



April 13, 2023

Questions and Answers Report



Mayor Kirk Watson

Council Member Natasha Harper-Madison, District 1

Council Member Vanessa Fuentes, District 2

Council Member José Velásquez, District 3

Council Member Josè “Chito” Vela, District 4

Council Member Ryan Alter, District 5

Council Member Mackenzie Kelly, District 6

Council Member Leslie Pool, District 7

Mayor Pro Tem Paige Ellis, District 8

Council Member Zohaib “Zo” Qadri, District 9

Council Member Alison Alter, District 10

The City Council Questions and Answers Report was derived from a need to provide City Council Members an opportunity to solicit clarifying information from City Departments as it relates to requests for council action. After a City Council Regular Meeting agenda has been published, Council Members will have the opportunity to ask questions of departments via the City Manager's Agenda Office. This process continues until 5:00 p.m. the Tuesday before the Council meeting. The final report is distributed at noon to City Council the Wednesday before the council meeting.

QUESTIONS FROM COUNCIL

Items #5 and #6:

Item 5. Approve an ordinance to suspend a Gas Reliability Infrastructure Program interim customer surcharge proposed by Atmos Energy Corporation, Mid-Tex Division.

Item 6. Approve an ordinance to suspend a Gas Reliability Infrastructure Program interim customer surcharge proposed by CenterPoint Energy Resources Corp.

COUNCIL MEMBER POOL'S OFFICE

1. *Is the interim rate adjustment at all related to repairs and improvements necessary coming out of Winter Storm Uri?*

The interim rate adjustments for Atmos Energy and for CenterPoint Energy are for recovery of capital investments for calendar year 2022 including replacement pipe, new meters, and additional plant for new customers.

We are just now starting the review of the filings. After reviewing the filings, I will be in a position to better answer your question.

To my knowledge the associated costs for the repairs and improvements to provide gas service and the extraordinary gas supply costs from Winter Storm Uri are being recovered by natural gas distribution companies statewide through a securitization financing instrument by the Texas Natural Gas Securitization Finance Corporation, separate from the GRIP filings.

Item #15: Authorize negotiation and execution of a contract for a scenario-based simulator with VirTra, Inc. in an amount not to exceed \$160,215. [Note: This procurement was reviewed for subcontracting opportunities in accordance with City Code Chapter 2-9D (Minority Owned and Women Owned Business Enterprise Procurement Program). For the goods and services required for this procurement, there were no subcontracting opportunities; therefore, no subcontracting goals were established].

MAYOR PRO TEM ELLIS'S OFFICE

1. *Is the simulator training designed to be an immersive experience or a computer-based program or online course?*

The training space is a modular setup made up of 8 floor to ceiling 'projector style' screens that create a circular room setup with surround sound. This training set-up is created specifically to provide officers with an immersive training experience.

2. *Please clarify whether the city be purchasing the training simulator or renting access to it?*
This contract is for the purchase of a Virtual Reality/Augmented Reality simulator training.

Item #33: Approve an ordinance amending Exhibit A to the Fiscal Year 2022-2023 City of Austin Fee and Fine Ordinance (Ordinance No. 20220817-005) to add a fee for police commanders for reimbursed special events, amend a fee and add a fee for emergency communications dispatchers, and add four fees for reimbursed special events requesting forty or more sworn personnel.
COUNCIL MEMBER FUENTES'S OFFICE

1. *These fees are already reflected in the 2023 fee schedule on the city website-what is the purpose of passing an ordinance at this time?*
Attached are the current FY22-23 Fee Schedule for Police. The requested fees are not reflected in the current approved budget. Council approval of this ordinance will result in an amended FY22-23 Fee Schedule. The amended fee schedule is included as an attachment in backup for Item 33 (all changes are highlighted yellow).
2. *How often are special events requesting over 40 officers?*
Special event planners frequently request the services of over 40 officers. In 2022, APD completed 52 large scale events: 47 events (with less than half dozen event organizers) required 40+ officers and 5 events required 25-40 officers.
3. *What is the presumed impact of these increased/new fees on the budget?*
There is no budget impact – this ordinance is focused on reimbursed special events. The requested fee increases will allow APD to continue to staff large scale reimbursed special events. Smaller scale local events (those requiring less than 40 officers) will see only a slight fee increase (of \$7) for dispatcher services.

