

# MINUTES OF BUDGET WORKSHOP MEETING

September 4, 2018

## MONTGOMERY CITY COUNCIL

### CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Sara Countryman declared a quorum was present, and called the meeting to order at 6:11 p.m.

Present: Sara Countryman Mayor  
Jon Bickford City Council Place # 1  
John Champagne, Jr. City Council Place # 2  
T.J. Wilkerson City Council Place # 3  
Rebecca Huss City Council Place # 4  
Dave McCorquodale City Council Place # 5

Absent:

Also Present: Jack Yates City Administrator  
Susan Hensley City Secretary  
James Napolitano Chief of Police  
Cathy Branco Financial Consultant

### BUDGET WORKSHOP:

❖ Discussion of the following items related to the City of Montgomery 2018-2019 FY Proposed Operating Budget:

Rebecca Huss said that she had a question since Mr. Yates is calling this a zero based budget, and said that terminology needs to be discussed because her thought on a zero based budget is you start from scratch and talk about what you need, not necessarily just increasing anything. Rebecca Huss asked Mr. Yates what his definition was of a zero based budget. Mr. Yates said starting on what is actually needed and said he went through every line item trying to do that.

- Summary

- General Fund Revenue
- General Fund Expenses
  - Administration
  - Police Department

John Champagne said his first questions was on this amendment he sees some reductions on wages from \$788,000 to \$708,000. Mr. Yates said he figured out last year's budget was \$618,480, so he took that and added \$60,000 for one new officer and \$37,804 which would be 4% cost of living and 2% percent merit for the entire which got him to \$715,000 and for some reason he rounded down to \$708,000. Mr. Yates said the calculation was last year's budget plus one new officer. John Champagne asked how they got to the \$788,000 initially. Mr. Yates said that was the Chief's initial request. John Champagne said in other words Mr. Yates is saying that \$72,000 was wrung out of the Police Department salaries. Mr. Yates said that was reducing the request for 1 ½ officers to one officer. John Champagne said that makes sense. Mayor Countryman asked to confirm that instead of two officers, one officer is being requested. Mr. Yates said that was correct. John Champagne asked what the basis for reducing by one officer was. Mr. Yates said the initial request was for 1 ½ officers. The Chief confirmed that information and now it is down to one officer.

Mr. Yates said the difference is because the Chief had in the budget for 16% raises for the officers, and what he suggested was 6%. Jon Bickford asked what the rationale for 16% raises was because that caught him off guard. Chief Napolitano said he researched the local police departments, sheriff's office and all the constables as to what they are paying and then compared to Conroe Police Department, Shenandoah, Magnolia and Constables Office; he was trying to get them to the middle of the road. Chief Napolitano said he is trying to make it a level playing field to bring people to the City, so he tried to get that level at \$29.08 an hour that would be below Conroe Police Department but right at Shenandoah and the same as Montgomery County. The Chief advised the County pays the same as the Constables Office; they get the same pay based on years of service. Mr. Yates said the Chief compared with Houston Police

Department and the County levels, and never got the numbers for Magnolia or Willis. Mayor Countryman said she did not see the City of Magnolia information. The Chief advised that he could bring the information in, but he just came up with that number that would put them in the middle of the road, which would make it more enticing to stay. Chief Napolitano said he hated to say this but some of the officers are being recruited away, and two are on the cusp of leaving. The Chief said Mr. Yates came back and said they are going to have a 10% increase in your entire overall budget, so that reduces them down to the 6%, which is still higher than everyone else is getting at the City, if approved, and losing one of the officers that they would have gained at the year end. Rebecca Huss said that is higher than what other municipalities and the Sheriff's Department are giving their employees, so that is what will be happening with Mr. Yates' recommendation. The Chief said they will be catching up in that category but not all. Rebecca Huss said it is difficult to catch up all at once and take up a larger chunk of the City's budget when the City itself is not growing to the size of the County or Houston or the other things that the Chief used as his examples. The Chief said he did not use Houston, he used Harris County. Rebecca Huss stated that Houston is Harris County. The Chief said he was not looking at the tax base for the cities he was just looking at what they paid their officers. The Chief said the officers look at what is best for them and their family.

