

STATE OF TEXAS §  
COUNTY OF CAMERON §  
TOWN OF LAGUNA VISTA §

MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE LAGUNA VISTA TOWN COUNCIL

DATE: August 30, 2011  
TIME: 6:00 p.m.  
PLACE: City Hall Building

MEMBERS PRESENT: Susie Houston, Mayor  
Steve Muschenheim, Council Member  
Leti Keplinger, Council Member  
Michael Carter, Council Member  
Paul Villas, Council Member  
  
Rolando Vela, City Manager  
Ramon Vela, Town Attorney  
Alma Deckard, City Secretary

MEMBERS ABSENT: Rita Garcia, Council Member  
William Schnier, Council Member

ALSO PRESENT: Richard Lane, Citizen  
Richard Hinojosa, Citizen  
Arden Curts, Citizen  
Carole Benham, Citizen  
Martha McClain, Citizen  
Jeff Hughes, Citizen  
Stan Backues, Citizen

ORDER OF BUSINESS

1. Call to Order  
Mayor Houston called the meeting to order at 6:05 pm.
2. Pledge and Invocation was lead by Council Member Villas.
3. Roll Call – Council Members Garcia and Schnier were absent.

4. OPEN FORUM: None.

5. PUBLIC HEARING – a public hearing to solicit public input on the proposed 2011 ad valorem property tax rate.

Mayor opened the public hearing concerning the 2011 ad valorem property tax rates.

Stan Backues stated asked if the certificates of obligations are causing the taxes to go up? Mayor explained that the debt service of .046689 is to pay for the certificates of obligations for the 1.5 million that the town is borrowing. Mr. Backues stated that the charter specifically states that the municipal judge should be an attorney and an attorney was not appointed. He specifically singled out Council Member Villas, telling him that he was on the charter committee and he should have known better.

Ramon Vela informed Stan Backues that he must address the board as a whole and not address the council members on an individual basis.

Mayor explained that the proposed property tax rate is \$0.2932 and the debt service rate is \$0.046689, for a total tax rate of \$0.339899.

Jeff Hughes asked if the board thought this was a good time to raise taxes, with the way the economy is these days. Mayor explained that Laguna Vista has one of the lowest property tax rates in the valley. The Town of Bayview and City of South Padre Island are the only ones that are lower. South Padre Island has a very large sales tax revenue, unlike us. The City of Port Isabel is about \$0.68.

Council Member Carter stated that the property tax rate is not actually going up. We've made major cuts in the budget to keep the tax rate the same as last year.

Council Member Villas stated that the previous board held the tax rate for several years. In obtaining the certificates of obligations, we are investing in ourselves. This will help our property values to prosper.

Jeff Hughes stated that there are people that are in a hardship that may not be able to afford this tax increase. Council Member Carter explained that if the property values go up then our debt service will decrease.

Richard Lane asked if the funds being borrowed have been specified for particular projects; is the list specific? Mayor explained that there will be a meeting in October to come up with the specifications of how much will go to each project.

Ramon Vela explained that the projects were identified within groups. The specific amounts will be designated at a later time.

Council Member Muschenheim made a motion to close the public hearing for the 2001 ad valorem property tax rates, Council Member Villas seconded the motion. All voted "aye" to approve, motion carried.

6. ADJOURNMENT

Council Member Muschenheim made a motion to adjourn meeting at 6:25 pm, Council Member Carter seconded the motion. All voted “aye” to approve, motion carried.

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Susie Houston, Mayor

Attest:

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Alma Deckard, City Secretary