



**City Council Meeting  
Minutes  
Regular Session  
February 14, 2013 - 7:00 p.m.**

Rhome City Hall  
105 W. First Street  
Rhome, TX

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**Council Present:** Mayor Chris Moore; Mayor Pro Tem Jo Ann Wilson;  
**Council Members:** Chris Graves, Cole L. Blanche, Michelle Pittman and Louis Godfrey

**Staff Present:** Walt Leonard, City Attorney; Ramah Burns, City Secretary;  
Chief Rose and Preston Gilliam, Public Works Director

Mayor Moore led the assembly in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Citizen Presentation and Public Input:**

None

**Announcements from Mayor and Council Members**

Michelle Pittman said she works at the Kimball Art Museum. She said they are offering Rhome residents ½ price off tickets.

Jo Ann Wilson said the Parks Board will have “Easter in the Park” this year.

1. **Consent Agenda:** The items will be enacted with one motion. Any Council Member may remove any item from the Consent Agenda.

**A. Approval of Minutes:**

1. January 10, 2013 Regular Session

- B. 2. **Approval of Check Registers:**  
January 8, 2013 through February 11, 2013

Motion was made by Chris Graves, seconded by Michelle Pittman to approve the consent agenda.

**Motion carried unanimously.**

Mayor Pro Tem Wilson asked to discuss the Police Department. She told Chief Rose there was a lot of outdoor furniture setting around in yards.

2. A. Department Reports: Staff Reports (No action needed.)
  1. Police Department:
  2. Fire Department -
  3. Public Works –
  4. Administration –
  5. Parks and Recreation

Discussion and necessary action concerning the following agenda items:

2. New Business

- A. Public Hearing on a variance request from Best Value Pharmacy, 400 South Main Street for a pole sign 10 ft. high and 6 ft. wide.

Public Hearing opened at 7:03 p.m.

Pharmacist Carter High introduced himself.

Public Hearing closed at 7:04 p.m.

- B. Action on a variance request from Best Value Pharmacy, 400 South Main Street for a pole sign 10 ft. high and 6 ft. wide

Motion was made by Chris Graves, seconded by Cole Blanche to approve the pole sign for Best Value Pharmacy.

Motion carried unanimously.

- C. Contract for Election Services between the City of Rhome and the Wise County Elections Office for elections for an election to be held on May 11, 2013.

Motion was made by Jo Ann Wilson, seconded by Cole Blanche to approve the contract for Election Services between the City of Rhome and the Wise County Elections Office for elections for an election to be held on May 11, 2013.

Motion carried unanimously.

**D. Joint Election Agreement and Contract for Election Services between the City of Rhome and Northwest ISD.**

Motion was made by Cole Blanche, seconded by Jo Ann Wilson to approve the Joint Election Agreement and Contract for Election Services between the City of Rhome and Northwest ISD

Motion carried unanimously.

**E. Service request for MD Resort/Aurora Conference Center.**

Walt Leonard, City Attorney said Preston Gilliam and he the last month or so has come across this situation and there is not a clear cut answer. A year or so ago they have an agreement with the City of Aurora. They wanted their CCN back. That has to go through TCEQ. During that process one (1) piece of the City of Aurora asked to be left out of it – and they were. That is M D Resort with the Aurora Conference Center. They are as a result not in Aurora's CCN. They are however in their city limits. M D Resorts has indicated that they would like to purchase water from Rhome sooner than later. It would be simpler to get it straight from us and we are not that far from them. That dropped back into our CCN because they didn't complete the transfer. We also have information that someone has filed an incomplete request that they be put back in to the CCN for Aurora. TCEQ is of the opinion that is not a good one – it has all kinds of flaws. This was done by the previous owner. There are several items that need to be solved? One if it's in our CCN we should have been notified they were asking out. We have an agreement with Aurora that we will not provide water service in their city limits. He said what the council should do tonight is to authorize the Mayor and Staff to move forward to seeking to resolve this issue. We need to see about providing either on an interim of permanent basis in conjunction with Aurora. We are in limbo and we need to get it straightened out with TCEQ because someone has tried to dispose of our CCN without tells us. He said we probably need to talk with Aurora because we do have the agreement with them about their city limits. They are the ones who have created this anomaly by dropping these people out of their CCN.

