



**City of Rowlett**  
**Special Work Session Minutes**  
**City Council Retreat**

4000 Main Street  
Rowlett, TX 75088  
www.rowlett.com

*City of Rowlett City Council meetings are available to all persons regardless of disability. If you require special assistance, please contact the City Secretary at 972-412-6115 or write 4000 Main Street, Rowlett, Texas, 75088, at least 48 hours in advance of the meeting.*

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Friday, June 20, 2014  
Saturday, June 21, 2014

8:00 A.M.

Annex Conference Room –  
4004 Main Street

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As authorized by Section 551.071 of the Texas Government Code, this meeting may be convened into closed Executive Session for the purpose of seeking confidential legal advice from the City Attorney on any agenda item herein.

The City of Rowlett reserves the right to reconvene, recess or realign the Regular Session or called Executive Session or order of business at any time prior to adjournment.

**FRIDAY, JUNE 20, 2014:**

**Present:** Mayor Gottel, Councilmember Dana-Bashian, Councilmember Sheffield, Councilmember van Bloemendaal, Deputy Mayor Pro Tem Pankratz, and Councilmember Bobbitt; City Manager – Brian Funderburk, Assistant City Manager – Jim Proce, City Secretary – Laura Hallmark, Director of Human Resources and Risk Management – John Murray

**Absent:** Mayor Pro Tem Gallops (arrived after lunch)

**CALL TO ORDER**

Mayor Gottel called the meeting to order at 8:15 a.m.

Welcome & Opening Remarks

Mayor Gottel welcomed everyone and stated he looks forward to this process every year and reviewed how important this retreat is in strategic planning.

Mr. Funderburk reviewed the agenda for the next two days.

Icebreaker Exercise

Mr. Murray conducted the icebreaker, which demonstrated that one problem or issue may have several options from where to begin and the differing opinions of the steps that are involved to solve it or finish it.

What do we want Rowlett to look like in the future?

Mr. Funderburk reviewed Realize Rowlett 2020 (RR2020) its process, guiding principles, and framework for the future, leading into the discussion of the vision for Rowlett and its future. Council discussion regarding Form Based Code and that process was very new ground for Rowlett and the naysayers who said "you can't do that".

Lengthy discussion regarding Rowlett's lack of a "personality" – there is no destination for the City. As part of this discussion, Council brainstormed ideas for developing a "personality" and projects or events that would be attractions for current residents, future residents, developers, and the public in general. One item that was discussed at length was a music series for the downtown area.

The Council took a short break from 10:34 a.m. – 10:45 a.m.

#### Short-term Timeframe Discussion

Mr. Funderburk reviewed the various opportunities and threats presented to the City, including: economic development opportunities now that PGBT and DART are complete; RR2020 creates a positive vision and regulation plan for development; taxes paid per capita provides less resources for community services and amenities; similarity of value and housing structures; capacity for incentive-based development limited; and remaining proceeds from previously issued bonds depleting.

Council discussion regarding barriers to the opportunities that exist, including: failure of a bond package, tax rate increase, current tax rate, capacity to do the work under-staffing in Parks to maintain parkland at a high standard, and moving too slow or too fast with opportunities.

Lengthy discussion outlining items that Council would like to address over the next two years. The list of topics included: economic development strategies, infrastructure strategies, parks strategies, community strategies, and development/planning strategies.

The Council took a short break from 2:32 p.m. – 2:48 p.m.

#### General Obligation Bond Process

Mr. Proce reviewed the bond process including: What is this CIP, CIP benefits, process? What are Rowlett's needs & challenges? Which stakeholders should we engage? How do we establish criteria? How will we engage out community? How do we leverage future freed up bond capacity? What is the timing for the bond election calendar? What are we going to do about our alleys?

Council discussed appointing an ad hoc committee for the bond process, with each Councilmember submitting names to Mr. Proce who will compile a list for Council's approval at a later date.

Council discussion regarding alleys in the City – their condition, their repair and/or replacement, and how to fund them.

## ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Gottel thanked everyone for their participation throughout the day and adjourned the meeting at 4:53 p.m.

## SATURDAY, JUNE 21, 2014:

**Present: Mayor Gottel, Mayor Pro Tem Gallops, Deputy Mayor Pro Tem Pankratz, Councilmember Dana-Bashian, Councilmember Bobbitt, Councilmember Sheffield, and Councilmember van Bloemendaal; City Manager – Brian Funderburk, Assistant City Manager – Jim Proce, City Secretary – Laura Hallmark, Chief Financial Officer – Alan Guard, Director of Human Resources and Risk Management – John Murray**

## CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Gottel called the meeting to order at 8:20 a.m. and reviewed Council's discussion from the previous day.

Mr. Funderburk reviewed the agenda and the goals for the day

### Financial Challenges and Opportunities

Mr. Funderburk outlined some financial opportunities including: increase in tax value, freed up bond capacity, long-term liabilities from employee benefits; as well as some financial challenges, which include: FY2015 budget shortfall, employee turnover and compensation, and park maintenance and amenities.

Lengthy discussion of long-term employee liabilities of retiree health benefits and vacation/sick leave payout upon separation from the City.

The budget shortfall of approximately \$900,000 was discussed along with the possibilities of coverage – reduction of services or possible tax increase.

The Council took a short break from 10:51 a.m. – 11:02 a.m.

Council discussed, at length, City tax exemptions, specifically relating to the senior tax exemption – it's effects on City revenue and the available options.

Current and projected water restrictions along with the effects on the budget were also discussed.

### Employee Compensation and Benefits

Mr. Murray reviewed the compensation study and the results as related to the surveyed market cities, which outlined a majority of the positions earn significantly less than their peers. Council

discussed fixing the public safety step plan, which had been approved several years ago, but not funded.

The Council took a short break from 2:07p.m. – 2:15 p.m.

Mr. Funderburk reviewed the policy considerations as discussed by Council over the two day meeting. He and staff will take the direction as set by Council and submit for consideration at a later date.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

Mr. Funderburk thanked everyone for their good discussion over the two days.

Mayor Gottel provided closing remarks and adjourned the meeting at 2:58 p.m.

  
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Todd W. Gottel, Mayor

  
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Laura Hallmark, City Secretary

Date Approved: July 1, 2014