Item #36: Approve a resolution authorizing negotiation and execution of an Advance Funding Agreement with the Texas Department of Transportation for the High Safety Improvement Program lighting projects on Howard Lane from Scofield Road Parkway to Dessau Road, and Slaughter Lane from Riddle Road to Brandt Road for a total estimated cost of \$2,851,951 with the City's share of the costs estimated to be \$323,953 plus any cost overruns.
COUNCIL MEMBER FUENTES'S OFFICE

1. *What is the timeline for completing the Slaughter Lane Street Lighting Project?*
The Slaughter Lane lighting project is being bid together with the Howard Lane lighting project as a single construction contract. The Slaughter Lane project has a construction duration of six months. Staff anticipates completion of the project by Fall 2024.

Item #57: Conduct a public hearing and consider an ordinance amending City Code Title 25 relating to mitigation of wildfire risk.

MAYOR PRO TEM ELLIS'S OFFICE

1. *Could ATD please provide their feedback on Part 4 of the draft ordinance, regarding reserved right-of-way, and how the inclusion of turning radii aligns or balances with our safe streets mobility goals? Could the addition of this criterion result in wider street cross-section designs, which are known to promote speeding?*

The proposed modifications to LDC 25-6-54 apply to establishing roadway alignments through right-of-way reservation and dedication, which should not result in wider street cross sections and increase traveling speeds.

City Council adopted the City's updated Transportation Criteria Manual (TCM) in 2022, which includes narrower street cross sections, among other updated design requirements, that adhere to best practice street design to meet our safety goals where the previous TCM did not. The Transportation and Public Works Department (TPW) collaborated with the Austin Fire Department (AFD) during the TCM update on revised corner radii that balance slower turn speeds to improve safety while ensuring AFD vehicles (in their current configuration) are able to appropriately maneuver turns while responding to emergencies. TPW sees the proposed ordinance language as consistent with the engineering criteria in the TCM to address safe use of the right-of-way.

2. *If AFD fire truck length determines the necessary turning radii, what progress has been made in conversations regarding City procurement of shorter, European-style fire trucks?*

Over the past several years AFD has worked collaboratively with our other city partners as noted above. The collaboration has led to a mutual understanding of needs and ability to meet current criteria. AFD has shifted to more compact vehicles based on Operational needs as well as to ensure we are working collaboratively towards the current engineering criteria.



Council Question and Answer

Related To

Items #5 and 6

Meeting Date

April 13, 2023

Additional Answer Information

Item 5. Approve an ordinance to suspend a Gas Reliability Infrastructure Program interim customer surcharge proposed by Atmos Energy Corporation, Mid-Tex Division.

Item 6. Approve an ordinance to suspend a Gas Reliability Infrastructure Program interim customer surcharge proposed by CenterPoint Energy Resources Corp.

COUNCIL MEMBER POOL'S OFFICE

1. *Is the interim rate adjustment at all related to repairs and improvements necessary coming out of Winter Storm Uri?*

The interim rate adjustments for Atmos Energy and for CenterPoint Energy are for recovery of capital investments for calendar year 2022 including replacement pipe, new meters, and additional plant for new customers.

We are just now starting the review of the filings. After reviewing the filings, I will be in a position to better answer your question.

To my knowledge the associated costs for the repairs and improvements to provide gas service and the extraordinary gas supply costs from Winter Storm Uri are being recovered by natural gas distribution companies statewide through a securitization financing instrument by the Texas Natural Gas Securitization Finance Corporation, separate from the GRIP filings.



Council Question and Answer

Related To

Item #15

Meeting Date

April 13, 2023

Additional Answer Information

Authorize negotiation and execution of a contract for a scenario-based simulator with VirTra, Inc. in an amount not to exceed \$160,215. [Note: This procurement was reviewed for subcontracting opportunities in accordance with City Code Chapter 2-9D (Minority Owned and Women Owned Business Enterprise Procurement Program). For the goods and services required for this procurement, there were no subcontracting opportunities; therefore, no subcontracting goals were established].

MAYOR PRO TEM ELLIS'S OFFICE

1. *Is the simulator training designed to be an immersive experience or a computer-based program or online course?*
The training space is a modular setup made up of 8 floor to ceiling 'projector style' screens that create a circular room setup with surround sound. This training set-up is created specifically to provide officers with an immersive training experience.
2. *Please clarify whether the city be purchasing the training simulator or renting access to it?*
This contract is for the purchase of a Virtual Reality/Augmented Reality simulator training.