Motion was made by Chris Graves seconded by Cole Blanche to authorize Mayor and Staff to try and resolve this or issue a temporary fix.

Motion carried unanimously.

#### **F. Communications Systems**

**Michelle Pittman said she knows after the first of the year all the communications logs were changed. She just knows one day her radio didn't work. She didn't know if they have had problems with the radios.**

**Mayor Moore said all the fire department radios are up to speed. He didn't know if they will work with the County. He said they are working in the old antilog system. He said they have digital radios and capability. We a contract with the county but they haven't put up their antennas on the water tower.**

**Chief Rose said the County should be working in April. He said the last Chief's meeting Sheriff Walker said they would keep the antilog side on as long as he could. He said they two (2) new cars they have ordered have the new radios in them. He said he hasn't been in a rush to spend that money. He is waiting to see what the County is going to do.**

**Cole Blanche asked if Chief Rose has an estimate on the cost of digital radios.**

**Officer Chance Garrett said \$20,000 for eight (8) radios. The hand held's are \$20,000. The \$40,000 can be paid off in 3, 5 or 7 year contract.**

**Cole Blanche said we are getting close to the budget. He asked Chief Rose if he has looked in his budget to see if he has enough to get them in this budget.**

**Louis Godfrey asked if Homeland Security have grants.**

**Chief Rose said they was going to be grant money and it was going to cover us.**

**Chris Graves asked if they can get more finance numbers.**

3. Old Business

A. Fire Department Incentives -

Tim Robison – 1110 Sunrise Avenue spoke. He said he has lived in Rhome, TX since 1999. He said a volunteer is a person that performs a service voluntarily. To perform a service at their own free will, to do charitable or helpful work without pay, to offer ones self or services for the undertaking by choice and without request for obligation, a person who performs volunteer work. He said Rhome Volunteer Fire Department. He asked if you thrown incentives out there what are you doing. He asked are you not paying them? You are going to have to change the name on the fire department and all the lettering on all the trucks. He said it's a can of worms you are opening up. He said that was his opinion. He knows there is lack of membership over there. You need to go to the root of the problem. Why has the membership failed? Go talk to people. He said he has property in New Fairview they told him why. What has caused this problem? Somebody address that. He said why throw money at the situation or problem when you don't know where you don't know where the problem is.

Jo Ann Wilson said her first response is we don't have this kind of money. She said there are two (2) different figures – one that is \$19,000 and one that is not to exceed \$21,000. She asked if this is going to come out of Fire Department existing funds or the city.

Michelle Pittman said the budget only set aside a certain amount of money to leave them an option. They could use part of that money. The numbers they see are for a year. We only have seven (7) more months. That number is higher than what they are looking at for this budget year. She said she thinks we do have the money set aside. She said we have to address this problem. The lack of volunteers is not just the Fire Department we can get people on the Parks Board. She said the city has an obligation to provide some kind of assistance to the people.

Jo Ann Wilson asked if she or Chris Moore think this will bring more people or is this to compensate the existing people.

Mayor Moore said he didn't think it was compensation for him because he is already doing it. That's not why he is doing it. He said they did it years ago and they did have issues with it with the people on the department at the time abused it, so they did away with it. They used the money to buy bunker gear. They looked at

volunteer departments that are paying per call or shift work. You can do it as a volunteer. You can't exceed \$15,000 – then they aren't considered volunteers.

Michelle Pittman said they have to try something because what's going on now isn't working. You answer one (1) call every other day, you drive five (5) miles – you're paying your gas to get up there. They are paying to go help you so even a small incentive to pay for their gas to do this service.

Louis Godfrey said this has been going on for the twenty (20) years that he has live here. He said they have tried the incentive program before and it got way out of hand. He said he doesn't see where we are going to get all this money to pay the incentives. He said we need to find out what caused the volunteers that were already there to leave. We need to find out what is causing them not to come back. He said something has happened in the last two (2) years. If it's a problem we need to concentrate on that and fix it.

