

City of Wimberley

221 Stillwater, P.O. Box 2027, Wimberley, Texas 78676

SPECIAL CITY COUNCIL MEETING
WIMBERLEY CITY HALL-CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS
221 STILLWATER, WIMBERLEY, TEXAS
MONDAY, MAY 21, 2018 – 10:00 A.M.

MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Susan Jagers called the meeting to order at 10:02 a.m.

CALL OF ROLL

Council Members Present: Susan Jagers Mayor
Craig Fore Place Two
Allison Davis Place Three
Gary Barchfeld Place Four
Patricia Cantu Kelly Place Five

City Staff Present: Shawn Cox City Administrator
Laura Calcote City Secretary

CITIZENS COMMUNICATIONS

There were 19 citizen's comments. They were as follows:

1. Phil Collins spoke in favor of the hotel occupancy tax and how to successfully market the City. Additionally, Mr. Collins suggested further work on the City's Comprehensive Plan.
2. Mike Scott addressed Council regarding the fate of the hotel occupancy tax and the benefit of the tax for the City. Mr. Scott stated sales tax alone is not enough to support a city.
3. Martha Kneis spoke in favor of the hotel occupancy tax and how the tax is imposed on visitors to the City, not residents. She also noted the time of the meeting was problematic.
4. Clay Ewing presented reasons to support the hotel occupancy tax, and how 400 or so Texas municipalities currently have a hotel occupancy tax in place. Mr. Ewing expressed how the tax is needed for the City and helps to promote tourism.
5. Julie Ray addressed Council regarding the hotel occupancy tax and advised Council members to think carefully through the topic. Ms. Ray stated she was in favor of the tax,

since visitors pay the fee and no money comes out of the citizenry's pockets.

6. Albert Valera spoke in favor of repealing the hotel occupancy tax and advised the City to take a step back to review the topic.

7. Bill Appleman addressed Council pertaining to the history of the hotel occupancy tax, and how the City has failed to identify a marketing strategy. Mr. Appleman was in favor of repealing the tax.

8. Tomas Palm spoke regarding a marketing/tourism plan and how the community needed to be involved in the plan.

9. Robbie Walker spoke in favor of repealing the hotel occupancy tax and noted the tax is not free money.

10. Heather Carter addressed Council regarding their responsibility to fiscally protect the City, and how the hotel occupancy tax aids in this task.

11. Dan Sturdivant spoke regarding rethinking the hotel occupancy tax, and how Wimberley does not want to be like Fredericksburg with a hotel on every corner.

12. Cathy Moreman addressed Council for the City of Wimberley to be on record for supporting local businesses, and how the hotel occupancy tax helps to do so. Additionally, Ms. Moreman stated the marketing campaign is working to promote tourism within the City.

13. Lila McCall spoke regarding the City's financial status, and how previously the City failed to adequately handle funds. Furthermore, Ms. McCall suggested retailers cannot survive in the City without some help.

14. Bob Cook addressed Council pertaining to the MindEcology marketing campaign and contended the City should allow the company to finish the campaign.

15. Traci Ferguson suggested the City Council meet with the Hotel Occupancy Tax Advisory Committee before making any decisions on the hotel occupancy tax. Ms. Ferguson also stated she was in favor of the tax.

16. Mindy Webber spoke in favor of the hotel occupancy tax, and how the tax enables the City to have additional funding. She also noted Wimberley set the tax rate at 5% when most surrounding cities have the rate at 7%.

17. Pam Mitchell addressed Council regarding the history of the hotel occupancy tax, and how the City needs to step back and devise a plan before moving forward with the tax.

18. Casey Craig spoke regarding the Wimberley lodging owner's feelings on the hotel

occupancy tax, and how taxing is a big topic to consider.

19. Jennifer Ober spoke pertaining to the time and effort the new Hotel Occupancy Tax Advisory Committee had spent revising the hotel occupancy tax application, and how the tax could be beneficial for the City. Additionally, Ms. Ober contended the Tourism Director position is important and funding for the Visitor Center.

