

STATE OF TEXAS \*  
COUNTY OF HENDERSON \*  
CITY OF GUN BARREL CITY \*

The City Council of the City of Gun Barrel City met in a special meeting in City Hall, located at 1716 West Main Street, Gun Barrel City, Texas, on Monday, August 18, 2014 at 4:30 p.m.

Mayor Braswell called the meeting to order at 4:30 p.m. and gave the invocation. The Pledge of Allegiance followed. Roll was called and a quorum established.

[Council Member - Rodney Bevill: Present](#)

[Council Member - Ronald Wyrick: Present](#)

[Council Member - Dennis Baade: Present](#)

[Council Member - Curtis Webster: Present](#)

[Council Member - Marty Goss: Present](#)

[Mayor - Jim Braswell: Present](#)

**Citizen Presentations: None**

**ITEM # 1:** Interview applicants in Open Session for the Planning and Zoning Commission. **(Mayor)**

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Steve Shorrock had lived here for 8 years. He graduated from the University of Massachusetts in 1968 with a degree in engineering. He worked in the textile industry in sales and marketing for about 40 years. He was active with the Meals on Wheels program and with Toys for Tots. He was also on the Board of the Cedar Creek Library. When Baade asked if Shorrock had attended any P&Z meetings, he said no.

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Paul Eaton graduated from seminary in Tennessee with a degree in theology. He was a pastor for about ten years. He had spent over 50 years in construction management before his retirement.

Webster asked if Eaton had any personal relationships that would affect his ability to serve on the P&Z and interact with the Council. Eaton didn't think he did. He knew everybody on the Commission and would like to help. Bevill noted that Eaton had applied for both the P&Z and the EDC and asked if Eaton had a preference. No preference, he was retired.

**ITEM # 2:** Interview applicants in Open Session for the GBC Economic Development Corporation. **(Mayor)**

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Mayor Braswell said there were four seats on the Board to fill with seven applicants. Patsy Black would be interviewed on Tuesday, August 26.

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Jim Cavanaugh had been on the EDC Board for two years and had served as the Treasurer. He had lived in Gun Barrel City for ten years. He had a Bachelor's Degree in both business and accounting and a

Master's Degree in business. He had worked in several financial organizations in financial planning, budgeting and cost accounting over the last 40 years. Fifteen of those years had been in supporting corporate real estate. He thought the EDC Board had made some good progress in the last two years and he looked forward to serving on the Board again. He also currently served on the P&Z as President.

Braswell said they were all aware of the issues between the Council and EDC. Could Cavanaugh see them amending those issues and being able to move forward and do the job that they should as Councilman, Mayor, City Manager and EDC Board member? Cavanaugh felt a lot of time and effort had been focused on trying to improve the communication between the Council and EDC. They've seen some progress; he felt they needed to continue to work together to really achieve some of the goals and some of the development that they want to see in the next few years.

Wyrick asked Cavanaugh if there was anything special he wanted to work on in the next two years if he were to be reappointed. Cavanaugh replied the EDC had worked on an industrial type park and he would like to see them begin to get light industry into the City. It was a critical goal in order to get better paying jobs in the City. Also, the development of Heritage Cove should be a priority because it would give the City some identity once it's established.

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Gary Damiano currently served as Vice President on the EDC Board. He had lived in the City for three years and was appointed to fill a one-year unexpired term on the EDC last year. He had served on the Heritage Cove Task Force, the RBEG committee and was currently managing the Boots2Business. He served in the Navy during Viet Nam. He taught high school and college in Pennsylvania. He had worked in recruiting and staffing for the last 35 years. He had enjoyed serving on the EDC; it was challenging. They had done a lot but they could much more. He'd like to see an industrial park, a north-south bypass, Heritage Cove get put together and become a real downtown and a number of other things. He hoped he had had an influence with the Council and the EDC.

Baade asked what the EDC should focus on. He felt they needed to focus on primary jobs and the goal should be to raise the number of folks in the middle class as well as increase the income of those in the middle class. To do that, they needed to do some infrastructure such as a gas line. We need to market Gun Barrel City. We should be a destination city.

Webster asked how the communication could be approved. He felt the transparency, the openness, the team work could all be improved. Both sides needed to be pulling toward the same target and have the same agenda.

Braswell asked what was keeping us from our goals. We need better communication between the EDC and the Council. We need to do a better job of marketing the City. We need to look at our demographics. We need to prove to companies that there is more here than meets the eye. Improve infrastructure.

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Paul Eaton was an architectural draftsman for a number of years which was part of his construction background. He felt infrastructure was important and that we needed a gas line. Propane was a lot more expensive than natural gas. He felt we needed to provide that to our businesses.

Webster asked what he could add to the EDC as a Director. With his background in land developing, he felt there were a number of things that could be done to bring businesses to town. Communication was important and there needed to be more transparency between the EDC and Council. The Council

appoints the EDC Board and the Council needs to know what the EDC is working on. Council makes the decision to approve EDC projects.

