

MINUTES OF THE CITY COUNCIL

CITY OF AUSTIN, TEXAS

Recessed Meeting

May 3, 1948
2:00 P. M.

Council Chamber, City Hall

The meeting was called to order, with Mayor Miller presiding.

Roll Call

Present : Councilmen Glass, Thornberry, Johnson, Bartholomew,
Mayor Miller.

Absent : None

Present also: W. T. Williams, Jr., Tax Assessor and Collector;
Rickey Key, Howard Hull, and L. Theo Bellmont, members of Tax Board of
Equalization.

Mrs. Helena Hardcastle - 1501 West 6th Street, 110x396'
Block 11, Outlot 1, Div. 2,
Map 101, Item 58

Mrs. Hardcastle said that the property is exceedingly old and has
been in the family for about 75 years. The assessment was raised from
\$1,630 to \$2,130 on improvements. The land remained the same. The house
has 1967 square feet, with a unit of \$2.55, and was given 55% depreciation.
The Council said they would send someone out to check the house for her.

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George H. Harrington Estate 3107 Hempell Park, Lot 72,
by Mrs. Harrington less NW triangle, Block 8, Outlot 74,
Division D, Map 64, Item 90.

Mrs. Harrington said that the City took the corner off the lot in
1930, giving it a 28 foot frontage, and making the lot too small for build-
ing. She stated that she was charged with 3 frontages --- the 31st Street
(according to Mrs. Harrington) side is not a front and cannot be a front.
She said that there is one front and only one and that is the 28 foot front-
age. The valuation is set at \$3,730. The Council told Mrs. Harrington
this would be rechecked.

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J. O. Lamb

- Representing Westfield
property owners.

Mr. Lamb first wanted to know what basis the land value on Enfield Road was arrived at. He said that he was revalued in 1945 and then they came back in 1947 and revalued it again, making an increase of about 700%. Mr. Lamb pointed out that formerly the whole Enfield Addition had restrictions in deeds making each piece of property about one acre and having 75 foot set back. He said that the unit is too high and that they were told when the property was revalued in 1945 that that valuation was to stand for 5 years. He said that he paid \$2,000 for his property in 1933. The Council told Mr. Lamb that this property would be studied and rechecked.

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Darrell Roe

- 2316 Enfield Road

Mr. Roe said that he has 176x66' with a valuation of \$1,910. He contended that the unit is too high. The Council said it would be rechecked.

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R.G. Mueller

- 816 Congress Avenue, 10.72
acres Plat 180, Item 2; 800
block East 10th St. Plat 31,
Item 92; 5200 Dallas Highway,
Plat 191, Item 20.

Mr. Mueller said that his property goes back about 80 feet from the Avenue, but is not excavated to the 2nd and 3rd level and all the other lots in the block are. Therefore, he feels that he should have some consideration rather than having the same value as those who have their lots excavated and are getting the benefit from the entire lot. The Council felt that Mr. Mueller should have some consideration because his lot is not excavated. They told him that they would study the situation and advise.

Mr. Mueller then took up the 10.72 acre tract which is across from the Colored Deaf and Dumb School. He said that he paid \$2,750 for it, that he has 1600 feet on the railroad and this comes to a point, with very little depth. He feels that \$400 an acre is too high. The Council told Mr. Mueller that they would look into this, and notify him.

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Mr. Mueller stated that the 4.90 acre tract on the 5200 block of the Dallas Highway was raised from \$945 to \$1,950, which he feels is too great an increase. He said that he was given only 30% and he has no sewer and no gas. The Council said that they would look at it.

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Mr. Mueller then took up the property in the 800 Block of East 10th Street. He said that he has four box houses, with assessed valuation

of \$2,000, and only 35% depreciation. The Council said they would check this.

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Mrs. A. T. Stephenson - 2213 Bentley

Mrs. Stephenson appeared in protest of valuation on her home at 2213 Bentley, which she felt was too high, and the Council told her they would have it checked.

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Everette Kelly - Everette Kelly Pharmacy,
Furniture & Fixtures, and Stock

Mr. Kelly said that he was assessed \$4,000 for furniture and fixtures and \$10,670 for stock. He said that he was not called on for an inventory nor did anyone ask to see his books. He stated that the fixtures cost him \$5,200 ten years ago, and thinks \$3,000 would be a fair valuation. Mr. Kelly will file a certified copy of his inventory and the figures will be accepted.

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R. Ben Thrasher, for - 2005 Guadalupe
Dan McCaskill 2003 Guadalupe

Mr. Thrasher said that the assessed land value of \$13,250 is too high, but the improvements valuation is reasonable. He said that \$250 front foot basis seems out of reason. Mayor Miller explained that Guadalupe is a very high priced street.

