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ELGIN CITY CITY COUNCIL MINUTES

September 24, 2024

6:30 PM

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor McShan called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Present:

Theresa Y. McShan, Mayor
Arthur Gibson III, Council Member
Joy Casnovsky, Council Member
Chuck Swain, Council Member
YaLecia Love, Council Member
Al Rodriguez, Council Member
Matthew Callahan, Council Member
Sue Brashar, Mayor Pro Tem

Absent:

Forest L. Dennis, Council Member

Staff:

Thomas L. Mattis, City Manager
Owen Rock, EDC Director
Michael Gonzalez, Public Works Director
Chris Noble, Chief of Police
Amy Miller, Community Services Director
Beau Perry, City Engineer/ Development Services Director
Pam Sanders, HR Director
Dodie Navejas, UB Customer Services Manager
Aaron Crim, Commander
Lucy Domingues, Officer
Mathew Decker, Sergeant
Aldo Gomez, Sergeant
Nathan Neitsch, Detective
Esmeralda Rangel, Assistant City Secretary

PRESENTATION

1. **Review and discussion of the proposed City of Elgin FY24-25 Annual Operating Budget as presented by the City Manager, including but not limited to possible discussion of all departments, operations, functions, personnel, infrastructure, facilities, taxes, and tax rates; and all revenues, and expenditures related thereto.**

Mayor McShan opened the work session, and Mayor Pro Tem took the opportunity to address several items from the previous council meeting, as she had been absent. First, she revisited the ordinance she had proposed to the council in 2022, which aimed to freeze the tax ceiling for Elgin residents aged 65 and older or those who are disabled. She also noted that appraisals from the appraisal district had decreased. Mayor Pro Tem clarified that Representative Stan Gerdes had incorrectly stated that the city had a \$25 billion budget and pointed out that emails were being circulated with the wrong tax rate. Additionally, these emails included a disclaimer stating they were paid for by a political ad. She also responded to claims about a "slush fund," explaining that the funds were allocated to support local non-profits that benefit the community, such as Elgin Care, Community Cupboard, and Alley Cates, among others. Mr. Mattis also emphasized that the city only has control over its own taxes, not other taxes, and further discussion followed.

Ms. Casnovsky made a motion to provide a report on how the tax rate numbers are derived at the Thursday council meeting. Mr. Gibson seconded the motion. The vote was as follows: Ms. Casnovsky - yes, Mr. Gibson - yes, Mr. Swain - no, Ms. Love - yes, Mr. Callahan - yes, Mr. Rodriguez - yes, Mayor Pro Tem Brashar - yes, Mayor McShan - yes. The motion carried.

Ms. Love expressed interest in seeing the impact of lowering the tax rate. Mr. Swain responded that any decrease would inevitably affect city services in some way. Mr. Gibson then asked his constituents if they had a specific target for the tax rate they hoped to achieve. Mr. Rodriguez suggested cutting travel and training expenses from the budget as a potential way to reduce costs. Mr. Mattis clarified that the current budget was conservative, designed to maintain services at their current level, and that there could always be a budget amendment later if necessary. He agreed with Mr. Gibson, stating that the council should provide clear direction to staff on their priorities. During the discussion, Mr. Mattis explained that each penny reduction in the tax rate equates to a loss of \$100,000 in city funds. He added that to reach a lower tax rate, new positions could be eliminated, though he didn't recommend this, as the new positions were created in response to both council feedback and the city's growth. Mr. Mattis also mentioned he would be presenting a more detailed analysis at Thursday's meeting, addressing both council and citizen feedback, as well as including Mayor McShan's suggestion to lower the tax rate to 0.55 instead of 0.59. The discussion continued.

ADJOURNMENT

Mayor McShan adjourned the meeting at 7:38 p.m.

ATTEST:


Theresa Y. McShan, Mayor


Esmeralda Rangel, Assistant City Secretary