

**CITY OF RUSTON
REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING
Tuesday, November 3, 2020**

The City Council of the City of Ruston met on this date via Virtual Teleconference

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER

At 7:00PM Mayor Hopkins called the regular Council Meeting to order. Councilmembers present were Councilmember Hedrick, Councilmember Hardin, Councilmember Holland and Councilmember Syler. Councilmember Huson was excused. Following the flag salute, Councilmember Hedrick moved to approve the agenda, with a second from Councilmember Hardin passed 4-0.

MINUTES

Councilmember Hedrick moved to approve the minutes for the Regular Council meeting of October 20, 2020, with a second from Councilmember Hardin, passed 4-0.

STAFF REPORT – Nothing at this time

GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENTS – Nothing at this time.

BUSINESS –

- 1. ORD 1537 – FY2021 Tax Levy (1st reading) -** As part of the budget process, Ruston will consider a budget and the revenue sources for City operations and capital expenses. As part of that process, the City is required to hold a public hearing on this topic. The public hearing on revenue sources is currently scheduled to coincide with Second Reading of Ordinance No. 1537 on November 17, 2020. Ruston is required to adopt its property tax levy in November of each year by ordinance and transmit a certified copy of the ordinance to Pierce County Assessor-Treasurer and to the Pierce County Council no later than November 30th. A Levy Certification must also be transmitted with the Ordinance. Adoption of this Ordinance should be scheduled on the agenda for after the public hearing on the revenue during the meeting on **November 17, 2020**. This levy ordinance increases the property taxes levied by Ruston by the maximum amount allowed by law (one percent plus new construction, etc.). The total estimated 2020 levy amount is **\$597,303.01**, which includes additional property tax estimated from new construction (**\$13,011.21**, based on a new construction value of \$6,576,700) and the estimated additional revenue from the increase in administrative refunds (**\$35,348.09**). In 2020, the City collected \$593,076.53. In Section 2, Ordinance No. 1537 provides that there is a zero increase from last year. That is due to refunds which actually created as 7.44% (or \$4,132.81) decrease.

However, in working with the Assessor’s Office, using the zero in the ordinance is the correct method. The City should see a slight increase between 2020 and 2021 collections.

Mayor Hopkins will be working the Assessor’s Office to confirm the information they have provided and will bring an answer before Council at the next meeting for better understanding.

- 2. ORD 1538 – 2021 Budget (1st reading)** – In accordance with State law, the Mayor of the City of Ruston completed and placed on file with the City Clerk-Treasurer a proposed budget and estimate of the amount of monies required to meet the public expenses, interest, reserve funds, and expense of government of the city of Ruston for the fiscal year ending December 31, 2021. The Council is required to adopt its budget ordinance prior to January 1, 2021.

The City Council Budget consideration schedule for Fiscal Year 2021 is as follows:

Mayor’s Budget Message to Council:	November 3, 2020
Council discussion of revenue sources:	November 3, 2020
Public Hearing on Revenue Sources	November 17, 2020
Adoption of Tax Levy Ordinance No. 1537	November 17, 2020
Public Hearing on Proposed Budget:	November 17, 2020
Budget Discussion #1:	November 3, 2020
Budget Discussion #2:	November 17, 2020
Budget Discussion #3:	December 1, 2020
Adoption of Final Annual Budget for 2020:	December 1 or 15, 2020

Prior to budget adoption, the City Clerk will have fully complied with state law by publishing notice of the availability of the budget for public review and publishing notice of the required public hearings on the City’s proposed tax levy and budget (November 17th).

The Final Budget’s beginning balance is \$4,803,771.00 plus taxes, license fees, service charges, fine, forfeitures and other revenues totaling \$9,145,915.00, including inter-fund transfer(s) of \$355,000.00 are combined in the Final Budget for a total expenditures and ending balances amount of \$8,899,494.00.

The totals of estimated revenues and appropriations for each separate fund and the aggregate totals for all such funds combined are set forth below:

Fund Name	Resources	Uses
Fund 001 – General Fund	\$ 1,942,392	\$ 1,942,392

Fund 005 – Surplus Real Estate	\$ 1,321,432	\$ 1,321,432
051-060 – Developer Tracking	\$ 28,447	\$ 28,447
Fund 101 – City Street Fund	\$ 478,400	\$ 478,400
Fund 102 – Equipment Reserve	\$ 12,250	
Fund 105 – Street Reserve	\$ 108,100	\$ 108,100
Fund 301 – Capital Construction	\$ 454,200	\$ 422,200
Fund 401 - Electric Utility	\$ 1,352,300	\$ 1,352,300
Fund 402 – Electric Utility Reserve	\$ 418,000	\$ 418,000
Fund 403 – Sewer Utility	\$ 1,891,000	\$ 1,891,000
Fund 404 – Sewer Reserve	\$ 398,000	\$ 398,000
Fund 405 – Garbage Utility	\$ 350,800	\$ 350,800
Fund 406 – Garbage Utility Reserve	\$ 89,000	\$ 89,000
Fund 407 – Storm Sewer Utility	\$ 287,000	\$ 287,000
Fund 410 – Sewer Capital Projects	\$ 204,000	\$ 204,000
Fund 622 – WR Rust Playfield	\$ 46,921	\$ 46,921
Fund 623 – Electric Meter Deposits	\$ 117,800	\$ 117,800
Fund 624 – School Building	\$ 330,200	\$ 330,200
Total	\$ 9,830,242	\$ 9,785,992

The Public Hearing will be held on November 17, 2020. The public hearing must take place prior to adoption. The City is required to pass the budget before the end of this calendar year.

3. RES 719 – Commerce Interagency Agreement – CARES Act - In March of 2020, the Congress passed the CARES act which provided funding to State and local government for costs incurred due to the public health emergency with respect to the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19). These funds were distributed to larger cities and counties and to the State of Washington. Washington is providing a portion of these funds to smaller jurisdictions to offset expenses resulting from COVID-19. The maximum grant available to Ruston is \$45,225.00. In order to access these funds, the City must sign an interagency agreement with the Washington State Department of Commerce who is distributing these funds for Washington.

The funds can be used for expenses incurred between March 1, 2020 and November 30, 2020 as a result of the COVID-19 emergency, such as creating safer public facilities to limit the spread, creating better telework infrastructure so that work can be done remotely, and taking actions to comply with public health measures. The list of expenses eligible for reimbursement is found on Attachments A and B to the Interagency Agreement. There are several procedures and documentation requirements that the City must meet in order to obtain these funds and the last day to file for reimbursement is December 15, 2020. The City Clerk has been undergoing training to enable the City to comply with these procedures. The Agreement allows the City to obtain reimbursement for COVID-19 related expenses in an amount up to \$45,225.00. Mayor Hopkins provided a list of items the CARE Act funds would support. Councilmember Hardin moved to approve Resolution 719, with a second from Councilmember Hedrick passed 4-0.

CLAIMS/PAYROLL – Councilmember Hedrick moved to approve Claims and Payroll, with a second from Councilmember Hardin, passed 4-0.

MAYOR'S TIME – Mayor Hopkins has had discussion with EPA, Department of Ecology and Point Ruston on the possibility of using the mound of dirt located on Point Ruston's property to infill Rust Park and remediate the hillside east of the park. Mayor Hopkins had additional conversation with EPA on Monday, and EPA noted that the work may be postponed into 2025. The City looked at the liability impact this would have should the dirt come on to City of Ruston property. It was decided that it was in the City's best interest to terminate this potential project. Mayor Hopkins wrote a letter to EPA stating the City was not interested in accepting the dirt. The result of this decision was remediation of the Point Ruston site was to be completed in 2021 and that EPA extended the date to 2022. Mayor Hopkins explained that if EPA continued to grant the developer extra time and because time was not of the essence for this developer, EPA would be allowing Point Ruston to sue the City of Ruston. Mayor Hopkins made it very clear the City did not want EPA to continue granting extensions and asked EPA what the cap would look like. EPA noted the cap could be hydro-seeded or asphalted. Mayor Hopkins noted the City of Ruston does not want to see asphalt because of the problems related to the asphalt cap on Yacht Club Road, which is now a parking lot. EPA noted they would use hydro-seed. It appears Point Ruston is scaling back with no other building applications in the pipeline. EPA expects to have an executed permit for Building 9-11 (which surrounds the parking garage), by January 2021 with the work completed by June 2021. This was an aggressive timeline. The SEPA process has been hand held throughout the process and has cost the City an enormous amount of money.

COUNCIL TIME –
Councilmember Hedrick – Nothing at this time.

Councilmember Hardin – Nothing at this time.

Councilmember Holland – Nothing at this time.

Councilmember Syler – Nothing at this time.

Councilmember Huson – Was excused.

MEETING AJOURNED – At 7:30PM Councilmember Hedrick moved to adjourn, with a second from Councilmember Hardin, passed 4-0.

Mayor Bruce Hopkins

ATTEST:

Judy Grams