Council Question and Answer

Related To

Item #33

Meeting Date

April 13, 2023

Additional Answer Information

Approve an ordinance amending Exhibit A to the Fiscal Year 2022-2023 City of Austin Fee and Fine Ordinance (Ordinance No. 20220817-005) to add a fee for police commanders for reimbursed special events, amend a fee and add a fee for emergency communications dispatchers, and add four fees for reimbursed special events requesting forty or more sworn personnel.

COUNCIL MEMBER FUENTE'S OFFICE

- 1) *These fees are already reflected in the 2023 fee schedule on the city website-what is the purpose of passing an ordinance at this time?*

Attached are the current FY22-23 Fee Schedule for Police. The requested fees are not reflected in the current approved budget. Council approval of this ordinance will result in an amended FY22-23 Fee Schedule. The amended fee schedule is included as an attachment in backup for Item 33 (all changes are highlighted yellow).

- 2) *How often are special events requesting over 40 officers?*

Special event planners frequently request the services of over 40 officers. In 2022, APD completed 52 large scale events: 47 events (with less than half dozen event organizers) required 40+ officers and 5 events required 25-40 officers.

- 3) *What is the presumed impact of these increased/new fees on the budget?*

There is no budget impact – this ordinance is focused on reimbursed special events. The requested fee increases will allow APD to continue to staff large scale reimbursed special events. Smaller scale local events (those requiring less than 40 officers) will see only a slight fee increase (of \$7) for dispatcher services.

FY 2022-23 Fee Schedule

Police	Fee	Note
Emergency Response/Assistance		
Patrol/Patrol Support		
Dispatcher	\$38.00	per hour
Event Scheduling Fee	\$45.00 \$57.00	per event
Mounted Rental - Outside Services	\$20.00	per hour
Personal Watercraft Rental - Outside Services	\$10.00	per hour
Police Cadet	\$39.00	per hour
Police Lieutenant	\$94.00	per hour
Police Officer/Cpl-Det	\$74.00 \$75.00	per hour
Police Sergeant	\$88.00	per hour
Vehicle Rental - Outside Services	\$12.00	per hour
Watercraft Rental - Outside Services	\$20.00	per hour
License/Use Permits		
68-A Vehicle Inspections	\$40.00	per inspection
<i>Mandatory inspection of "homemade", rebuilt, or imported vehicles to obtain a title on the vehicle.</i>		
Metal Recycler Permit	\$50.00	per permit
<i>Permit to operate a metal materials recycling location. One permit for 2 years.</i>		
Out of Jurisdiction Off Duty Peace Officer Security Application & Renewal	\$10.00	each
<i>Does not apply to peace officers employed by (1) the City; (2) Travis Co Sheriff's Dept; (3) a Travis Co Constable's office; or (4) a state agency,</i>		
Parking/Towing Rates		
Non-Consent Towing Fees		
<i>These fees amend and replace any fees for these services previously adopted by council including those contained in the 2006 ordinance</i>		
Additional Charges		
Category A Tow Truck		
Wait Time	\$20.00	per hour
Category C Tow Truck		
Additional Category C Tow Truck	\$800.00	per hour
Additional Specialized Equipment	\$300.00	per hour
Air Bags	\$75.00	per hour
Fork Lifts	\$125.00	per hour
Haul Trailers	\$500.00	per hour
Large Slide Trucks/Rollbacks (3 ton minimum size for hauling vehicles or equipment with gross weight of 15,000 pounds or more)	\$200.00	maximum