Braswell said we all knew there were conflicts with the EDC when Eaton was Mayor. He wasn't blaming anyone; it was personality conflicts. If Eaton were appointed to the EDC Board, could he work with the remaining EDC members that were involved with some of the problems? Eaton said he was a people person and he thought the problems they had were solvable.

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Rob Rae thanked everyone for considering him. The members of this Board were volunteers who worked hard for the betterment of the City and the citizens within the City. That needed to be recognized. What could he contribute to the Board? He felt a relatively younger, active business owner would be a great asset to the Board. He felt he had a finger on the pulse of the business owners. The EDC was the only entity other than the City Council who had direct authority over budgeted funds in the form of sales tax revenues. It must be taken seriously and personal vendettas and agendas must be put aside. Rae would not have a problem being transparent and speaking his mind. He wanted to put the EDC funds to be spent in ways to bring new jobs and sales tax revenues to Gun Barrel City.

Bevill said one thing that impressed him was that Rob, as a citizen, was at almost every Council meeting. The façade improvement project was particularly interesting to him. As a business owner, you're looking for something that's attractive.

Baade asked what he thought the biggest challenge was for the EDC and the City. The transparency and the communication between the EDC and the City was a big challenge. A big problem was that the City wasn't growing and we should be.

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David Skans was a neighbor to Mayor Braswell. He had lived in the City for two years, had been married for 42 years and had two children and five grandchildren. He retired in May 2013. He currently owned Skans Mediation Center in Gun Barrel City. He had an undergraduate degree in commercial transportation. He spent two years getting his online degree in business analysis from the University of California in Irvine. He had an eight-month executive certification in negotiation and conflict resolution from the University of Notre Dame. He got his court appointed certification for mediation from the University of Texas School of Law. With his skills, he could help the EDC with mediation, sales and negotiation. He understands the needs of the City one of which was the ad valorem tax need. The real need was tax revenue. Until we get tax revenue, we can't provide better roads. He felt the City needed to fill its empty buildings. We need attractive businesses that will attract other businesses.

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Sandra Ward came here in 1985 from Indiana. She worked in the payroll department at Frito Lay. When she was in Indiana, she was in retail accounting for Ben Franklin. She also had a 30-year background in restaurants in Indiana. She had no degrees in anything. Everything she had was from the 'school of hard knocks'. Her husband, Tom Ward, was one of the original founders of the GBCEDC. He served as its first President. She had owned and operated Bluebonnet Emporium for 20 years. What do we need that can make a go of it in the City? She would love to see some new and interesting chain stores and Mom and Pop shops in town. We need another grocery store to give Walmart some competition. We need a name brand grocery store. She was easy to get along with but she was not a push over. She had a mind of her own. She was currently and had been for the last 12 years the Treasurer of the Friends of the Animals and worked there from 6 till 6 on Tuesdays.

Webster asked if the EDC meetings would conflict with her duties at Friends of the Animals. She said she was sure that they would let her go an hour or so early once a month.

**ITEM # 3:** Discuss and/or take action to discuss and set a proposed tax rate. **(City Manager)**

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City Manager Gerry Boren made the comment that twenty five years ago, with no property tax, things were thriving but we didn't have internet shopping, the gas was a dollar something a gallon and insurance was cheaper. Although more people are here and they're shopping more, Kaufman now had a Walmart and Kemp was going to get a Walmart Express. This was all going to impact our Walmart sales. The City Charter states that the City must hold an election before we raise the ad valorem taxes. The Texas State law says the citizens have a right to petition you to have a roll back election after you set the tax rate. The Supreme Court has ruled that you cannot have redundant elections. So, we requested an AG opinion which stated that the City had to follow both laws.

Boren was asking the Council to ask the citizens if they wanted to have a property tax to improve the roads, to increase the police department and fire department capabilities and to set that infrastructure up. We need to let the citizens know that we're here to protect your home. We need to let them know that if they're here to make meth, we're going to take you down by the fullest the law will allow.

We were seven police officers below the FBI standard. We need to fight the drug problems and provide health and safety to our citizens. Another issue was that we have 95 miles of roads. A road costs \$25,000 per lane mile to repair. Ninety five miles of roads would cost \$6,000,000. To do \$10,000,000 of road repairs, to put \$1,000,000 into the Police and Fire Departments and to build a fire station on the West side of the City and to fight the drug problems, Boren was asking the citizens to invest one dollar a day to make these things happen. We need to ask our citizens if they're ready to invest in their homes.

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Webster asked if there would be exemptions for senior citizens, disabled veterans and a homestead exemption. The exemptions discussed were \$5,000 for senior citizens, \$5,000 for disabled and \$3,000 for homestead. That would be a Council decision.

