

MINUTES OF THE CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF AUSTIN, TEXAS
Special Called Council Meeting
September 10, 1980
6:00 P.M.
Council Chambers
301 West Second Street

The meeting was called to order with Mayor McClellan presiding.

Roll Call:

Present: Mayor McClellan, Councilmembers Cooke, Himmelblau, Mullen, Snell, Trevino

Absent: Councilmember Goodman

Mayor McClellan stated that this was a Special Called Meeting for the purpose of a public hearing on the proposed 1980-81 Operating Budget; the proposed water, sewer and sanitation rate structures; and the proposed fee revision recommended for Public Works, Planning, Urban Transportation, Building Inspection, Parks and Recreation, Emergency Medical Services, Library, Electric, Brackenridge Hospital, Finance, Utility Customer Service, Transit fare increases and General Revenue Sharing Funds.

Mayor McClellan briefly reviewed the proposed budget and stated that the Council would have to cut it by \$13-\$14 million or find additional sources of revenue if there were to be no tax increase.

MS. VICKIE COOK, Travis County Services for the Deaf, acted as interpreter for the evening.

MR. LEON J. BARISH, Chairman, Renewable Energy Resources Commission, read a letter expressing the Commission's concern over the level of funding proposed by the City Manager for the Office of Energy Conservation and Renewable Resources for FY 80-81. The letter supported the budget request from the Administrator of the Office of Energy Conservation and Renewable Resources. Mr. Barish emphasized the need for a viable program of energy conservation.

MR. RALPH WHITE, Chairman, Mayor's Commission on Employment of the Handicapped, asked the Council to add to the Affirmative Action office a handicapped component consisting of two people at a cost of \$42,676 annually.

MR. JIM CANNON, representing MIGHT and co-chairman, Legislative and Legal Awareness subcommittee of the Mayor's Committee on Employment of the Handicapped, spoke in support of the addition of two people referred to by Mr. White and felt that a lay person could not handle the position.

MS. ELAINE ROBERTS, vice chairman, Mayor's Committee on Employment of the Handicapped, spoke in support of the budget for the Mayor's Committee on Employment of the Handicapped in the amount of \$32,303. Proposed projects included a resource directory for business and industry, a slide show on architectural barriers for use with prospective employers and civic groups and four communications seminars consisting of the following areas:

1. Employer training
2. Public awareness
3. Applying for a job
4. Systems for employment, such as special transit, special services and housing

At that point, Mr. White recognized the disabled people in the audience by asking them to stand.

An unidentified women stated that she was a City bus driver who drove the Martin Luther King/South Congress route. She opposed the proposed fare increase and the cutting of staff. It was her understanding that 16 drivers and 2 mechanics would be laid off; bus service would stop at 8:00 p.m.; the Highland Mall turnaround would be discontinued; Burnet/Mesa and Riverside/Bergstrom routes would run only at peak hours; other routes would be discontinued and Casis and Enfield routes would be discontinued on Sundays.

DR. JIM BENSON, Director, Urban Transportation Department, stated that the following changes in bus service were being proposed in the budget:

1. Increase headways from 40 minutes to 60 minutes for Saturday service.
2. Terminate night service at 8:00 p.m. on 10 routes with limited ridership.
3. Peak period service only on the Burnet/Mesa route in the segment between Northcross Mall and Mesa Drive.
4. Peak period service only on the Riverside/Bergstrom route between Montopolis and Bergstrom.
5. Eliminate Sunday service on the Enfield and Casis routes.

The Highland Mall turnaround service would not be eliminated. If the proposed changes were implemented by the Council, then potentially 18 employees could be laid off within 30 to 60 days after the budget was adopted. The union had been notified of the potential for a layoff.

MS. JANICE CURLEE, an employee of Austin--Travis County MHMR who worked with developmentally disabled, most of whom were mentally retarded. She asked that they be able to attend a seminar on employment and that the illiterate ones be told about it verbally and assisted in attending it. She opposed increasing bus fares because it would effect the handicapped individual's ability to pay for housing and electrical service. Cutting service would limit such individual's ability to get to and from work.

