

**CITY OF RUSTON
REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING**

Tuesday, December 5, 2023

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER

At 7:01PM Mayor Hopkins called the regular Council Meeting to order. Councilmembers present were Councilmember Hedrick, Councilmember Kristovich, Councilmember Syler, Councilmember Huson and Councilmember Jensen. Following the flag salute, Councilmember Hedrick moved to approve the Agenda, with a second from Councilmember Kristovich, passed 5-0.

MINUTES - Councilmember Hedrick moved to approve the minutes for the regular Council Meeting of November 21, 2023, with a second from Councilmember Kristovich, passed 5-0.

STAFF REPORT – Nothing at this time.

GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENTS –

Talia Thepvongsa – Thanked Ray Johnson for the beautifully decorated tree and recognized the Ruston Fire Department for coming out to the tree lighting event and was happy to see that the community turnout was even better than last year.

BUSINESS –

ORD 1575 – 2024 Budget (3rd reading) – In accordance with State law, the Mayor of the City of Ruston will complete and place on file with the City Clerk-Treasurer a proposed preliminary 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, 2024. The Council is required to adopt its budget ordinance prior to January 1, 2024. On October 17, 2023 the Council held a preliminary public hearing to hear from the public about their budget priorities. The final public hearing on the budget was held on November 21, 2023. The City’s Levy Lid Lift that was on the November General Election Ballot has passed, therefore, the numbers have been changed since the last meeting to reflect these additional revenues. The City is required to pass the budget before the end of this calendar year.

The City Council Budget consideration schedule for Fiscal Year 2024 is as follows:

Mayor’s Budget Message to Council:	October 3, 2023
Council discussion of revenue sources:	October 17, 2023
Public Hearing on Revenue Sources	October 17, 2023
Public Hearing on Preliminary Budget	October 17, 2023
Adoption of Tax Levy Ordinance No. 1573	November 7, 2023
Public Hearing on Proposed Budget	November 21, 2023
Budget Discussion #1:	October 17, 2023
Budget Discussion #2:	November 7, 2023

Budget Discussion #3:
 Budget Discussion #4:
 Adoption of Final Annual Budget for 2024

November 21, 2023
 December 5, 2023
 December 5 or 19, 2023

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, including a preliminary and final budget hearing.

BUDGET OVERVIEW

The proposed Total Revenues forecast is \$10,902,721, consisting of Beginning Balances in the amount of \$4,750,031, plus interfund transfers in of \$307,000, and operating revenues of \$5,845,690. The Total Expenditures proposed are \$10,943,654, consisting of operating expenses in the amount of \$5,956,657, plus Interfund transfers out of \$307,000, and Ending Balances of \$4,679,997.

The proposed budget by funds is as follows:

Fund	Name	Revenue	Expense
Fund 0001 – General Fund	General Fund	\$ 2,586,990	\$ 2,517,923
Fund 0005 – Surplus Fund	Real Estate Surplus	\$ 2,070,610	\$ 2,070,610
Fund 101 – City Street Fund	City Street Fund	\$ 879,400	\$ 949,400
Fund 103 – Reserve for Streets	Reserve for Streets	\$ 110,000	\$ 110,000
Fund 301 – Capital Construction	Capital Construction Fund	\$ 130,000	\$ 130,000
Fund 401 - Electric Utility	Electric Utility Fund	\$ 1,774,300	\$ 1,774,300
Fund 402 – Electric Utility Reserve	Electric Utility Reserve Fund	\$ 222,000	\$ 222,000
Fund 403 – Sewer Utility	Sewer Utility Fund	\$ 1,668,500	\$ 1,668,500
Fund 404 – Sewer Reserve	Sewer Utility Reserve Fund	\$ 328,000	\$ 328,000
Fund 407 – Storm Sewer Utility	Storm Sewer Utility Fund	\$ 262,500	\$ 262,500

Fund 410 – Sewer Capital Projects	Sewer Debt Service Fund	\$ 375,000	\$ 375,000
Fund 411 – Electric Meter Deposit Fund	Electric Meter Deposit Fund	\$ 153,000	\$ 153,000
Fund 622 – WR Rust Playfield	WR Rust Playfield Fund	\$ 53,421	\$ 53,421
Fund 624 – School Building Fund	School Building Maintenance Fund	\$ 222,000	\$ 222,000
Fund 635 – Pt. Ruston Signage Custodial Fund	Pt. Ruston Signage Custodial Fund Custodial Funds	\$ 75,000	\$ 75,000
Transfers		\$ 307,000	\$ 307,000
TOTAL		\$ 10,902,654	\$ 10,943,654

The 2024 Budget Ordinance will establish the appropriations necessary to authorize expenditures for each of the City's funds. Councilmember Hedrick thanked all those who voted for the Levy LID Lift. It reflected a true appreciation for City public safety and a tribute to the Ruston Police and Fire departments. Councilmember Hedrick moved to approve Ordinance 1575, with a second from Councilmember Kristovich, passed 5-0.

CLAIMS/PAYROLL – Councilmember Hedrick moved to approve Claims and Payroll for December 5, 2023, with a second from Councilmember Kristovich, passed 5-0.

MAYOR’S TIME – Mayor Hopkins thanked Councilmember Hedrick, Councilmember Jensen and City Planning Director, Rob White, for their attendance at a meeting with Speaker Laurie Jinkins. Speaker Jinkins presented an overview of all the legislative accomplishments in 2023. The City had the opportunity to share its capital improvement projects which require funding beyond the City’s fiscal capabilities. Another area discussed was centered around an environmental and remedial action perspective. Ruston has incurred cleanup costs that have not been completely reimbursed by either the state Department of Ecology (Ecology) or U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). Speaker Jinkins noted there may be an opportunity to help the City with capital improvement projects and recommended the City send a request for consideration. Mayor Hopkins submitted the City’s request on December 1, 2023. Mayor Hopkins thanked everyone who participated in the annual tree lighting and was pleased to know there was great community participation.

Councilmember Hedrick – Thanked Ray Johnson for decorating the Ruston tree and everyone that took part in the annual tree lighting. After Ruston’s council meeting, held on election day, Councilmember Hedrick attended a gathering at a Ruston resident’s home. There he met a gentleman, who was not a resident of Ruston and discussed the passage of the Levy LID Lift proposition.

The gentleman complimented the City and its first responders. Councilmember Hedrick was proud to live in Ruston and wished everyone a merry holiday season.

Councilmember Kristovich – Nothing at this time.

Councilmember Syler – Nothing at this time.

Councilmember Huson – Nothing at this time.

Councilmember Jensen – Thanked Ray Johnson for the beautifully decorated tree and enjoyed seeing everyone at the annual tree lighting. Councilmember Jensen gave a special thank you to a little elf, Mr. Byzinker, for playing his trumpet and spreading Christmas cheer.

MEETING AJOURNED – At 7:35PM Councilmember Hedrick moved to adjourn, with a second from Councilmember Kristovich, passed 5-0.

Mayor Bruce Hopkins

ATTEST:

Judy Grams