Boren said the proposed tax rate was .2599 cents per \$100 of assessed property value. Braswell asked if there was a set period of time that the tax rate would be valid. Boren replied that the AG opinion said that if the City ever wanted to increase the tax rate the City would have to go back to the voters. Our Charter was very specific that we had to go back to the voters.

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The way this would work would be: 1) The citizens would vote in November and approve the tax rate; 2) Taxes would be paid in 2015 and 3) The City wouldn't receive the taxes until 2016. We will have to do Truth in Taxation and let the citizens know exactly where we're going to spend the money. Safety and roads was where this money would be going. A .2599 cent rate would get the City \$44,000 for every penny collected a year. If you want seven more police officers and three more firemen then that was 10 pennies.

The Mayor asked what the proposed income would be from the proposed tax rate. Total income to pay a \$10,000,000 bond to build the roads (because that was the most efficient way) the payment would be \$790,000 over a 20 year amortization. The \$1,500,000 that would be invested in the Police and Fire Departments would be about a \$75,000 payment. The residue for growth would be about \$300,000. So, it

would be about \$1,200,000. It was important to have Town Hall meetings to explain the need for the tax and to let people know how to calculate the tax valuation.

Mayor Braswell said with no property tax and we paid all our property taxes to Henderson County if we have a property tax and we had all these empty homes, run-down trailers, does that give us some leeway there to take those properties over especially if they're inhabited. Boren said he thought we could go in and manage the dead lots and put liens on them and eventually capture them. Right now we budget about \$5,000 a year to clean up lots. We've asked POAs to help but they're budgets are strained as well.

Bevill said it needed to be explained that with an ad valorem tax it would enable the City to go out for grants that we currently aren't eligible for because we have no tax. Braswell thought it was a reasonable tax rate. The City would never progress as quickly as we would like to see and provide these things unless we address this issue.

Council Member - Dennis Baade: Motion that Gun Barrel City increase the annual ad valorem tax to a rate of \$0.2599 on every one hundred dollar (\$100.00) assessed valuation on all real property situated in the City of Gun Barrel City, Texas to take effect for tax year 2015, liable under the law to taxation and not exempt from taxation by the Constitution and laws of the State of Texas for purposes of road maintenance and provision of police and fire services.

Council Member - Rodney Bevill: 2nd

Council Member - Rodney Bevill: Approve

Council Member - Ronald Wyrick: Approve

Council Member - Dennis Baade: Approve

Council Member - Curtis Webster: Approve

Council Member - Marty Goss: Approve

Mayor - Jim Braswell: N\A

**ITEM # 4:** Discuss and/or take action to adopt Ordinance #O-2014-011 calling a Special Election for November 4, 2014. **(City Manager)**

Council Member - Curtis Webster: Motion to adopt Ordinance #O-2014-011 calling a Special Election for November 4, 2014.

Council Member - Dennis Baade: 2nd

Council Member - Rodney Bevill: Approve

Council Member - Ronald Wyrick: Approve

Council Member - Dennis Baade: Approve

Council Member - Curtis Webster: Approve

Council Member - Marty Goss: Approve

Mayor - Jim Braswell: N\A

**ITEM # 5:** Discuss and/or take action to rescind the motion made on Item #16 on the June 26, 2014 City Council agenda relating to the feasibility study and address any needed amendments at the August 26 City Council meeting.

Reconvene into Open Session to discuss and/or take action on a report from the EDC on the light industrial site east of Hwy. 175.

Council Member - Marty Goss: Motion to proceed with the feasibility study with the two locations being the property located on 334 connecting 175 and 334 and the property located on east side of 175 and to

allow additional funds to be applied to finish the second feasibility.  
Council Member - Curtis Webster: 2nd

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Boren said some people had commented about the way the motion was made, who made the motion, and about the agreement. If there's any question, let's just fix it and rescind the motion. Also, we're asking for another document to come back from the EDC that says exactly what you want and exactly how much is the cost because the motion was so vague it was basically just saying to allow additional funds to be applied to finish the second feasibility. How much are the funds for the second study? That is very important to know how much more it's going to cost to do that second study. Boren was asking that the previous motion be rescinded so they can get the needed amendments back to the Council.

Council Member - Curtis Webster: Motion to rescind the motion made on Item #16 at the June 26, 2014 City Council meeting.

Council Member - Dennis Baade: 2nd

Council Member - Rodney Bevill: Approve

Council Member - Ronald Wyrick: Approve

Council Member - Dennis Baade: Approve

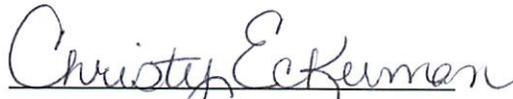
Council Member - Curtis Webster: Approve

Council Member - Marty Goss: Abstain

Mayor - Jim Braswell: N/A

The meeting adjourned at 5:53 p.m.

**Attest:**

  
Christy Eckerman, City Secretary

**Approved:**

  
Jim Braswell, Mayor