity study and the bid opening is coming up for the replacement of water lines. There was further discussion about the possibility of raising the water rates and how that could affect the debt service ratio. There has been a decrease in water and sewer tap fees since 2021, and this has affected the ratio. Council Member Russom explained that we thought the water meters were going to solve the problem of the missing water but that didn't happen. He stated he doesn't see how we don't go up on water rates at some point; the County is going up on us, we can't continue to absorb that cost and fund all of

our water projects. He wants to know that something proactively is being done to fix the problem. Public Works Director said with the new water meters, a lot of the issues are on the customer's side, and before we weren't seeing that, so that is a good thing that they have been able to identify some problems.

5. Either adopt City of Temple water rates and the sewer rates for the next 12 months, to take effect on December 1, or announce that during its regular monthly meeting on December 4 the City Council will adopt water rates and sewer rates for the next 12 months, to take effect on December 1  
It was determined that they will wait until the December 4<sup>th</sup> Council Meeting to make a decision.

6. Review and discuss options for garbage collection and disposal services in the City of Temple, effective as of July 1, 2024

City Administrator Bill Osborne explained that we will need to do something over the next few months; the current three year agreement with GFL expires at the end of June. We don't have to make a decision immediately we have to start the process of what you want to do. Among the things we are looking at, the City of Villa Rica has talked about a multi-jurisdictional approach; they made contact with several local governments and the Fairfield community. Most of the jurisdictions did not seem to be interested in participating, but we wanted to find more about it and have stayed in the loop with what is going on. The City of Villa Rica contracted with a firm, Davenport Laurence to look at the ins and outs of such an operation.

The timing for Temple and Villa Rica to move forward is not great, because our contract expires in mid-June, and Villa Rica's contract expires two years later. If you wanted to continue with GFL for one or two years, I am sure we could do that. GFL is talking about some significant increases. There is another alternative, the consulting term of Davenport Laurence has been in communication with Temple, and a copy of their proposal is in the book. Assistant Administrator Lisa Jacobson explained that we have to go out with an RFP in January since the contract is up. It was mentioned that our counterpart City is looking at doing their own garbage. She had her rumors that if we go out to bid, that potentially another bid might come in for garbage services, potentially at a lower rate. Her recommendation is to go out to bid in January. Davenport Laurence reviewed our contract and said there are some areas that can be reduced (ex. Fuel surcharges) and the RFP could address some of these things. They would like to provide a proposal that would suit the City of Temple's needs for the RFP. City Administrator Bill Osborne said there are some options out there; Davenport Laurence was going to charge us \$30,000 for their assistance, but we have told them we don't have that level of need. Davenport Laurence will get back to us with a proposal that will better suit Temple's needs.

7. Review and approve the submission of one application to the Norfolk Southern Corporation for funds from the company's Safety First grant program or under the Thriving Communities grant program, with the application deadline being November 15

Assistant City Administrator Lisa Jacobson stated that we have gone ahead with the Safety First Grant program. Information about the grant and what is being requested is in the book. There was a motion by Council Member Walden to approve the submission of the application to Norfolk Southern for the Safety First grant program, second by Council Member Boles. Vote 5-0.

8. Review the response to the City of Temple's request for proposals for field and grounds maintenance services in the City Park for a three-year period starting January 1, 2024, and then consider selecting a company to provide these services

Recreation Director Ingrid McKinley said they received one bid for the field and ground maintenance services from River Bottom Farms. City Administrator Bill Osborne explained that the last several years that River Bottom Farms has been the only bid and in his opinion that is because we did have other bidders in previous years, but the price from River Bottom Farms was far lower and the other companies realized they could not compete with them. He explained they have done a good job and have been dependable and he recommends approving the bid. There was a motion by Council Member Walden to approve the proposal by River Bottom Farms in the amount of \$16,594.50, second by Council Member Boles. Vote 5-0.

9. Receive a report concerning the need to repair the "the headworks 14-inch bypass mud valve" at the City of Temple's Sewer Treatment Plant; and then consider directing staff promptly to initiate the process of obtaining comparative quotes for making the needed repairs; discussion

Assistant City Administrator Lisa Jacobson explained there is a bypass mud valve that goes around the grit system, this valve is not working well and could hinder treatment of the water. We have received one quote so far. Sewer Director Jimmy Jenkins explained another company is interested in giving a quote, however they can not be here until next week. City Administrator Bill Osborne explained another part of this is looking at how we will pay for this, and we are requesting that we delay approval for the truck for the sewer treatment plant until the new fiscal year. Mr. Jenkins explained that the quicker this is replaced, the better. This will stop all the grit from going into the tanks which over the long haul will maintain adequate treatment of the water. Mayor Johnson said there will be no action at this time because we are still looking for quotes. This will go on the next agenda.

10. Amend the City of Temple's current FY2023 Capital Fund budget for the Sewer Treatment Plant by transferring the funds previously approved for the purchase of a new truck for the Sewer Treatment Plant to a new line item for the necessary replacement and/or repairs of this valve.

There was a motion by Council Member Wallace to amend the FY2023 Capital Fund budget for the Sewer Treatment Plant by transferring the funds previously approved for the purchase of a new truck for the Sewer Treatment Plant, second by Council Member Walden. Vote 5-0.

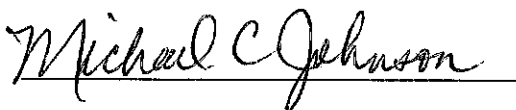
**Executive Session, if needed- N/A**

**Closing Comments:**

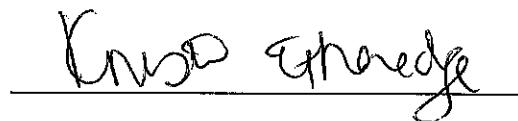
Casey Russom- I hope we can get an understanding of what is going on with our water.

Howard Walden- Hope everyone has a Happy and safe Thanksgiving.

**Adjournment:** There was a motion by Council Member Bracknell to adjourn, second by Council Member Walden. Vote 5-0. The meeting adjourned at 5:39PM.



Mayor Michael Johnson



City Clerk