

TOWN HALL MEETING MINUTES

JUNE 5, 2021

10:00 AM

Meeting was called to order by Mayor Bennett at 10:01 am. Quorum was established with all council members present. Mayor Bennet welcomed the community and noted the Town Hall meeting is being lived streamed on YouTube. In person attendance: 50 people.

Agenda Item #1 – Provide Information & Questions & Answers Pertaining to TX General Land Office Grant to the City

Mayor Bennett summarized the grant application process that took place in the fall of 2020, with the grant application submitted at the end of October. The city received notice of the 1st round grant funding on May 21st. She then introduced Dawn Pilcher from LJA Engineering and Jill Finney from Langford Community Management, grant writer/administrator. County Commissioner, Joe Blackshear, was also present.

Dawn Pilcher began by explaining that in the past 5 years Ivanhoe has experienced 3 100-year storms that caused extensive damage to the community. Hurricane Harvey caused a dam failure at Lake Ivanhoe and the TX Commission on Environmental Quality required the dam to be completely breached to avoid catastrophic failure. The TX General Land office (GLO) \$11.4 million grant is to be used to mitigate future failures and to build a dam to facilitate a retention pond to serve as flood control to capture and retain water for slow release. The Hazard Mitigation projects also include Lake Ivanhoe and, Lake Tristan emergency spillway and Lake Camelot dam. GLO is paying 99% of the projects.

Ms. Pilcher also noted the city has a good chance to receive an \$8 million grant which the city has applied for thru the GLO. This grant is 100% funded and is to be used for flood control projects, including streets and ditches. Councilman Herrington pointed out that with only collecting \$500,000 per year in taxes, if every penny spent on projects alone, it would take nearly 20 years to collect this amount of money. Mayor Bennett clarified that per the grant requirements the City must own several properties that are currently owned by the IPOIA. Changing ownership will require a vote by the IPOIA membership. Vance Townsend suggested the possibility of eminent domain if there was problem. Mayor Bennet stated that this is not a good means of acquiring property.

Randy Fredrick asked if Lake Ivanhoe will be at a constant level. Ed Lee asked if current piers will be back in the water. Dawn stated that the water level would fluctuate with the amount of rain or drought, but there should be an operational level depending on weather and springs in the area.

Sarah Warren read a statement thanking everyone for all the hard work and dedication displayed for the betterment of our community. Stated that the IPOIA wants to work together with the City for mutually beneficial goals and that the IPOIA membership will have to vote on any sale of IPOIA property. Sarah requested that the IPOIA be included in all City processes so they can present information to the membership.

Judy Shumake asked if the drainage ditch by her house on Sherwood Forest Dr. will be included in either grant. Ms. Pilcher replied that dredging & silt removal is not part of the grant.

Pat Hughes wanted to know the time frame. Ms. Pilcher stated that it will be at least a year before construction begins.

Karl Muench stated that he supports the sale of IPOIA property and cannot imagine the IPOIA membership not approving. Mayor Bennett stated that the IPOIA will receive approximate \$795,000 paid through the grant. Property has to be appraised at fair market value at time of sale.

Mayor Bennett stated that the \$11.4 million funds are specific for dams and cannot be used for road work. However, the \$8 million grant funds can and will be used for drainage and road work upon,

Councilman Warren asked for clarification on how much property would be required from the IPOIA (park and reserve areas) and what will be done with Lake Camelot dam. Ms. Pilcher stated that the exact amount of land will not be known until engineering is completed. The downstream side of Lake Camelot dam will have to be removed,

along with all the trees, and the dam and road reconstructed. The dam will be approximately the same height and will be designed so water will go through flood control gates and not over the road.

Councilman Herrington asked if the projects around Lake Ivanhoe cannot be constructed together will the grant administrator shift the scope of work alignment. Ms. Finney stated that there are ways to do this, and Ms. Pilcher commented that the cost of materials has increased considerably in the past few months, with state agencies beginning to realize the grant funds might not go as far as expected.

