A Special Meeting was held by the City Council of the City of Haltom City, Texas, on August 20, 2018, at 7:00 p.m. at City Hall, 5024 Broadway Avenue, Haltom City, Texas, with the following members present:

Mayor David Averitt  
Mayor Pro Tem Dr. An Truong  
Council Place 1 Jeannine Nunn  
Council Place 2 Walter Grow  
Council Place 3 Lin Thompson  
Council Place 4 Brent Weast  
Council Place 5 Bob Watkins  
Council Place 6 Ricky Brown was absent.

Staff Present: Keith Lane, City Manager; Rex Phelps, Assistant City Manager; Art Camacho, City Secretary; Andrea Russell, City Attorney; Jennifer Fung, Finance Director; Sidonna Foust, Customer Service Director; Toni Beckett, Human Resources and Risk Management Director, and Greg Van Nieuwenhuize, Public Works Director.

**CALL TO ORDER**

Mayor Averitt called the meeting to order at 7:09 p.m.

1. **RFP for Utility Independent Study Firm** – Consideration and/or action to approve a Request for Proposal (RFP) to hire an independent objective firm to evaluate the current water metering system and utility billing. Assistant City Manager Rex Phelps approached the Council and addressed several issues with the citizens concerning their objections with Fathom and presented solutions the City and Fathom have taken to correct these problems, which included meter tests, reviewing sprinkler systems, and fixing water leaks at citizen’s homes. In addition, he requested the Council consider producing a RFP for an independent firm to evaluate the billing and utility system in order to remedy the concerns of the citizens and the Fathom company. A discussion was held regarding the specifications, time frame, completed audit, and other criteria needed for this evaluation. Council Member Brent Weast moved, seconded by Council Member Thompson, to approve a RFP to hire an independent objective firm to evaluate the current water metering and utility billing. **The vote was unanimous. Motion carried.**

2. **Tax Rate** – Conduct a public hearing regarding the FY2018-19 proposed tax rate. Finance Director Jennifer Fung gave a PowerPoint presentation that listed several items, including the projected budget and expected revenues. A discussion was held concerning the increases in property tax estimates, water and sewer rate increases, sales tax revenues, public safety personnel hirings, and current employee shortage. Mayor Averitt opened the Public Hearing at 8:10 p.m. and the following individuals came forward:
   1. Sherry Thompson – Questioned Animal Shelter floor stripping and asked about volunteer labor.  
   2. Shirley Eakins – Asked about acquired donations for Animal Shelter and Police Dept. through utility billing.  
   3. Stacey Corbin – Inquired about the hiring specifics for public works employees and possible fundraisers to raise revenues.  
   4. Jim Moore – Stated problems to improve city are critical and to spend wisely.  
   5. Trae Fowler – Stated that as a Council Member, employee raises were acquired, but that taxes cannot continue to rise; that utility rates are increasing; the revenue change from the prior EDC taxes should be able to help meet the budget costs;
cut positions and increase employee pay in the departments; and a panel of citizens should be assembled for fixing the utility situation.

6. Rebecca Wheat – Stated her fixed income has made it hard to live in Haltom City.
7. Sandy Webb – Remarked on her earlier statements regarding utility billing.
8. Randy Hasley – Stated his property developments are hard to accomplish with the high property tax rate.
9. Ronald Eakins – Questioned the lack of public transit for the handicapped.

Other mixed discussion points from the Council and noted citizens included the increase of sales tax, the new projected developments above Loop 820 in housing and apartments, the dissolving of the EDC, BISD tax increases, possible sales of EDC and city properties, paying off city debts, voter approved debt, and the effort to save revenue instead of going into further debt.

Mayor Averitt closed the Public Hearing at 9:17 p.m. and announced that the second public hearing and the first vote on the property tax rate will be Monday, August 27th.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Mayor Averitt adjourned the meeting at 9:20 p.m.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED BY:  

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Art Camacho, City Secretary

APPROVED BY:

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David Averitt, Mayor