

**IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE OKLAHOMA OPEN MEETING LAW
THE AGENDA WAS POSTED MARCH 23, 2022 AT 4:00 P.M.
AT THE MUNICIPAL BUILDING, 723 SOUTH LEWIS, STILLWATER, OKLAHOMA**

**MINUTES
STILLWATER CITY COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING
COUNCIL HEARING ROOM
723 S. LEWIS
MARCH 28, 2022**

**PRESENT: MAYOR WILLIAM H. JOYCE, VICE MAYOR ALANE ZANNOTTI,
COUNCILORS CHRISTIE HAWKINS AND KEVIN CLARK
ABSENT: COUNCILOR AMY DZIALOWSKI**

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Mayor Joyce called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

2. GENERAL ORDERS

- a. Presentation of proposed FY23 operating budget and consider reinstating the automatic rate escalators for electric, water, and wastewater utilities

Finance Director Christy Cluck stated that the revenue and expenditures for the proposed FY23 budget would be presented by Budget Specialist Shelby Johns.

Ms. Johns presented the FY23 proposed budget to Council and she and Ms. Cluck answered Council's questions.

Ms. Cluck reported that preparing a balanced budget is becoming more difficult as expenditure increases outpace revenue growth. Inflation in calendar year 2021 alone was 5.1%; however, no adjustment to utility rates has occurred since 2018. She stated the automatic rate escalator was suspended in January 2019 pending completion of a cost of service/rate study on all utilities. Ms. Cluck reported that the study was completed in 2020 with recommendations to adjust rates, but no action was taken, including reinstating the rate escalator.

Discussion was held amongst the Councilors regarding inflation costs and reinstating the rate escalator.

Councilor Hawkins stated the City has tried to help its residents by offering three grant programs to assist with utility bills during the pandemic, by paying \$3,000,000 (one-half) of the utility expense from Winter Storm Uri and by spreading the remaining \$3,000,000 over a three year recoupment period from residents.

MOTION BY MAYOR JOYCE, SECOND BY VICE MAYOR ZANNOTTI TO DIRECT STAFF TO BRING THE ELECTRIC RATES BACK TO AN SUA MEETING IN THE FUTURE.

**ROLL CALL VOTE: JOYCE-YEA, ZANNOTTI-YEA, HAWKINS-YEA, CLARK-YEA.
NAY-NONE. MOTION CARRIED WITH FOUR YEA VOTES.**

- b. Presentation of proposed pay plan adjustment

Human Resources Director Christy Driskel stated that during last month's study session staff discussed with Council the importance that compensation, retirement and health benefits play in recruitment and retention of valuable employees. She stated that more information will be presented to outline the path forward to better align these three key pieces of overall compensation with the current competitive job market. This also moves the City of Stillwater in the right direction for retention and recognition of current employees.

Ms. Driskel stated that staff will be conducting a multi-prong review and approach to compensation adjustment for July 1. A multi-phase approach allows staff to best address individual position concerns and the pay structure as a whole while still being responsive to the cost-of-living increases across the nation. The tiered approach provides more appropriate adjustments by salary level where a larger percentage of increase may be necessary due to a lower starting salary.

Ms. Driskel stated that regarding health insurance benefits, the City is able to make adjustments behind the scenes in plan administration that results in no increase to current employee premium sharing. She also stated that the life and dental insurance premiums are on track to renew with no premium increase.

No action was taken on this item.

c. Discussion and possible action on proposed adjustments to the City of Stillwater OkMRF Plan

Deputy City Manager Melissa Reames stated that at the February 28, 2022 council study session on employee recruitment and retention, staff presented two alternatives to the current Oklahoma Municipal Retirement Fund (OkMRF) defined contribution plan. The options discussed were lowering the vesting schedule from the current 10 years and increasing the employer contribution from 6% to a graduated 10% upon additional participation by the employee. Further discussion with OkMRF shows vesting schedules can range from immediate vesting to 10 years. OkMRF sees the average schedule for private sector plans at three years and public plans at seven years.

Discussion was held amongst Council about the different vesting years and percentage options. Council asked staff to verify questions with OkMRF and bring back additional information to Council.

No action was taken on this item.

3. ADJOURN


MOTION BY COUNCILOR CLARK, SECOND BY COUNCILOR HAWKINS TO ADJOURN THE MARCH 28, 2022 REGULAR MEETING OF THE STILLWATER CITY COUNCIL.

ROLL CALL VOTE: JOYCE-YEA, ZANNOTTI-YEA, HAWKINS-YEA, CLARK-YEA.
NAY-NONE. MOTION CARRIED WITH FOUR YEA VOTES.

The March 28, 2022 regular meeting of the Stillwater City Council adjourned at 6:39 p.m.



WILLIAM H. JOYCE, MAYOR
STILLWATER CITY COUNCIL



TERESA KADAVY
CITY CLERK