Tim Robison said one individual he talked to said there is a spoiled bottle of milk up there and it needs to be poured out.

Michelle Pittman said all of the fire departments that she has talked to in the county have many volunteers. They have told her there are six (6) or seven (7) that show up. Everyone else is just on the rooster.

Chris Graves said they need to do something and move forward with it. It's written up where the city council can revoke this anytime. He said it's worth a shot and try to get some coverage.

Motion was made by Chris Graves, seconded by Cole Blanche to approve the Volunteer Incentive Program as presented by Michelle Pittman.

Jo Ann Wilson said she would like to see them Table this.

Louis Godfrey said he thinks this needs to be tabled to get more information. He said they need to get to the heart of why we don't have volunteers. He said you can't solve this by throwing money at it. He said it's this council responsibility to find out what the problem is not just thrown money at it.

Michelle Pittman said she has been spending time and talked with many people – she goes and she does the work. She said what she has found is the people who are not volunteering have a personal reason why their not.

David Wilson said he was on the Fire Department years ago at 2 o'clock in the morning and 15 people would show up. Not just one (1) time but many times. The volunteer attitude then is totally different than what it is now.

Jo Ann Wilson said New Fairview has 15 or 16 volunteers, Newark has 26 volunteers. There is something wrong. Are the requirements more strenuous that the other fire departments?

Mayor Moore said there maybe a personal issue with some but the new people in the city aren't volunteering. You would think they would want to volunteer. He said they have requirements they want you to make 25% of the calls a month to be active.

Mayor Moore said they have a motion.

Jo Ann Wilson said this isn't personal for him or Michelle – if they are going to vote on incentives she didn't think Michelle can vote because she is on the fire department.

Michelle Pittman said she was probationary and that she doesn't want to receive the incentives.

Motion carried 3-2. Jo Ann Wilson and Louis Godfrey voted no.

#### **B. EMT/First Responder position**

Mayor Moore said since they have incentives he thinks this one go.

Chris Graves said there is no reason to Table it. They have been talking about it for a year. He said they have a job description and required skills.

Jo Ann Wilson asked who this person reports to.

Cole Blanche said the Mayor and the Fire Chief.

Jo Ann Wilson said the Fire Department is not a part of the city.



**Cole Blanche said this will be a city employee. They are paid and they report to the Mayor. When they are on fire duty or EMS duty they report to the person over fire and EMS – which is the Fire Chief.**

**Jo Ann Wilson said then how can he report to the EMS Administrator.**

**Michelle Pittman said you can't have an EMS worker unless they are working under the EMS protocol which Dr. Hoover is our Medical Director.**

**Jo Ann Wilson said she has a problem with us paying somebody and that person responding to the EMS Administrator, when you look at the officers of the fire department that isn't the Fire Chief. She said whatever they put out has got to have a fitness for duty physical and advertise it.**

**Michelle Pittman said the person can report to the Mayor but the EMS Administrator follows the protocol that has been approved by their Medical Director. If that person goes off on a limb and does that not approved they can't do that.**

**Motion by Cole Blanche, seconded by Chris Graves to approve Michelle Pittman's guidelines.**

**Jo Ann Wilson asked how many people on the fire department right now would qualify for this position.**

**Michelle Pittman said your have one (1) EMS Responder, a paid person who is required to take all the EMS calls. The Volunteer Incentive Program offers a daytime shift – a higher for daytime only to get someone who can work fire calls, accidents. There is per call incentives for everything after 5pm.**

**Tim Robison said aren't you throwing money at the problem that you can't tell where the problem is.**

**Michelle Pittman said she knows where the problem begins – she said she has seen it. She said she has seen it first hand, she has had people tell her the problem first hand, but people seem to think their issue is bigger that getting out of bed and helping someone.**



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Jo Ann Wilson said she wanted to add one (1) and remove one (1). She wants to take off "Preference will be given to qualified applicants with current membership or past service. She would like to add "Fitness for duty physical ability to stand, lift and carry up to 125 lbs and 250 with assistance".

Mayor Moore said the thought the "Preference" should be removed and Cole Blanche did have the 125 lb limit on his.