Jon Bickford said this is the first time that they have had this large of a request, and in the past they have been very supportive and doing right by the officers. Jon Bickford said this was really a large jump this year and asked if there was a really big jump that happened across all the departments this year or has this just been building and we are just now catching it. The Chief said they have been building and we have not been catching up with them. Jon Bickford asked if the City has been behind. The Chief advised yes. The Chief stated a few years ago they were still considered a rural Police Department outside the Houston Galveston area, and now the Houston population has caught up with us, but their income is a lot higher than us because of their tax base. The Chief

said when you have the Precinct 1 Constables office in Willis that can hire an officer away with a take home car and pay him more than he is getting paid now, it is hard for us to keep them. Mayor Countryman said there will always be someone offering more and better.

John Champagne said he was going to ask some rhetorical questions because he gets the impression that the request may have been irresponsible. John Champagne asked the Chief what was his immediate charge to his responsibilities. The Chief advised it was to protect the citizens of this City. John Champagne said it was to also manage his department. The Chief said that was correct. John Champagne asked if part of what the Chief does is to see how the overall budget fits into the City's budget. The Chief stated yes. John Champagne said really it is not. The Chief said he is in competition with these other Police Departments. John Champagne said his point is the fact is the Chief's focus should be the Police Department; Mr. Yates, along with City Council's focus should be how does the Chief's request fits into the overall expenses of the City. John Champagne said if the Chief threw something out there that they determined to be excessive that is our opinion, so good luck, throw it out there and if you get it great and if not, you understand. John Champagne said his deal is he is looking at last year's request for salaries, which he did not have for this year, the hourly rates for Napolitano was \$41.00, Rosario was \$29.00, Bauer was \$23.50, Belmares was \$32.00, and then it fluctuates. John Champagne said the proposed budget for this year, which he is not sure where it is, brings Rosario to \$29.50, Bauer to \$24.00 and they go down the line. Mr. Yates said that was the larger figure. John Champagne said he would say he sees a 4% increase and asked what the basis was for the 4% increase because inflation is not running 4%. Mr. Yates said it was an attempt by him to go up a little bit to get closer to other departments without going up to the 16%. John Champagne said cost of living is a term not necessarily tied to CPI.

John Champagne said he hates cost of living raises because they just spread out the funds and dust everybody with it, and the assumption is everybody is performing the same and this reeks of government pay, he loves merit-induced pay increases. John Champagne said they will always have a core in each department that they rely on, the fringe guys we manage them. John Champagne said he was against the 4% across the board, plus the 2%, but he was in favor of giving people that deserve it the raise they deserve. Mr. Yates said in response, they have done that before and the Chief particularly has practically given everybody the 4% because he thinks everyone is doing such a great job. John Champagne said that is his call. Mr. Yates said he understands that. John Champagne said he wants merit raises, and it is up to staff to determine who gets the raises not him. Jon Bickford said that could mean that one person could get one percent and someone else could get 12%. John Champagne said that is correct. The Chief said unfortunately it has been that way and in these other departments that is how they work, so when he was asked to come up with a number that is what he did. John Champagne said if the department heads are not looking at their individuals in terms of who is serving the City the best and who is the most productive, then he does not know what to say about that. Mr. Yates said he has no problem with going to the 4%.

Jon Bickford said they need to come up with a number that says this year they are going to allocate a specific amount to the raise pool. Mr. Yates said the employees have a written review every year. Mr. Yates said in this case it would be \$37,000 for raises for the Police Department. John Champagne said it would be up to the Chief to disburse it the way he sees fit.

Rebecca Huss said the whole point of the Department Head is not to just throw things out there to see what sticks, if they are going through line by line item and taking the difference between a fantastic belief in whatever they can get away with and in reality of what the taxpayers deserve in efficiencies then she did not think the department head is doing their job of truly mapping out what the goals and achievements and efficiencies of their department are. Rebecca

