



CITY OF EL LAGO

MINUTES OF THE SEPTEMBER 13, 2023
REGULAR CITY COUNCIL MEETING
411 TALLOWOOD DRIVE, EL LAGO,
TEXAS 77586

1. **Call to Order** -- Mayor Findley called the meeting to order at 7:01 PM.
2. **Invocation and/or Pledge of Allegiance** – Mayor Findley led the pledges.
3. **Declaration of a Quorum**

Present: Mayor Shawn Findley
Mayor Pro Tem Ann Vernon
Councilperson Darin Clark
Councilperson John Skelton
Councilperson Jeff Michalak

Councilperson Charles Parette - absent

4. **Citizen Comments – None**
5. **Public Hearing**

5.1. *Public hearing regarding the proposed tax rate of \$0.427244 per \$100 valuation for 2023.*

Mayor Findley recessed the council meeting at 7:03pm and opened the public hearing.

Chris Russo of 315 Pebblebrook Drive voiced his opposition to the tax rate increase. Mr. Russo stated that the No-New Revenue rate should be used for homeowners that need relief. The cost-of-living and insurance rates are increasing.

Randy Elms of 207 Biscayne Blvd voiced his opposition to the tax rate increase. Mr. Elms stated that his son has tried to purchase a home in El Lago and the cost of flood insurance was too high. He stated that between tax increases and insurance costs it will be tough to sell homes in El Lago.

Mayor Findley closed the public hearing and resumed the city council meeting at 7:06pm.

6. **New Business**

6.1. *Consider/Approve the property tax rate be increased by the adoption of a tax rate of \$0.427244, which is effectively a 8.07 percent increase in the tax rate.*

Council member Michalak made a motion to approve that the property tax rate be increased by the adoption of a tax rate of \$0.427244, which is effectively a 8.07 percent increase in the tax rate. Council member Skelton seconded the motion. Mayor Findley called for any discussion on the motion.

Council member Michalak stated that hard work has gone into the creation of the budget and items had to be cut in previous years and El Lago needed to catch up. Council member Skelton mentioned the hardships with increasing home values. Council member Clark asked Cheryl Hunter (previous city accountant) about the 8.07% increase. Ms. Hunter stated that it is the rate calculations and the increase in home valuations. Mr. Clark also stated that safety and security are a priority for our city and that the cost is expensive. He reiterated that city council worked hard, had to

cut items and we must be able to afford our services that protect and serve El Lago. Mayor Pro Tem Vernon stated that she commiserates with those citizens regarding the insurance rates and the cost-of-living increases. As the citizen costs increase, so do those costs to the city for insurance and personnel. Mayor Findley agreed 100% with council comments. Mayor Findley stated that it is not the council's goal to raise taxes. He noted that safety and police need tools and training. Adopting the Voter Approval Rate with the 3.5% increase takes care of the police department. He stated that he is in his 2nd term of office, and this is the 2nd tax increase and he does not wish to do that but we must maintain operations.

After discussion, a roll call vote was taken, and the motion passed unanimously as noted below.

<u>CouncilMember</u>	<u>Position</u>	<u>For</u>	<u>Against</u>	<u>Present</u>	<u>Absent</u>
Charles Parette	1				X
Jeff Michalak	2	X			
Darin Clark	3	X			
John Skelton	4	X			
Ann Vernon	5	X			

6.2. *Consider/Approve the portion of the 2023 tax rate dedicated to maintenance and operations be \$0.384548 and debt service be \$0.042696.*

Council member Skelton made a motion to approve the portion of the 2023 tax rate dedicated to maintenance and operations be \$0.384548 and debt service be \$0.042696. Mayor Pro Tem Vernon seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken, and the motion passed unanimously as noted below.

<u>CouncilMember</u>	<u>Position</u>	<u>For</u>	<u>Against</u>	<u>Present</u>	<u>Absent</u>
Charles Parette	1				X
Jeff Michalak	2	X			
Darin Clark	3	X			
John Skelton	4	X			
Ann Vernon	5	X			

6.3. *Consider/Approve Ordinance 502 Levying Ad Valorem taxes for the tax year 2023 for the use and support of the municipal government of the City of El Lago's FY2024 budget with a total tax rate of \$0.427244.*

Mayor Pro Tem Vernon made a motion to approve Ordinance 502 Levying Ad Valorem taxes for the tax year 2023 for the use and support of the municipal government of the City of El Lago's FY2024 budget with a total tax rate of \$0.427244. Council member Michalak seconded the motion.


Mayor Findley asked for discussion. Mayor Pro Tem Vernon read a section of Ordinance 502 that is required to be in the ordinance by Texas Tax Code Chapter 26. The text read: **THIS TAX RATE WILL RAISE MORE TAXES FOR MAINTENANCE AND OPERATIONS THAN LAST YEAR'S TAX RATE. THE TAX RATE WILL EFFECTIVELY BE RAISED BY 8.69 PERCENT AND WILL RAISE TAXES FOR MAINTENANCE AND OPERATIONS ON A \$100,000 HOME BY APPROXIMATELY \$-5.26.**

A roll call vote was taken, and the motion passed unanimously as noted below.

<i>CouncilMember</i>	<i>Position</i>	<i>For</i>	<i>Against</i>	<i>Present</i>	<i>Absent</i>
Charles Parette	1				X
Jeff Michalak	2	X			
Darin Clark	3	X			
John Skelton	4	X			
Ann Vernon	5	X			

7. **Adjournment** There being no further business, Mayor Findley adjourned the meeting at 7:26 P.M.

ATTEST:



 Shawn Findley
 Mayor

 Missie Adkins
 Acting City Secretary