Motion was made by Cole Blanche, seconded by Chris Graves to take out the word Preference and accept the rest of what Michelle Pittman submitted.

Mayor Moore said he wanted to see us move forward. He would like to see us do a position. He agrees there are a few things that need to be changed before they do it.

Amended motion by Cole Blanche, seconded by Chris Graves to Require take out "Preferences" and add a fitness for duty physical and the salary range of \$30,000 - \$35,000 plus benefits.

Motion carried 3-2. Jo Ann Wilson voted no. Louis Godfrey abstained.

#### C. K-9 Unit

Jo Ann Wilson asked Chief Rose where they were on the K-9 Unit.

Chief Rose said he has contacted TML and they haven't gotten back with him. He is working with Walt Leonard on the contract.

#### D. Personnel Manual

Walt Leonard said he would have a draft for the meeting in March.

#### E. Park Master Plan

Deborah BeCraft said everyone should have received the Park Master Plan. She said last month they tabled the pavilion last month and this should answer a lot of their concerns.

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Chris Graves said the plan is good and he appreciated it. He said he still has issues with the pavilion. He said he knows they need it and if has come up that some of the hotel/motel tax can pay for part of it with restrooms and information center. He doesn't want to move forward with the pavilion until they can hammer out of all the details to see what we can get. He wants to see if we get something bigger and better?

Cole Blanche said he has found maybe another contributor. He is waiting on an email back from them.

Louis Godfrey said the area behind the park is Front Street. He said we are going to have to close it off so a developer won't try and open it up. He said every from the alley south.

Chris Graves said put it on the agenda.

Mayor Moore said to put this to close the streets after we get a survey. He said Walt Leonard and Ramah Burns can see what Hotel/motel tax can be used on the pavilion. He asked if we can move forward to do a pavilion granted that they get rid of this road.

Chris Graves asked if the pavilion is placed on the donated land from Mr. Snodgrass that's such a larger place and it we can tap the Hotel/motel taxes why not go a little bigger.

Louis Godfrey said he thinks we need to look at putting restrooms there.

Mayor Moore said Walt Leonard and Ramah Burns to see what we can put in. He said right now unless the money comes up lets just leave it at the 40 x 40 on the Snodgrass property.

Cole Blanche asked if we had a survey on the Snodgrass property.

Motion was made by Louis Godfrey, seconded by Cole Blanche to move forward with the pavilion after a survey is done.

Motion carried unanimously.

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Cole Blanche asked is they are going to need a privacy fence for the resident beside the park. He said a tall wooden fence. The panels are about \$30 - \$35 a piece or we could some donated.

Motion was made by Louis Godfrey, seconded by Cole Blanche to put a privacy fence along the area where the resident lives.

Motion carried unanimously.

Deborah BeCraft said she wanted to ask they clarify buying a grill and TV for the raffle. She said they could start selling raffle tickets. She said they are changing Pioneer Days from the 3<sup>rd</sup> weekend in September to the 4<sup>th</sup> weekend because there are conflicts with fun raisers with other cities for the Bar-B Q cookers.

Chris Graves said they can start selling raffle tickets but one ought to be able to get the items donated. He said buy them at the last case scenario.

Jo Ann Wilson talked about the chili cook off and meet the candidates. The council said the Saturday a week before Early Voting begins. The Saturday before Early Voting is April 27<sup>th</sup>.

4. Recessed into Executive Session at 8:30 pm on Executive Session in Executive Session in compliance with Chapter 551 of the Texas Government Code (Open Meeting Act) Vernon's Texas Code Annotated, as follows:
  - a. Section 551.072 – Real Property
  - b. Section 551.071 – Potential land acquisition – utility sites.
5. No action was taken at 9:05 pm in - Executive Session Item on Items 4.a. and 4.b.
6. Future agenda items:
  1. Front Street - Easements
7. Motion was made by Louis Godfrey and seconded by Cole Blanche to adjourn at 9:50 p.m.

Motion carried unanimously.

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There being no further business the meeting adjourned at 9:50 p.m.

**CERTIFICATION:**

Passed and approved on this the 14th of March 2013.



**Chris Moore**  
Mayor



**Ramah Burns**  
City Secretary