Huss said part of the job of every department head is in fact management of that department and the paperwork that goes into floating it and this budget is an important part of it. Rebecca Huss said the fact that you just put down some numbers and throw it out there to see what sticks is not particularly helpful in all of this, in her opinion. John Champagne stated that was her assumption, the fact is he believed the Chief used competitive salaries, entities in and around Montgomery, looking at his department and what he is competing against. Mayor Countryman asked the City Secretary if the Chief asked what cities to use. Ms. Hensley advised that was correct. Mayor Countryman asked if those cities were used. Ms. Hensley said yes except for Willis and Magnolia. Chief Napolitano said they used Montgomery Country, Shenandoah, City of Conroe, Constables offices and Harris County. John Champagne said he understood what Rebecca Huss was saying, but if you want to use that to say that was an irresponsible submission, that is her opinion. John Champagne said the fact is he has personally no problem with someone submitting a budget and us saying it is not going to happen. Rebecca Huss said it would be better to just say that is fantastic we trust every number that you put down. John Champagne said it would be better if we had better employees and a better City Council. Rebecca Huss said the voters spoke in May. John Champagne said it would be better if they had better voters. John Champagne said he was saying let's get down to where we can have the most equitable budget that promotes and encourages people that are working well within the City, that brings value to this City and work within the flawed parameters that they have. Mr. Yates said he thought he did that by going from \$618,000 to \$788,000 which is \$170,000 for them to figure out how to staff the department. Jon Bickford said they learned something very valuable this year in as much as they went through some iterations on the budget where there were a lot of hours requested, and he thinks if they would have said okay everyone we do a bottoms up right from the beginning, we probably could have saved some iteration or two, and that might have caused some frustration.

John Champagne asked what you use as a basis for keeping an employee or letting them go, would it be cost to benefit ratio. Jon Bickford said as managers and leaders they have to say it is very costly to lose anybody. Mayor Countryman said sometimes people work for less with quality of life and benefits; there are a lot of factors. Jon Bickford said he would like to think that it is a whole lot less stressful to work in the City of Montgomery environment as a police officer than it is in Harris County as a Sheriff's officer. Mayor Countryman said they do not have officers here that are adrenalin junkies, the guys that are here want to be here, and sure, it can look greener on the other side. Jon Bickford said the most important thing is leadership and the second is are they satisfied at work. Jon Bickford said he would like to propose for next year we say before the budget starts, give direction to the department heads on zero budget, and another thing they need to start a raise pool. Mayor Countryman said they need to know how much money they have to deal with. Jon Bickford said the raises need to be performance based. John Champagne asked how many employees are with the City. Mr. Yates said there are 21 employees. John Champagne said 50% of that is represented by the Police Department. Mr. Yates said that was correct. John Champagne asked what the total percentage of the budget was for the Police Department. Jon Bickford said the Police budget is 35% of the total budget. Jon Bickford said Shenandoah Police Department is 23% of their budget and so is Willis. Jon Bickford asked how many people they have in the City of Montgomery, and how many apartments do they have in the City. Mr. Yates said there were approximately 210 apartments in the City. John Champagne said they have approximately 1,500 people in the City of Montgomery. Mr. Yates said he has been using 1,200 people. Jon Bickford said you can't function as a Police Department without a certain baseline and when you are a small City your ratio of what you have to spend on the Police Department relative to the rest of the budget is big because there is stuff that you have to have. Mayor Countryman stated that there are also four other agencies that overlap in the area. John Champagne asked what agencies. Mayor Countryman said DPS, MISD, Montgomery County Sheriff's Department and the Constables. John Champagne said the

assumption is that they are in here on a regular basis. Mayor Countryman said yes.

Chief Napolitano said he wanted to say that, unfortunately, these guys are government paid workers and they look at it in the sense that you were saying you don't like. Chief Napolitano said they look at Conroe PD, it says the first year they make this salary, and each year it goes up and then when they get to six years as a police officer they just stop improving because there is no more raises after six years; they just get their cost of living raise. Chief Napolitano said then the pay scale goes to the Sergeant and then to the four other positions. John Champagne asked if they could use that model. Chief Napolitano said he was trying to get the officers at a specific level and next year he won't approach it the same way he will do it in a different manner. John Champagne said the way that he understood it the Chief had \$37,000 to disperse as he sees fit. Mr. Yates said that was correct. Mayor Countryman asked how the department heads give themselves a raise. Jon Bickford said Mr. Yates does that. Mr. Yates said he also does a review of the reviews that the department heads have completed. Mayor Countryman asked if the department heads are done as merit raises or on the 6%. Mayor Countryman asked if the 6% would be done across board; would the department heads be done the same. Mr. Yates said if it was across the board everyone would be the same. Mr. Yates said he sends out the parameters to the department heads and gives them a range as to what raises they can give and the amount of funds that can't be exceeded.