With no further comment on the agenda item, Mayor Bennett moved to the next item.

Agenda Item #2 – Provide Information & Questions & Answers Relating to Other Street Construction Projects in the City

Ed Lee questioned the culvert on Mill Creek Road as to whether it would support the heavy traffic. Public Works Supervisor Mr. David Marshall explained that the culvert is in the process of being replaced and will have to handle the large/heavy trucks carrying road base material.

Councilman Herrington asked if there is any plan to work on Lake Tristan's dam at spillway and reroute water into Lake Ivanhoe. Ms. Pilcher said not at this time.

Karl Muench asked if Mill Creek Road will be re-opened to Hwy. 69 for another entrance. Mayor Bennett said no.

David Marshall asked if Lake Camelot will be completely drained during the dam work. Ms. Pilcher said there is a possibility the lake will have to be drained.

Danny Muzny asked about reconstruction on S-curve on Lakewood Drive from Lake Tristan spillway to the tree. Councilman Herrington said that this is not part of the grant funds, but can be look at using bond funds.

Ms. Finney stated that the role of a grant administrator is to research grants, file applications, provide additional information with the State and Federal agencies to ensuring compliance with governmental and environmental regulations. City Council approves individual portions of the grant for specific projects.

Councilman Warren asked when will the project surveys be complete. Ms. Pilcher explained the surveys will not occur until after all environment clearances have been approved which will take about a year.

Ed Lee asked if the City Council can reject any bids. Ms. Pilcher said that LJA Engineering takes the lowest and best bid that meets the bid requirements and recommends this contractor to City Council. Local contractors and sub-contractors are used whenever possible, but they must meet state and federal criteria.

Bruce Kipling asked in flood plan will be redone. Ms. Pilcher responded that a flood plan update is not part of the grant.

Vance Townsend wants to know if drainage ditches will be adequate and will vegetation be controlled on all major road work. Mayor Bennett stated that there will be a \$1 to \$2 million budget for road work under the grant as compared to the current \$200,000 for Public Works. The City did not receive funding for the \$8 million drainage grant the first time around (thru the TX Dept. of Emergency Management) and was a 75%/25% grant. The \$2 million bond that was voted on was the City's 25% match, but it resulted in the City being on the list for funding the second time and which is a 100% grant. Therefore, the remaining bond funds can be used directly for road work on streets not covered by other grants.

Richard Pruitt asked if Lake Tristan will be drained during the dam spillway construction. Ms. Pilcher said that the water will be lowered and a coffer dam can be put in place to keep lowering the lake to a minimum.

Birdie Mosher asked about the construction of Ivanhoe East and West. David Marshall stated the Public Works crew is taking care of this project and a two-lane solid limestone base is being installed with the possibility of having an asphalt top at a later date.

Vance Townsend asked if ditch work is to be done to increase drainage. Ms. Pilcher said that work is limited by the plat records of right of ways. Mayor Bennett said maintaining right of ways is part of the annual budget and not included under grants.

Dave Rader recognized the work of the IPOIA, the City and community members who worked to incorporate the community. He noted that without being an incorporated city none of these grants would have happened.

Mark Bonnett asked about property valuations. Ms. Pilcher said that valuations are not tied to the grant construction.

Vance Townsend commented about the “pink elephant” in the room: Two members of City Council have spouses on the IPOIA board and a possible conflict of interest. Ms. Pilcher explained that federal guidelines and requirements will apply. Mr. Townsend also noted that the last time major construction was done, a person or persons kept moving the detour signs. Ms. Pilcher said the contractor will be made aware of the issue.

With no other questions or comments submitted, Mayor Bennett moved to the next agenda item.

Agenda Item #3 – Adjourn Meeting

Councilman Herrington made the motion to adjourn the meeting and was seconded by Councilman Craven. The motion passed unanimously and the meeting adjourned at 11:19 AM.

Respectfully submitted,
C. D. Woodrome, City Secretary

Approved by Council June 16, 2021

Cathy Bennett, Mayor