MS. HELEN SPEAR, a member of the Library Commission, stated that the Commission unanimously supported the City Manager's recommended budget for the library, plus a supplemental figure of \$76,000 for children's services.

Responding to Councilmember Himmelblau's question, Ms. Spear said that there was more new book money this year than last, but that it did not reflect the increase in inflation and population.

Mayor McClellan asked if the City were able to keep the libraries open for longer hours, would it be possible to expand volunteer services. Ms. Spear said that it had been tried and probably could be expanded with a paid, rather than volunteer, coordinator of volunteer services.

MR. BRIAN DUDLEY, a transportation planner and transit rider, presented ridership figures since 1975, stating that with the type of service being offered ridership would not reach the level projected for 1981 of 6.7 to 8 million riders annually. He felt that unimaginative management was the cause. He stated that 10% of the ridership would be lost if fares were raised by 50%, which would amount to about 1,500 per day.

MR. GERALD NEELY, representing the Capital City Youth Basketball Association, urged the Council to support their program by including it in the 1980-81 budget. He was not sure whether or not \$30,000 in participation costs was included in the AISD adopted budget, but would be meeting with PARD and AISD next Friday to discuss details of implementing the program for the coming year.

Mayor McClellan felt that a joint approach was important to maintain.

MR. KEN JORDAN, operator of Child Craft Day School, spoke concerning the yearly fee for day care centers under the Sanitary Sewer Industrial Waste Ordinance.

Mayor McClellan stated that under proposed changes to the ordinance, day care centers would be removed from permitting requirements.

MR. RAY NEUBAUER, a homeowner in an older neighborhood, asked the Council to reduce and make some City services pay for themselves. He stated that he was ready for a tax revolt if taxes went up 100% on his property under the proposed budget.

MS. MARILYN CRAWFORD asked why transit rates had doubled in the last three years. Dr. Benson stated that over 90% of cost increases could be attributed to salaries and wages, fuel, bus parts and the taxicab contract for STS.

MS. SUSAN DIRKS, a member of the Renewable Energy Resources Commission, recommended and requested full funding of the Office of Energy Conservation and Renewable Resources.

MR. GARY ENTRESS, spokesman for the Hancock Neighborhood Association, introduced Mr. Charles Harker, president of the Association.

MR. HARKER stated that Hancock Golf Course was the oldest golf course in Texas. He reviewed reasons why Hancock Golf Course should be restored and maintained by the City primarily for use by young golfers and seniors golfers.

DR. TED EDWARDS, retired educator and president of the Senior Golf Association of Austin, urged the Council to retain and make substantial improvements to Hancock Golf Course. He cited the following reasons:

1. No proposals had been presented to the public for alternative uses for Hancock. The Council should not take any action to close Hancock without exploring all possible alternative uses.
2. If Hancock were closed, junior golfers would have to ride their bicycles across town to Jimmy Clay or Morris Williams to play golf. Without Hancock, more juniors would play at Muny, which already was the most patronized municipal course in town. Young players tended to slow down play on the regular courses. Seniors preferred to use Muny and Hancock to avoid driving crosstown to Clay and Williams to avoid morning and afternoon rush hour traffic.

3. Not only should Hancock not be closed, it should be improved and revitalized as a model 9-hole course to accommodate junior golfers during vacation months, afternoons after school hours and during weekends. Senior golfers would use the course during week days. Working people in the general vicinity would use the course in the early mornings and after work.
4. Built in 1899, Hancock is the oldest golf course in Texas. Its heritage should be preserved.
5. What appeared to be a program of planned attrition was reducing play and revenues from Hancock, so that eventually it would be recommended to close the course.

In closing, Dr. Edwards invited the Council to a barbecue on September 17th to meet some of the senior golfers.