John Champagne said from what he is understanding if someone comes up with a zero on their review Mr. Yates would have a problem with that and asked why. Mr. Yates said depending on what the review stated, if the review is the third bad review in a row he would say that he agreed with the zero, but if there had been two good reviews and the review trend has been positive and suddenly they get a zero he would question why that happened. Mr. Yates said it is just a review. Jon Bickford said he felt that should be done and was fair, but he would say about setting caps, if you say 7% is the cap and nobody can get 7%



then what you are creating is a system where the department head has to get rid of the money somewhere else. Jon Bickford said if he had someone that was a star performer but is really underpaid for that role, he might want to give that person 15%. Jon Bickford said he should not be capped; if he wants to give 15% he should be able to do that. Mr. Yates said if a department head walked in and said that was what he was doing, he would think that was all right. Jon Bickford said at some point you do peak out even if you are a star performer and if an officer, why haven't you moved up to a higher position. Jon Bickford said they don't have that many Sergeant's positions in Montgomery. The Chief said he has three or four officers that would be excellent in leadership roles.

John Champagne said he looks at a department head as running his own business, with certain guidelines so if I don't give him the wherewithal to protect his/her core employees that they have built their department around that they depend on day in and day out; then I am not letting him run his business. John Champagne said if the department head comes and says zero for a person he has no problem with that because he knows he better be weighing the pros and cons of giving a zero percent raise. John Champagne said he did not care if it seemed not right or unfair, hurts their feelings because at the end of the day he is holding the department head responsible and if he can't do the job he needs to go, and if he does not have that charge then we are missing the boat.

Chief Napolitano said Council had talked about the Police Budget being 35% of the overall budget, but when he started here five years ago they were right at 48% of the overall budget. Jon Bickford said that it has gradually gone down and it naturally will, but he felt that it was still a little high. Jon Bickford asked if they put a car in the budget. Mr. Yates said there were no cars in the budget. Jon Bickford said his concern was last year they had a car in the budget and this year they are going from \$1 million dollars to \$1.2 million dollars. Mr. Yates said they are putting in \$15,000 in the budget this year and next year for the price of a vehicle. Jon Bickford said what he had said was he did not want them in a situation where they have 10 vehicles out here if they are not replacing at

least a car or two a year, then by definition they are going to have an eight year old car. Mayor Countryman said they are going to have a parking lot full of vehicles they don't use, and asked what they are doing with the vehicles. Jon Bickford said if they have cars they are not using they should get rid of them. Chief Napolitano said the vehicles that have not been driven will be driven by the new officer and then one of the vehicles that they have out there, 2013 Dodge Charger, he will be driving. Jon Bickford said what they do not want to get into is a big maintenance headache. Chief Napolitano said he backed out one of the Chargers and they ended up spending \$2,500 on a new transmission for that vehicle. The Chief advised the Chargers are the biggest maintenance problems because they are junk. Rebecca Huss said if they are not getting a new car, what is the Copsync and radar shown under 17071 and 17071.2. Chief Napolitano advised that Copsync is for every officer that has Copsync they pay a yearly fee to use the software. John Champagne asked if it was licensing fees. Mayor Countryman asked if it cost \$3,000 for a new officer to use Copsync. The Chief advised that what it has gone up to.

Chief Napolitano said the radar line item is at \$8,000 because they have to replace three of the radar units that they have in the cars. The Chief advised the Dodge Chargers have old radar units. Chief Napolitano said the radar units are running \$2,200 each with installation. Jon Bickford asked if they purchased two units last year. The Chief advised they only purchased one and sent one unit back to be refurbished. Mayor Countryman said if they are \$2,000 is that \$6,600 then versus \$10,000. Mr. Yates said if they have another repair that has to be made on one of the older vehicles, he will need to meet with the Chief before they spend \$3,000 on the vehicle.

Rebecca Huss said they can drive the little black car that has been sitting in the parking lot and has not moved in months. Chief Napolitano said that is what you think, they have been using that vehicle for surveillance over and over again at night, they used it on a drug bust last weekend, and actually Mr. Muckleroy asked if he could use the black car, so he drove it and observed people stealing

water from what turned out to be another MUD. Chief Napolitano said when people see that car nobody pays attention to it so it works out for us. The Chief advised that car belongs to the District Attorney's Office.