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION

A. Discuss and consider possible action to fill a vacancy for Place One on the Wimberley City Council by appointment until the next general City election in May 2019.

Motion to nominate and appoint Michael C. McCullough to fill the Place One vacancy on the Wimberley City Council was made by Council Member Gary Barchfeld. Motion was seconded by Council Member Craig Fore. Motion carried unanimously (4-0).

B. Discuss and consider possible action to add Mayor Pro Tem Gary Barchfeld as signatory to the City of Wimberley bank accounts, effective immediately.

Motion to add Mayor Pro Tem Gary Barchfeld as signatory to the City of Wimberley bank accounts, effective immediately, was made by Council Member Allison Davis. Motion was seconded by Council Member Craig Fore. Motion carried unanimously (4-0).

HOTEL OCCUPANCY TAX

A. Discuss and consider possible action to approve Ordinance No. 2018-17 to reduce the tax rate to be imposed on hotel occupancy within the corporate limits and the extraterritorial jurisdiction of the City from five percent (5%) to zero percent (0%), effective immediately. *(Place Four Council Member Gary Barchfeld)*

There was discussion among Council members regarding the hotel occupancy tax rate, and how a plan should be in place to effectively utilize the funds collected.

Motion to approve Ordinance No. 2018-17 to reduce the tax rate to be imposed on hotel occupancy within the corporate limits and the extraterritorial jurisdiction of the City from five percent (5%) to zero percent (0%), effective immediately, was made by Council Member Gary Barchfeld. Motion was seconded by Council Member Craig Fore.

Council Member Allison Davis presented an amendment to the motion for the tax to be on hold for 60 days from today. Council Member Gary Barchfeld declined the amendment.

Council Member Allison Davis presented a second amendment to the motion for the tax to be on hold for 90 days from today. Council Member Gary Barchfeld declined the amendment.

Motion carried as follows (3-1):

Craig Fore	Aye
Gary Barchfeld	Aye
Patricia Cantu Kelly	Aye
Allison Davis	Nay

- B. Discuss and consider possible action regarding the MindEcology Contract and Advertising Program. *(Place Three Council Member Allison Davis & Place Four Council Member Gary Barchfeld)*

Darren Drewitz of MindEcology gave a presentation to Council regarding the status of the marketing campaign, and how effective the campaign has been in promoting tourism in Wimberley.

There was discussion among Council members pertaining to the success and monitoring of the MindEcology marketing campaign.

No action was taken on this item.

- C. Discuss and consider possible action regarding the status of the Hotel Occupancy Tax Advisory Committee and appropriated grant money. *(Place Three Council Member Allison Davis)*

Council Member Allison Davis discussed the membership requirements for the Hotel Occupancy Tax Advisory Committee, and how the Committee has been allocated \$20,000 to fund hotel occupancy tax applications.

No action was taken on this item.

- D. Discuss and consider possible action regarding the status of the Visitor Center Operations Agreement between the City of Wimberley and the Wimberley Convention and Visitors Bureau Foundation. *(Place Three Council Member Allison Davis)*

There was discussion among Council for future funding of the Visitor Center when the hotel occupancy tax had been reduced to zero percent (0%). The Agreement had been signed into effect for three years from February 2018.

No action was taken on this item.

- E. Discuss and consider possible action regarding the status of the Tourism Director position. *(Place Three Council Member Allison Davis)*

Council Member Allison Davis stated she was in favor of hiring a Tourism Director. Council once again discussed formulating and implementing a plan for the hotel occupancy tax before moving forward with hiring a Tourism Director.

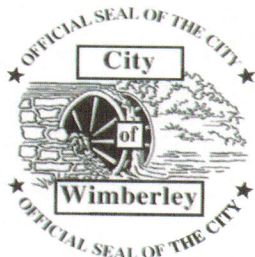
No action was taken on this item.

ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Susan Jagers adjourned the meeting at 12:19 p.m., without objection.

RECORDED BY:

Laura J. Calcote
Laura J. Calcote, City Secretary



APPROVED BY:

Susan B. Jagers
Susan B. Jagers, Mayor