An unidentified junior golfer hoped that the Council would keep Hancock Golf Course open.

DR. WILLIAM S. BRUMAGE, a retired physician, urged the Council not to close Hancock Golf Course.

MR. JOHN SANFORD, president, Hyde Park Neighborhood Association, agreed with the Hancock Neighborhood Association that the Hancock Golf Course should be maintained and kept open.

A representative from the North University Neighborhood Association, spoke in support of Hancock Neighborhood Association recommendations.

MR. GARRY ENTRESS, in summarizing for the Hancock Neighborhood Association, stated that funding Hancock for one year was their top priority. He asked the Council to place \$200,000 in the CIP for allocation over the next three years, with \$50,000 to be funded in FY 81-82 to renovate Hancock. In return, the Hancock Neighborhood Association would commit itself to the following proposals:

1. Hancock Neighborhood Association will buy newspaper and radio spots with its funds to promote play at Hancock.
2. Publicity tie-ins with the Legends of Golf at Onion Creek Country Club.
3. Personal appearances and clinics by touring professional golfers for junior players.

4. Greater use of Hancock by the Physical Education Department at The University of Texas.
5. Sponsor one major event a year in cooperation with Hancock Shopping Center to help offset Hancock's deficit.
6. Start junior programs in east and south Austin and hold them at Hancock.

Mr. Entress said that bound copies of the proposal would be hand-delivered to the Council on Tuesday morning.

MR. RAY REECE, a member of the Renewable Energy Resources Commission, wondered how many citizens were aware of the relationship between the City's budget problems and the City's utility investment patterns since 1973. He felt that the City needed rapid renewable resource development--solar, wind, energy efficiency and conservation, which generally cost one-third to one-half for the same amount of energy delivered or saved as did conventional energy expansion in the form of electricity. He felt that the Commission's performance to date merited full funding of the \$61,000 budget request.

MS. BETSY TIMM spoke in support of renewal resource development and asked for a well-funded office to encourage such development.

MR. RICK MANNING felt that energy considerations had to take precedent over such things as golf. He asked the Council to consider the projects proposed by volunteers in renewable energy resource development.

MR. JIM ROBERTSON spoke in support of neighborhood energy co-operatives and asked the Council for its consideration. He asked the \$61,000 budget request be granted.

MR. SCOTT VAN OSDOL, representing the Citizen Labor Energy Coalition, said that it was a political question of whether or not to support renewable energy resources and that there was a large constituency in Austin which supported it.

MR. CRAIG HENDERSON spoke in opposition to the proposed transit fare increase.

MS. MARILYN SIMPSON, president, Austin Neighborhood Council, stated that ANC requested reinstatement of full library services, including full library hours for the branch libraries, full funding for new books on the City's present and projected growth rate and the keeping of professional librarians in the branches.

MS. PAT POLUDECK spoke in opposition to increased transit fares and felt that the problem centered around energy. She stressed the need for conservation.

MS. MARJORIE LOEHLIN, who lived in Rollingwood, stated that she did not object to the fee for library use within the City of Austin, but wished that the money would go for library purposes. She asked the Council to be generous to the libraries.

MR. BO BYERS, president of the Parks and Recreation Tennis Advisory Board, urged adoption of the tennis budget recommended by the Parks and Recreation Board instead of the City Manager's recommendation of \$97,329. He also spoke on the following issues:

1. Use or service fees for Parks and Recreation programs - Felt that tennis court fees paid its way while other program fees did not and asked for more equity in charges.
2. Parkland acquisition policy - City Council and taxpayers should be aware that if all 8,628 acres of parkland were private property, nearly \$1 million a year in property taxes would be paid.
3. Capital Improvement Projects - Failure to meet prior-year CIP commitments while adding new ones will impact operating budgets. He specifically referred to the Council's 1978 authorization for a 16-court tennis center which was not built due to underfunding.