Rebecca Huss asked about capital outlay miscellaneous, saying that she was not a big fan of miscellaneous in a zero based budget. The Chief said that was for them to repair the evidence room, which was a quote that he gave to Mr. Yates that came in at \$21,000 to meet the state standard. Rebecca Huss asked why it was in the Police budget and stated that she thought they looked at that last year. Chief Napolitano said they did look at that last year but they never spent the money. Mr. Yates said there was also \$2,500 for an air conditioner for the server room. Chief Napolitano said there was also \$2,000 to purchase a fingerprint reader. John Champagne asked if there was a line item that would be more definitive of the item and said he agreed with Rebecca Huss, he did not like miscellaneous, especially when it is \$25,500. Rebecca Huss said she was confused if they did not spend the funds this year, they are at \$155,987 for the estimate for 2018 versus a budget of \$144,000, so if it was supposed to be \$25,000 spent on that item that was in the budget but not spent. The Chief said last year they put in \$15,000 for that item, which was incorrect. Rebecca Huss said either way you are still \$10,000 over budget and if you did not spend \$15,000 that means you are \$25,000 over budget on other stuff. Jon Bickford said the good news is they are going to spend the \$25,000 next year and be \$10,000 under budget.

Mayor Countryman asked if they are anticipating the overtime to go down because the estimate for 2018 was \$37,600. Mr. Yates said that it is based on when they were at full capacity they had \$35,000, and said that it is just hard to get rid of the overtime even if they have a full staff. Mayor Countryman asked if the officer is on the clock when they get to City Hall or when they get in their car. Mr. Yates said it is when they check in with dispatch. Jon Bickford said that is when they get in their car the contact dispatch, but if they take their car home, when they get in the car they are on the clock. The Chief advised that

was correct. Jon Bickford said they should check in and be on the clock when they are working.

Mayor Countryman asked to clarify that Copsync was not the web site, and asked what the website was. Chief Napolitano said computers and the web site (16342) is GTIN combined with computer for every office, and they split some of that money that goes into the services the GTIN gives us and then gives the rest of City Hall. The Chief said they also have to have CJES come in and make sure that they comply with the state regulations for security, so all of that comes out of that computer/website. Chief Napolitano advised the department has a separate server because of the TCIC and NCIC that runs through that computer, which has a completely different firewall and server. The Chief said the other one that says Mobile Data Terminal (MDT) is for the computers in the vehicle, and they are paying the Sheriff's Department a fee for dispatching services. Rebecca Huss said since the Chief was not even close to his estimate last year she asked if he felt that \$16,000 was a little optimistic for this year. Mayor Countryman asked if the change in the carrier was the difference. The Chief advised yes, with the change in the carrier going from Verizon to AT&T, so that should keep them down to where they are not paying as much. Rebecca Huss said it is exactly the same as last year's estimate, so that was more of putting the number over rather than an actual calculation. The Chief said it was what they looked at and thought we would spend on those items that he just mentioned, but he can go back and get an exact number before you pass the budget to make sure that is where they are at. Rebecca Huss said she was fine.

Mayor Countryman asked about computer technology that was \$180 this year or is that proposed, and said she knew that it was going to \$2,500. The Chief said most of the stuff that they are looking at right now does not appear that they are going to have to purchase all that much for next year. Rebecca Huss said she loved that the Chief finally scrapped the scheduling system that they did not use; it is nice to see that they cancelled that. The Chief said they use that scheduling system just fine, it is just sometimes Mrs. Branco has a hard

time with the print out. The Chief said some of the officers do not use it and they just had that discussion today to make sure that they all log on, because if they don't they might not get paid. Mr. Yates said the estimate is done by the computer, based on what is spent up to this point. Rebecca Huss said she thought it was an annual subscription, so that should be a pretty accurate amount. John Champagne asked if they were looking at \$840 right now. The Chief advised that was what they have spent so far, and they probably have last month's bill and this month's bill to pay. Rebecca Huss said it is actually an estimate based on monthly payments that have been paid. Mrs. Branco said it will be about \$844 at the end of the year; they are at \$600 right now.

