

**BRYAN CITY COUNCIL
MINUTES OF WORKSHOP MEETING
AUGUST 23, 2016**

A workshop meeting of the Bryan City Council was held on Tuesday, August 23, 2016, in the Council Chambers of the Bryan Municipal Building. A notice of said meeting was posted at least 72 hours in advance in accordance with Section 551, Texas Government Code. Mayor Jason Bienski and Councilmembers Mike Southerland, Ben Hardeman and Buppy Simank were present. Councilmembers Al Saenz and Greg Owens joined the meeting at 3:25 p.m. Councilmember Rafael Peña joined the meeting at 3:55 p.m. In attendance were City Manager Kean Register, City Attorney Janis Hampton and City Secretary Mary Lynne Stratta.

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 3:05 p.m.

2. PRESENTATION BY BRYAN COLLEGE STATION CONVENTION AND VISITORS BUREAU (CVB) REGARDING FISCAL YEAR 2017 BUDGET REQUEST AND RELOCATION EXPENSES

Shannon Overby of the Bryan-College Station Convention and Visitors Bureau reviewed the CVB mission, staffing, board structure, fiscal year 2016 highlights and fiscal year 2017 goals. She reported a major focus of CVB efforts in fiscal year 2017 would be to book hotel room nights during weekdays. She outlined significant changes in their increased budget request. Ms. Overby advised that College Station collects 75 percent of the hotel/motel taxes collected by the two cities, whereas Bryan collects 25 percent. She advised the CVB was asking for 34 percent of the City of Bryan's entire hotel/motel tax fund for the 2017 fiscal year. She discussed the use of the new mobile visitor center and that additional staffing was needed to cover the events where the mobile visitor center will be located. She also discussed the hotel tax grant funding process. Mr. Noel Mayes, Lodging Association member, stated he was present to represent the business interests of the hotel community. Ms. Overby reported the supply of hotel rooms will be up about 60 percent in fiscal year 2017, while demand had only increased 2.7 percent over the past year. She reported revenue per available room (RevPAR) was down 6.8 percent, occupancy was down 3.8 percent and average daily rate (ADR) was down 3.1 percent. It was questioned as to why hotels did not advertise more. Ms. Overby also reported the CVB was looking for a permanent home and that the City of Bryan would be asked to fund 25 percent of the buildout costs of the new facility (currently estimated at \$480,000). She clarified this amount was not included in their increased budget request for fiscal year 2017, and that the City of Bryan would be invoiced at a later date after negotiations for two possible sites (both in College Station) were complete. She also clarified the amount did not include monthly rent and added this was strictly office space and would not include a visitor center. Mrs. Overby then reported the CVB had broken its reserve fund into various reserve funds. She reminded Council the CVB was asking for \$130,000 more in funding this year than the previous year. Mr. Register noted a substantial increase had been included and funded in the current year's budget, but that he did not include another increase in the proposed City of Bryan Fiscal Year 2017 budget. In response to questions posed by Councilmembers, Mrs. Overby reported she could not give specific figures as to how much money the CVB was allocating for Texas Reds Festival promotion, but that it was part of their digital marketing plan and overall marketing plan. She was asked to provide that documentation.

3. PRESENTATION BY DOWNTOWN BRYAN ASSOCIATION (DBA) REGARDING FISCAL YEAR 2017 BUDGET REQUEST AND 2016 TEXAS REDS STEAK AND GRAPE FESTIVAL

Downtown Bryan Association Executive Director Sandy Farris provided information regarding the board structure, staffing and office space of the DBA. She discussed the Queen Theatre, which is being renovated and expected to open in late 2017. Mrs. Farris listed the events and activities held downtown, which have tripled in the last few years. She added 33 events were held in downtown in 2016, 28 of which were free to the public. The growing success of First Fridays, the growing rate of new businesses opening downtown, and the new weekly farmers' market were listed as signs of a successful partnership between DBA and the City of Bryan. Mrs. Farris advised the Council that the DBA had not requested any budget increase in three years and was asking for a very modest increase in their budget. She reported there was no extensive travel budget for DBA staff and they operated on a very frugal budget. Mrs. Farris asked the Council to increase the DBA operating budget by \$20,000 to help cover recurring hard costs. Ms. Amanda Reynolds, DBA staff member, presented information about the Texas Reds Steak and Grape Festival. She recapped last year's event and spoke about the upcoming tenth annual festival to be held September 23-25. She reminded Council the festival showcases the downtown area and other aspects of the community. She listed new components of this year's festival and asked for an additional \$10,000 in festival funding for next year. The amount of scholarships and donations to non-profits who volunteer to work at the festival were mentioned. It was also mentioned that sales tax in downtown had been on the upswing. In response to Council questions, Mrs. Farris reported visitors do stay overnight for First Fridays and other events, including Texas Reds. She showed a map of locations of Texas Reds visitors' homes, which indicated visitors came from many Texas counties as well as several other states. Mr. Register reported he did not place the additional funding requests in the proposed budget. A discussion followed about the festival placing "heads in beds" and promoting tourism.

4. DISCUSSION REGARDING CONSENT/STATUTORY AGENDA ITEMS FOR THE REGULAR MEETING OF AUGUST 23, 2016

Council briefly discussed agenda items 9 a and 9 b of the statutory agenda for the regular meeting of August 23, 2016. No action was taken.

5. COUNCIL COMMITTEE REPORTS

No reports were provided.

6. ADJOURN

Without objection, the meeting adjourned at 4:30 p.m.

City Secretary Mary Lynne Stratta

Mayor Jason P. Bienski