In conclusion, Mr. Byers cited a study conducted by a university research team this summer which found that 62 per cent of Austin's citizens were willing to pay more local taxes if the money was used to improve parks and recreation facilities and services.

MR. MIKE VAN BLARICAM, president of the Austin Firefighter's Association, cited statistics which indicated that pay for Austin firemen had not kept pace with the Consumer Price Index in Austin during the last several years. He asked for a 14% pay increase at all levels for Austin firemen and stated that firemen were saving the City money through low fire insurance rates.

MR. BOB SINDERMAN asked the Council to cut the budget across the board by at least \$12 million and keep taxes at the same rate as last year. He also asked the Council to terminate the people who prepared the proposed budget. He asked why Austin, through Valero, was producing and selling gas to private enterprise as well as electricity.

Councilmember Cooke pointed out that the Valero situation was transitional and that Austin did not control Valero. The excess electricity produced by the City was being sold at a profit to Houston Lighting and Power and was the most expensive electricity to produce in the system.

MS. MARY ALICE BROWN, representing the Austin City Council of PTA's subcommittee on library services, urged the Council to restore children's services and expanded hours for branch libraries.

MS. MARIAN VITUCCI, who lived outside the City limits, said that she had to pay \$12 for a library card, but that needs were not being met. She asked for longer hours at the branch libraries, more professional help and retention of copying machines at the branches.

MS. SHERRY ELLISON spoke in support of the Parks and Recreation budget at the highest level. She also asked that the copying machines be retained in the branch libraries, as well as full funding for the libraries.

MR. ROGER BAKER, representing Austinites for Public Transportation, stated that the City Council had not followed the Austin Tomorrow Comprehensive Plan to control growth. Regarding public transportation, Mr. Baker said that transit riders should not have to pay for mismanagement of transit funds.

MS. LAURA MCCOWAN, a librarian for 11 years with the Austin Public Library and now a volunteer, agreed that library volunteers could be useful, but they could not replace trained staff. She also spoke in support of the telephone information service, pointing out that it was important and heavily used.

MR. DONALD THOMPSON supported an increase in transit fares if there was to be an increase in services, particularly in the area of special transit services.

MR. BOB GARRETT spoke in opposition to a 50% increase in transit fares, but was willing to compromise on an increase.

M.A. LANG spoke in opposition to the proposed increase from \$25 to \$60 in the Sanitary Sewer Industrial Waste Ordinance annual permit fee. Regarding the Health Department budget, Mr. Lang asked how stickers were placed on vending machines in the City and what was the cost.

DR. ALBERT RANDALL stated that stickers were placed on machines to show that they had been inspected. He would check to see what the fee was and inform Mr. Lang.

MR. LANG contended that there was no inspection of vending machines in the City and he resented having to pay for it.

Mayor McClellan asked Dr. Randall for a report on the inspection process on vending machines, who did the inspections, how stickers were placed on the machines and any fees.

Regarding his proposed amendment to the electric rate ordinance, Mr. Lang stated that the Electric Utility Commission did nothing when he appeared before them to present the amendment and he asked that the Commission be gotten rid of.

Mr. Lang asked why the cost of nonanalysis of wastewater was to be increased by 140% (from \$25 to \$60 annually).

MR. BILL BULLOCH, Water and Wastewater Department, stated that not all businesses covered under the permitting process had been analyzed, that they were concentrating on problem areas first. The proposed fee increase would allow the City to inspect each permit holder at least once.

Mr. Lang asked why there were businesses in Austin which were not complying with some EPA regulations specifically in federally subsidized housing, privately owned apartments and possibly in University of Texas dormitories.

Mr. Bulloch stated that there was not sufficient personnel to monitor apartment houses or federally subsidized housing. If Mr. Lang could provide information on units having 6 or more washing machines in use, then the City would inspect them and issue permits.

MS. POLLY DEVANY spoke in opposition to increased bus fares and presented a list of 38 people who also opposed the increase. She also asked that the parks and arts budgets not be cut.