John Champagne said if he had to ask what the City's biggest liability day in and day out was, does anyone want to venture a guess. Rebecca Huss asked if he was asking about contingent liabilities. John Champagne said yes. Mr. Yates asked if he meant for getting sued. John Champagne said he was asking for catastrophic results being death, sued, financial liability, you name it, what is our biggest liability, do you think. Mr. Yates said probably the Police Department. John Champagne said you got it, so every individual that we send out there; the exposure today is unbelievable. Jon Bickford said he would agree with that. John Champagne said arguably he would think they got the best from a layman's point of view and from looking at the product over the last so many years, the experience, leadership and training that goes on in this Department as a result of this Chief he thinks is exemplary and as a hedge against what potentially exists by sending some knucklehead out there that screws it up, we can't even calculate so keep that in mind when you are looking at \$300 here and \$400 there. John Champagne said he would be really frank with everyone, when he reads what is going on out in the metropolitan areas that are just looking for a reason to come at a municipality because some guy did his job. John Champagne said they had a guy accused of racism after he bought everyone in the car an ice cream and a drink and said this is what they are up against. John Champagne said they manage this Department, but if we don't have confidence in who we have in place, they need to replace them. Rebecca

Huss said that is all fine and well but when we set our tax rate we are committing to the tax payers that the cost of running the government is the best that we can make it. Rebecca Huss said they talked about not spending money on things that are not justified, and even though it is silly we talked about things like are we buying the right type of pump for our lift stations and the differences in cost was only a couple thousand dollars. Rebecca Huss said for us to be spending time on something that might only be a couple hundred bucks here and there, whether it is the Police Department or Public Works, she thinks it is a commitment to the fine print, which is what it takes to keep taxes low and drive them lower. John Champagne said he did not disagree with that at all, his only qualm is when a Police Chief asks for a long rifle and we say no, based on what? Rebecca Huss said they are not talking about that, they are talking about the actual cost of a scheduling system, what is in the capital outlay miscellaneous line item; they are not talking about something more general than that. Rebecca Huss said she can't talk about something that happened last year that we were not in the same room when this was brought up last year. Rebecca Huss said that is not the issue at hand. John Champagne said he agreed with Rebecca Huss in principal, his only point is when deciding what is appropriate and inappropriate as a lay person he counts on people that we have in place to tell him why or why not. Rebecca Huss said John Champagne was plenty happy to know the details in other departments.

Jon Bickford said he would like to offer that we learned a lot in this budgeting cycle by going through the process of bottoms up, and he thinks that they are through that, so he would like to offer if there is any prudent questions based on the bottoms up look let's ask them. Jon Bickford said we have a \$3.5 million dollar budget to go through and picking apart \$200 or \$300 is probably pushing the envelope. Rebecca Huss said she would agree. Mr. Yates said he would also agree because of the surplus.

Rebecca Huss asked if there were other areas that they need to review. Jon Bickford said the rest of the budget seems to be pretty well, from what he observed, close to where it was last year.

Rebecca Huss said her personal feeling is that where we are now, they would really get so much out of having our own expertise on staff just in terms of the projects that we have going and the things that we don't know, having someone to guide us on that could save us hundreds of thousands of dollars on the millions of dollars of projects we are looking at. Mr. Yates said his guess is over the next three or four years close to a million dollars would be saved.

Jon Bickford asked if they have someone that they know of that they are thinking about. Mr. Yates said yes they do and they are talking to the person. Jon Bickford asked if when we apply for grants, they put the engineering services to get those grants in those grant requests. Mr. Yates said that is correct. Jon Bickford said if we have our own engineer can we also put his fees in the grants. Mr. Yates said yes. Rebecca Huss said except that she feels a lot of the grants they have done would be outside of one person's ability to do them. Jon Bickford said that was not the point he was trying to make, the point he was trying to make was he did not want to lose access to any funds regardless of how big or small they are if we hire someone, because if we do then that negates some of the gain they would get. Rebecca Huss said she was thinking of the TWDB projects.

Jon Bickford said the next one is do we have any sort of assessment of the number of hours they could limit Jones and Carter if they bring this person in. Mr. Yates said he would say approximately 60 percent. Mayor Countryman said Mr. Yates feels they could save over \$200,000 with having an engineer on staff. Mr. Yates said that would be 1,200 hours per year. This engineer could take over the plat review and escrow accounts. Rebecca Huss said one of the things she felt would be really good to have the things that are not really popular still done by a third party, such as inspections because we do not want our engineer doing inspections.