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Miss Catherine Wheatley, by 2000 Block Guadalupe
Ben Thrasher

Mr. Thrasher said that the same thing applies to Miss Wheatley's property that he had said about Mr. McCaskill's property. The Mayor told him that it was valued at less than 50% of present day value.

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Ted Buttrey - Buttreys Store, 107 West 6th

Mr. Buttrey said that the cost of construction was \$109,000 and that the assessed value was \$112,000. He compared his building with T. H. Williams' and pointed out that his air conditioning system was included in his personal property, which he has already paid. The Council stated that they would go into the matter and cost, etc., and give Mr. Buttrey an answer in a few days.

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J.C. Kimmerling

904-5 West 22nd Street

The Mayor read Mr. Kimmerling's letter and the Council told Mr. Kimmerling that the only thing that could be done would be to send someone out to look at the property and see what can be done.

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Thomas M. Allison, for
Gulf Distributing Company

Personal Property

Mr. Allison said that his predecessor had a conflict of personalities with the appraiser and refused to open the books to him. He stated that he would like to open his books to someone and show that his actual inventory was \$24,976. He further stated that the furniture and fixtures originally cost \$1,392.77 and that they have been using them four years. The Council said that they would look into Mr. Allison's books and get the matter straightened out.

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Mrs. Thelma Hicks

Beauty Shop at 1196 Navasota
Personal Property

Mrs. Hicks said that she bought all her equipment in 1942 for less than \$150 and that it is nearly all worn out and some of it is not in use. The Council stated that they would lower this assessment to \$60.00.

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R. B. Dalby

Did not appear before the Council.

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Hyde Park Pharmacy

by Mrs. Stacy, owner

Mr. Glass said that Mrs. Stacy called him and told him that she was ill and could not appear, but would like for the Council to accept her inventory that she sent them. The Council said this would be checked.

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W. L. Meier

Mr. Meier could not appear, so Mayor Miller read his letter and the Council decided that someone from the Tax Department should go out and look at the property.

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S.W. Ruff

Plat 314, Item 84; Plat 313,
Item 48; Plat 162, Item 61

Mr. Ruff stated that he is concerned with the property on the Dallas Highway that was very recently taken into the City Limits, known as the University Airport, together with improvements thereon. He said that he appeared before the Board of Equalization and some lots on the other side of the highway in the Northgate Addition were lowered. The Board at that time, said Mr. Ruff, said they would recheck the property and they reduced the valuation on that property and the property across the street was valued on the same basis, so it was likewise reduced in the same amount. He said that this property is an integral part of a much larger tract of land that is being used in the conduct of business. The taxes on the one strip of land 150 feet deep and 2300 feet long are out of reason. The valuation is \$35,130. He said that he sold a tract two years ago right across the street 400 feet long for \$15.00 a front foot. Mr. Ruff contends that the taxes on his land known as University Airport and leased to the University of Texas are confiscatory.

The Council told Mr. Ruff that they would look into this and try to do something for him with it. They also said they would check the lot in Tarrytown.

Mrs. Nellie McCaleb

Robinson Avenue

Mrs. McCaleb said that she thinks the lots are valued too high, as she is hemmed in and has no frontage on any street. She said that she was offered \$100 each for the lots and would not sell, yet the City has them valued at \$850.00. The Council said this would be checked, and she would be advised.

Hans Schmidli

Walkers' Washerette,
1513 Fredericksburg Road

Mrs. Schmidli said that he paid \$15,000 for the property because he had to have some place to move his business, but he doesn't think it is worth more than \$6,000. He said that the land is low and very shallow. The Council told him they would look into this and notify him.

Gordon Worley

47th and Red River and Caswell
Avenue

Mr. Worley said that he was not protesting the raise put on that portion of the land on which his house is located. He said that he has vacant property about 5.025 acres between Caswell and the Railroad that has been assessed for \$1170. When it was reappraised it got raised to \$7,600. Mr. Worley said that he has no water and sewerage and feels the valuation is too high for this property without utilities. Mr. Williams

said that the unit was fixed with the thought that utilities were available and the Council said this would be checked and an adjustment made.

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The Council set hearings for three appeals at 2:00, 2:30, and 3:00 P.M. respectively Thursday afternoon, May 13, 1948.

Upon motion, seconded and carried, the meeting was then recessed, subject to call of the Mayor.

Approved: Tom Miller.

MAYOR

Attest:

Helen M. Kellum.

CITY CLERK