MS. DOROTHY RICHTER asked the Council to keep the street sweepers and to have an alley maintenance program. Regarding the playground budget, she asked that wading pools be kept open all day, particularly where there was a large concentration of day care centers. Concerning a City pay raise, Ms. Richter stated that a graduated scale should be used instead of an across-the-board increase. She also felt that use of City cars should be cut back.

MR. JIM PARRA, president, AFSCME for Local #1624, presented the following budget recommendations:

1. General across-the-board wage increase of 10%, with a ceiling of 96¢/hour for anyone earning over \$20,000 annually. Cost would be a little over \$11 million.
2. Shift differential of 50¢/hour for employees on swing shifts and graveyard shifts. Cost - \$630,000.
3. Holiday incentive pay of 1½ times usual rate of pay for employees who work on family holidays (Christmas, New Year's Day, Independence Day, Labor Day and Thanksgiving. Cost - \$700,000.

4. Form a new holiday of June 19th (Juneteenth) as an official City holiday. Cost - \$412,000.
5. Unfreeze merit pay by adding two steps in each pay range.
6. Pay longevity pay after three years of service. Cost \$140,000.

Total proposals would cost \$13,346,259, which was less than 4% of last year's budget.

Councilmember Snell complimented AFSCME for the recommendation of June 19th as an official City Holiday.

MR. STUART HIRSH cited pay raise statistics from other municipalities in Texas and stated that the proposed raise for Austin was the lowest. He stated that the proposed two-step raise in October would leave all future employees at a disadvantage, particularly those recruited under affirmative action. It was the Union's position that no City supervisor should be given a merit increase larger than the average increase of his or her subordinates. In conclusion, Mr. Hirsh felt that the Union had been more conservative in its pay increase request that had been City staff.

MR. RAY BARNES spoke in support of AFSCME's merit pay proposal and asked the Council to extend merit lines this year.

MS. LILLIAN VOSS, a Registered Nurse at Brackenridge, spoke in support of a shift differential, especially at Brackenridge Hospital. She stated that other Austin hospitals had shift differentials.

MS. MARILYN ANDERSON, who was the 11 to 7 supervisor at the Laboratory in Brackenridge Hospital, favored a shift differential for Brackenridge employees. She cited the high turnover rate because there was no incentive.

MR. ALLAN BOWSER, an employee of the Aviation Department at Municipal Airport, spoke in support of shift differentials.

MR. STEVE SILVAS, an employee with Vehicle and Equipment Services, cited the high turnover rate for night workers in his department and stated that a shift differential would reduce that rate and make jobs easier to fill.

MS. JEANNE NYEAR, a public health nurse with the Health Department, spoke in support of holiday pay incentive and stated that 1½ times the regular pay would be more of an incentive. Holiday incentive pay would cover only the five family holidays.

MR. JULIO CORPUS spoke in support of June 19th as a City holiday.

MARY MARTINEZ spoke in support of a three-year service instead of six-year service for stability pay.

MR. PAUL GOTTLIEB stated that yesterday a packet was distributed to Council which referred to \$7 million worth of budget items. Questions raised centered around 1) cost of operating any particular department has risen well above any legitimate allowance for inflation or City growth without providing significant new services, 2) new services detailed in the budget document do not seem to be significant or beneficial and may not be warranted or justified during a tight budget year and 3) some departments have significant vacancies and may not require full funding for the coming fiscal year let alone the increases requested above the present budget level.

In addition, AFSCME recommended that the City investigate the following additional sources of possible funding:

1. An IPA grant to fund retaining of persons injured on the job. (Currently under study by the Personnel Department)
2. Cooperative funding with the Texas Rehabilitation Commission for on-the-job training programs for the disabled.
3. CETA Title IIC upgrading would provide on-the-job training for women, minorities and handicapped workers for better City jobs and the City would be reimbursed up to 40% of wages used during the training period.