Jon Bickford asked what kind of dollars they have to pay for a P.E. Mr. Yates said it would be about \$150,000, which would be paying the engineer \$95,000. Jon Bickford asked if we have looked at other P.E. salaries in the area to see if that is high or low. Mr. Yates said they did look at comparable salaries. Jon Bickford said if we are going to do this, we need to make sure it is an appropriate amount. Jon Bickford asked what would be the process of moving forward with that position. Mr. Yates said the dollar figure that he has in the budget is \$225,000 for engineer, so what he would suggest is leaving that figure in the budget and when they actually hire someone we adjust the budget. Mr. Yates said he would also like to wait until December before hiring someone. Jon Bickford said he would be good with that because nothing would be better for us than to get someone that knows our City already and that would be awesome.

- Court
- Public Works
- Utility Fund
- Special Funds
  - Capital Projects Fund
  - Court Security Fund
  - Court Technology Fund
  - Hotel Occupancy Tax Fund
  - Police Assets and Forfeitures
  - Montgomery Economic Development Corporation

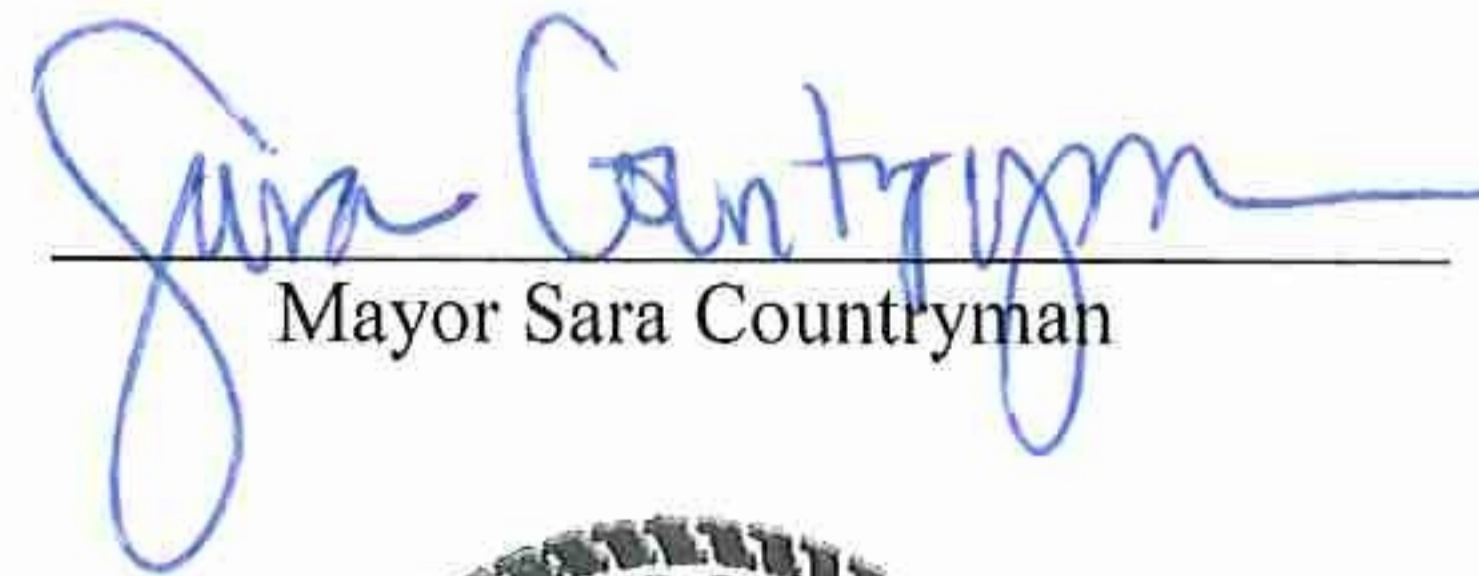
Mr. Yates confirmed with City Council their feelings regarding reducing the tax rate one cent. Rebecca Huss said it makes her so nervous because she loves banking the money, but maybe split the difference. Rebecca Huss said lets go down to .4000 to make it round and bank the difference. Jon Bickford said he liked the idea of reducing the tax rate and felt that was a great message to send. Rebecca Huss said she would rather have the difference of the funds somewhere not adding to their surplus, so put it in a depreciation fund or something like that.

## **ADJOURNMENT**



Jon Bickford moved to adjourn the workshop meeting at 7:21 p.m. John Champagne seconded the motion, the motion carried unanimously. (5-0)

Submitted by:  Date Approved: 12/11/18  
Susan Hensley, City Secretary

  
Mayor Sara Countryman

