



**AUSTIN CITY COUNCIL
MINUTES**

**BUDGET WORK SESSION MEETING
WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 12, 2015**

The City Council of Austin, Texas convened in a Budget Work Session Meeting on Wednesday, August 12, 2015, City Hall at 301 W. Second Street, Austin, Texas.

Mayor Adler called the meeting to order at 9:53 a.m.

BRIEFINGS

1. Briefing and discussion related to the departmental proposed budgets.
Presentation was made by Ed Van Eenoo, Deputy Chief Financial Officer.

The following department staff answered questions.

Public Safety

- **Emergency Medical Services: Rey Arellano, Assistant City Manager, Ernie Rodriguez, Chief, and Kerri Lang, Assistant Director.**

Direction was given to staff to provide: performance measure projections based on the City goals rather than the national accreditation standards; the number of ambulances in service and an estimate on the cost of operating an individual ambulance; the cost incurred last year from moving from a 48 hour work week to a 42 hour work week and an estimate for moving to a 40 hour work week; information on the maximum number of hours employees are allowed to work per day and per week; effects of moving back to the model of having two paramedics rather than one paramedic and one emergency medical technician; demographics of sworn and non-sworn personnel; the number staff who live within the City limits and the number who live outside the city and where; the total amount of services provided which are not reimbursed to the City; who serves on the EMS Advisory Board and how are they appointed; the number of repeat calls received; performance data on and any resources needed for the Community Paramedic Program; information on fees including if the amount charged insurance companies actually covers the cost of services; and information on the costs incurred by the department for covering festivals and special events and an analysis on the cost of creating a “special events” team that would handle events rather than use of overtime.

- **Austin Fire: Rey Arellano, Assistant City Manager, Rhoda Mae Kerr, Chief and Ronnelle Paulsen, Assistant Director.**

Direction was given to staff to provide: information on the implementation of the wildfire fuel mitigation program including any roadblocks and resources needed; the differential response rates across the city; response rates for the new areas being annexed including Circuit of the Americas, Lost Creek and Shady Hollow; the cost for leasing the facility potentially available in the Shady Hollow area; an update on the retrofitting of stations to accommodate the larger

vehicles and other station repairs; demographics of sworn and non-sworn personnel; the number staff who live within the City limits and the number who live outside the city and where; details on the plans for updating the stations including the timeline detailing when stations are scheduled to be updated; an explanation for the decrease in revenue relating to site inspection fees and if the costs of the fees cover the total cost of the inspection; and information on the costs incurred by the department for covering festivals and special events and an analysis on the cost of creating a “special events” team that would handle events rather than use of overtime.

The motion to waive the rules to allow public comment during the work session for three minutes each failed on Council Member Zimmerman’s motion, Council Member Garza’s second on a 4-4 vote. Those voting aye were: Council Members Gallo, Garza, Troxclair and Zimmerman. Those voting nay were: Council Members Casar, Houston, Pool and Renteria. Mayor Adler, Mayor Pro Tem Tovo and Council Member Kitchen were off the dais.

- Austin Police: Rey Arellano, Assistant City Manager, Art Acevedo, Chief, Brian Manley, Chief of Staff and Alice Thomas, Assistant Director.

Direction was given to staff to provide: additional information about the community policing program; a list of changes that can be incorporated now to increase the percentage of time officers have to devote to the community policing program; demographics of sworn and non-sworn personnel; the number staff who live within the City limits and the number who live outside the city and where; information on the correlation of uncommitted time compared to crime rates; information on the feasibility of partnering with other law enforcement entities in the area to assist with special events; details on how reducing the uncommitted time will translate into increased community policing within each district; a list of cities using “uncommitted time” as a matrix for determining number of officers and a list of cities currently meeting the 35% national standard; information on the costs incurred by the department for covering festivals and special events and an analysis on the cost of creating a “special events” team that would handle events rather than use of overtime; pay rates for candidates and probationary officers; and demographics on the Youth Program.

Mayor Adler recessed the meeting at 1:45 p.m.

Mayor Adler called the meeting back to order at 2:10 p.m.

BRIEFINGS CONTINUED

Development Departments

- Economic Development: Kevin Johns, Director, Sylnovia Holt-Rabb and Michelle Clemons, Financial Manager.

Direction was given to staff provide: information on requirements relating to salaries and benefits for employees who are hired by businesses who receive small business loans; economic revenue impact of SXSW in terms of actual tax revenue to the City; the list of pilot projects that are part of the Soul-y program; and statistics on the number of graduates from the Workforce Development Programs.

Utilities/Other Enterprise Departments

- Austin Energy: Robert Goode, Assistant City Manager, Larry Weis, General Manager, Mark Dombroski, Chief Financial Officer and David Kutach, Budget Director.

Direction was given to staff to provide: a breakdown of the amount of the transfers and the debt service; the total amount of the customer bad debt and its impact on the department's credit rating; and the total cost of marketing and sponsorship programs for the department.

Development Departments

- **Development Services: Rodney Gonzales, Acting Director, Meredith Quick, Acting Financial Manager and Melissa Martinez, Chief Administrative Officer.**

Direction was given to staff to provide: a working draft of the departments goals and performance matrix; department recommendation on merging the Austin Code Department with Development Services; information on the Zucker recommendation for adding a new public information specialist position dedicated to education and outreach; data on the number of calls that are received by the One Stop Shop and an estimate on the number of calls that could be addressed by the customer service representative; and information on the justification for the new position dedicated to web-site maintenance.

- **Planning and Zoning: Greg Guernsey, Director and Meredith Quick, Acting Financial Manager.**

Direction was given too staff to provide: additional information and a breakdown of the funding requests for the CodeNext Project including costs for green infrastructure and community engagement; information on the schedule to determine any ways to shorten the length of the project; information on who will be responsible for community engagement and the plan for the engagement; any resources needed for working with neighborhood groups and developing neighborhood plans; information on the increase in fees for the Austin-San Antonio Corridor; and information on other key performance measures collected by the department.

Mayor Adler adjourned the meeting at 5:33 p.m. without objection.

The minutes were approved on this the 20th day of August 2015 on Council Member Gallo's motion, Council Member Troxclair's second on an 11-0 vote.