MR. PETER FEARS, Business Agent for AFSCME, summarized by stating that they were not ashamed to ask for the six items proposed by AFSCME and that they were reasonable and fair. The total package was less than 12% of this year's payroll costs and the total request was about 4% of last year's budget. He urged the Council to support the Union's requests.

MS. EDITH BUSS, representing Travis County Democratic Women's Committee, spoke in favor of the library budget. She also spoke in support of social service agencies. Ms. Buss suggested that a citizens' suggestion box be created and an ad hoc committee formed to review those suggestions and select appropriate ones to present to the Council for consideration.

Mayor McClellan stated that a lot of good moneysaving ideas had been received since the City started an employee suggestion award program.

MS. IRENE DOMINGUEZ, member of the Parks and Recreation Board, disagreed with some proposed cuts in the Parks and Recreation Department budget.

Councilmember Cooke asked for the total budget and total staff for recreation centers located Northwest, South Austin, Pan American and Montopolis.

Mr. Ehrler presented the following figures:

	<u>FTE's</u>	<u>Manager's Recommendation</u>	<u>Reduction</u>
South Austin	9	8.25	.75
Pan American	9.75	8.25	1.50
Montopolis	8.25	7.50	.75
Northwest	7	5.75	1.25

Councilmember Cooke pointed that the Northwest Recreation Center had less staffing than the three other centers.

Mayor McClellan asked Mr. Ehrler to speak to the boxing program and Mr. A.B. Cantu's position, which was on the cut list.

Mr. Ehrler said that there were openings for Mr. Cantu where he could continue to operate as in the past, but in a broader sense.

Regarding Mayor McClellan's questions as to whether Mr. Cantu knew before the budget presentation that he would still be funded and could carry on with his boxing program, Ms. Donna Brasher of PARD replied that she had visited with Mr. Cantu last April to explain the guidelines presented to the Department by Research and Budget in preparation for next year's budget. She also visited with Mr. Cantu right after the Council received its copy of the proposed budget because she felt that it would be unethical to visit with him before the Council received the budget. In April, Mr. Cantu was advised that the position of boxing coordinator might be eliminated. There was no discussion regarding the continuation of the same program as in the past. Mr. Cantu was advised that he could work with the boxing program, but not in the same capacity.

Mayor McClellan felt that of the two vacancies (recreation specialist at Northwest Recreation Center and program specialist at South Austin Recreation Center), that in view of Mr. Cantu's background, South Austin probably would be a better location.

Upon Mayor McClellan's request, Ms. Brasher reviewed the boxing program and stated that only 75 people were expected to participate in the upcoming program at a cost of \$216.58 per participant. There has never been a registration of over about 125 people. The program could be carried out with seasonal employees working at the recreation centers. Mr. Cantu's work had been primarily with tournaments which came to 12 per year. His job was pairing boxers, bringing in boxers from out of town, buying equipment used on a citywide basis and doing publicity.

MR. JIM LUMPKIN, an employee of Brackenridge Hospital, stated that with regard to merit increases, the City should consider long time employees and give them something to look forward to.

MR. PHIL CONARD spoke in support of the position of part-time cataloguer for the 50,000 Neal Douglass photographs in the Austin-Travis County Collection.

Mayor McClellan asked Mr. Ehrler about the existing and proposed hours of operation for the natural science area of the Pioneer Farm.

Mr. Ehrler said that the 1979-80 operating hours for the Pioneer Farm and outdoor nature programs were from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Monday through Friday. The 1980-81 proposed operating hours would be to close on Monday, open 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Tuesday through Friday, 9:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. on Saturday and 12:00 noon to 6:00 p.m. on Sunday.

Mayor McClellan asked Mr. Ehrler for attendance statistics at Pioneer Farm, and Mr. Ehrler stated that he would get them for her.

ADJOURNMENT

The Council adjourned its meeting at 10:20 p.m.

APPROVED

Carole Keeton McClellan
Mayor

ATTEST:

Grace Monroe
City Clerk