FY 2022-23 Fee Schedule

Police	Fee	Note
Trailer Dollies (used to move semi-trailers)	\$300.00	per hour
Exceptional Labor (manpower)	\$15.00	per hour per man
Work Time (winching, preparing the vehicle to be towed and wait time)	\$15.00	per 15 minute increment
Police Officer Verified (apply if verified by the police officer in charge of the accident)		
Exceptional Labor (such as clearing debris)	\$35.00	per hour
Wait Time	\$15.00	per hour after first 30 minutes
Winching (only if normal hook-up is not possible due to vehicle conditions or location)	\$35.00	per hour, 1 hour minimum
Non-Consent Private Property Towing Fees		
"Fully Prepared for Transport" Fee	\$50.00	maximum
Vehicles greater than 10,000 lbs. and less than 25,000 lbs.	\$350.00	maximum
Vehicles greater than 25,000 lbs.	\$800.00	maximum
Vehicles less than 10,000 lbs.	\$185.00	maximum
Non-Consent Towing Fees (other than Private Property Tows)		
"Fully Prepared for Transport" Fee	\$50.00	maximum
Administrative Fee - Managed Towing Company	\$25.00	maximum
Vehicles greater than 10,000 lbs. and less than 25,000 lbs.	\$400.00	maximum
Vehicles greater than 25,000 lbs.	\$800.00	maximum
Vehicles less than 10,000 lbs.	\$185.00	maximum
Storage Fee - vehicle 25 feet or less in length	\$20.64	per day
Fees are set by the Texas State government and are adjusted annually based on the Consumer Price Index for all Urban Workers (CPI-U),		
Administrative Fee	\$25.00	
Impoundment Fee (if vehicle covered in storage)	\$20.64	
Fees are set by the Texas State government and are adjusted annually based on the Consumer Price Index for all Urban Workers (CPI-U),		
Storage Fee - vehicle exceeds 25 feet in length	\$36.11	per day
Fees are set by the Texas State government and are adjusted annually based on the Consumer Price Index for all Urban Workers (CPI-U),		
Vehicle Immobilization Fee	\$100.00	
Vehicle Immobilization Operator's Permit	\$15.00	
Vehicle Immobilization Operator's Permit Replacement	\$11.00	
Wrecker Permits		
Duplicate Documents	\$11.00	
Inspection Fee	\$100.00	
Name/Phone Change	\$22.00	
Registration Certificate (Tow Truck/Wrecker License)	\$15.00	

FY 2022-23 Fee Schedule

Police	Fee	Note
Professional Services/Analysis		
Administrative & Photographic Services		
Digital Imaging Photographs CD	\$1.00	per CD
Digital Imaging Photographs DVD	\$3.00	per DVD
Digital Imaging Photographs Xerox Copy	\$0.10	per page
Data Resources		
Certified Copies	\$2.00	
Crash Report Coupons (20)	\$120.00	
Police Reports - Crash Report - CAD Report Identification	\$6.00	
Additional Card	\$6.00	
Fingerprint Fee (2 cards)	\$12.00	per 2 cards



Council Question and Answer

Related To

Item #36

Meeting Date

April 13, 2023

Additional Answer Information

Approve a resolution authorizing negotiation and execution of an Advance Funding Agreement with the Texas Department of Transportation for the High Safety Improvement Program lighting projects on Howard Lane from Scofield Road Parkway to Dessau Road, and Slaughter Lane from Riddle Road to Brandt Road for a total estimated cost of \$2,851,951 with the City's share of the costs estimated to be \$323,953 plus any cost overruns.

COUNCIL MEMBER FUENTE'S OFFICE

1) *What is the timeline for completing the Slaughter Lane Street Lighting Project?*

The Slaughter Lane lighting project is being bid together with the Howard Lane lighting project as a single construction contract. The Slaughter Lane project has a construction duration of six months. Staff anticipates completion of the project by Fall 2024.



Council Question and Answer

Related To

Item #57

Meeting Date

April 13, 2023

Additional Answer Information

Conduct a public hearing and consider an ordinance amending City Code Title 25 relating to mitigation of wildfire risk.

MAYOR PRO TEM ELLIS'S OFFICE

1. *Could ATD please provide their feedback on Part 4 of the draft ordinance, regarding reserved right-of-way, and how the inclusion of turning radii aligns or balances with our safe streets mobility goals? Could the addition of this criterion result in wider street cross-section designs, which are known to promote speeding?*

The proposed modifications to LDC 25-6-54 apply to establishing roadway alignments through right-of-way reservation and dedication, which should not result in wider street cross sections and increase traveling speeds.

City Council adopted the City's updated Transportation Criteria Manual (TCM) in 2022, which includes narrower street cross sections, among other updated design requirements, that adhere to best practice street design to meet our safety goals where the previous TCM did not. The Transportation and Public Works Department (TPW) collaborated with the Austin Fire Department (AFD) during the TCM update on revised corner radii that balance slower turn speeds to improve safety while ensuring AFD vehicles (in their current configuration) are able to appropriately maneuver turns while responding to emergencies. TPW sees the proposed ordinance language as consistent with the engineering criteria in the TCM to address safe use of the right-of-way.

2. *If AFD fire truck length determines the necessary turning radii, what progress has been made in conversations regarding City procurement of shorter, European-style fire trucks?*

Over the past several years AFD has worked collaboratively with our other city partners as noted above. The collaboration has led to a mutual understanding of needs and ability to meet current criteria. AFD has shifted to more compact vehicles based on Operational needs as well as to ensure we are working collaboratively towards the current engineering criteria.