

**City of West Orange
Thursday, June 29, 2023
Special Workshop Session**

**City Council Chambers
2700 Western Avenue (rear entrance)
West Orange, Texas
5:00 P.M.**

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT:

Mayor Randy Branch
Michael Shugart, Sr.

Meritta Kennedy
Lanie Brown

Jay Odom
Brent Dearing

APPOINTED OFFICIALS PRESENT:

Christopher Leavins

Jon Sherwin

Mike Stelly

Call to Order

Mayor Branch called the meeting to order at 5:02 p.m. Council Member Shugart gave the invocation. The mayor then led in the Pledges of Allegiance to the American and Texas flags.

Workshop

Mayor Branch explained that the City is eligible to submit this Economic Development tax to the voters via Chapters 504 and 505 of the Texas Local Government Code. Most cities who have the tax have chosen to implement the Type "B" tax. Mr. Leavins added that it is less restrictive and more flexible than the Type "A" tax.

The mayor stated that he has a video for council to watch that explains a great deal about the tax and the formation of the corporation. Council then watched this 22-minute video.

At the conclusion of the video, Council Member Brown questioned the benefits of having a combined Type A & B corporation. Mr. Leavins responded that in certain situations, it would authorize more and could give you more flexibility. The board is comprised differently, the certificate of formation is different. He added that he did not see how doing so would really benefit West Orange, as Type A is so restrictive while Type B allows much more flexibility, while also including those most projects allowed under Type A.

Chief Stelly reported that, looking at this year's numbers, this tax would generate approximately \$250,000 plus per year. Mayor Branch added that an election to pass this tax will have to be called for November. This election will have to be called no later than the August Council meeting, but he would prefer to do it at the July meeting.

The mayor explained that the election would be held in November, and then if passed, work would begin on the corporation.

Council Member Brown asked if there was a plan to promote passage of the tax. She stated that it will take education in order for the voters to understand that this has nothing to do with their property taxes.

Mayor Branch explained that West Orange sales tax is currently 8%. Every other entity in the area is 8.25%. So any time anyone shops outside the city, they are already paying that extra ¼%. Most people do not even realize that they are only paying 8% in West Orange. This amounts to \$0.25 additional tax on each \$100 spent.

The mayor explained that the corporation board will consist of seven members, four of which can be from the city – council and/or staff; and three private citizens of West Orange or Orange County. Mr. Leavins added that these board members would serve two-year terms.

Adjournment

With there being no further discussion or questions brought forth, Mayor Branch adjourned the workshop at 5:47 p.m.



Randy Branch, Mayor

ATTEST:



Theresa Van Meter, City Secretary

