

Minutes  
Special Council Meeting  
September 29, 2025

On this 29<sup>th</sup> day of September 2025, at 6:00 p.m., the City Council of the City of Devine convened for a Special Meeting, the same being open to the public, at the Dr. George S. Woods Community Center, 200 E. Hondo Avenue, Devine Texas 78016. Notice of said meeting having been prescribed in Chapter 551, Government Code, and Vernon's Texas Codes, Annotated, and the following members being present:

Mayor Butch Cook  
Alderman Josh Ritchey  
Alderman Ray Gonzales  
Alderman Jeff Miller  
Alderman Michael Hernandez  
Alderman Harold Lance

Thus, constituting a quorum.

Personnel Present: David L. Jordan, City Administrator; Michelle Martin, City Secretary; Pete Sanchez, Director of Public Works; Sophia Benavides, Finance Director; Chris Andrews, Police Lt., Joe Brown, Police Chief, Tom Cate, City Attorney.

Others Present: Anton Riecher, Devine News.

Public Hearing on the Proposed Budget for FY 2025-2026

The public hearing on the proposed budget for FY 2025-2026 began at 6:02pm. No one signed up to speak at the public hearing and no one attended the public hearing. The public hearing on the proposed budget for FY 2025-2026 was closed at 6:14pm.

Public Hearing on the Proposed Tax Rate for FY 2025-2026

The public hearing on the proposed tax rate for FY 2025-2026 began at 6:16pm. No one signed up to speak at the public hearing and no one attended the public hearing. The public hearing on the proposed tax rate for FY 2025-2026 was closed at 6:30pm.

Mayor Cook welcomed everyone to the special meeting at 6:30pm.

The second order of business was to consider and act upon a resolution for the City of Devine Airport as a special revenue fund.

- The Mayor explained the purpose of creating a separate special revenue fund for the City of Devine Airport in order to more clearly reflect operational costs and debt service associated with airport facilities, including hangars purchased through a long-term note.
- Council discussion followed regarding transparency and long-term budgeting.

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Alderman Josh Ritchey made the motion to adopt a resolution establishing the City of Devine Airport as a Special Revenue Fund. Alderman Jeff Miller seconded the motion.

Motion Carried 5-0.

The third order of business was to consider and act upon approving the Budget for FY 2025-2026. City Administrator David Jordan discussed the various budget workshops that have been held in the past few months. The community has been given an opportunity to participate as well. He thanked all the staff involved in the preparation of the budget and all of the work that was done in working with council to address the needs of the community

**Budget Highlights:**

- Total tax revenue increase of \$61,695, representing approximately 4.06%.
- Approximately \$11,641 of the increase attributed to new property added to the tax rolls.
- Additional revenue increases reflected grant funding, which is offset by corresponding expenditures.

Alderman Michael Hernandez made a motion to adopt the FY 2025-2026 Budget as discussed during the numerous budget workshops and public hearings.

**Vote (Roll Call):**

- Alderman Harold Lance Jr- Yes
- Alderman Michael Hernandez – Yes
- Alderman Jeff Miller – Yes
- Alderman Ray Gonzales – Yes
- Alderman Josh Ritchey – No

Budget passes 4-1, Alderman Josh Ritchey voting No.

Alderman Michael Hernandez made a motion to ratify the tax rate increase that is reflected in the fiscal year 2025-2026 budget.

**Vote (Roll Call):**

- Alderman Harold Lance Jr- Yes
- Alderman Michael Hernandez – Yes
- Alderman Jeff Miller – Yes

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- Alderman Ray Gonzales – Yes
- Alderman Josh Ritchey – Yes

Motion Carried 5-0. Budget FY 2025-2026 approved.

The fourth order of business was to consider and act upon approving the Proposed Tax Rate for the FY 2025-2026. There have been public hearings on the tax rate and opportunities for the community to provide feedback on the proposed tax rate.

**Debt Service & INS Portion**

Alderman Michael Hernandez made a motion to adopt a tax rate component of 0.103600% that will be used to pay the debt service for the City of Devine.

**Vote (Roll Call):**

- Alderman Harold Lance Jr- Yes
- Alderman Michael Hernandez – Yes
- Alderman Jeff Miller – Yes
- Alderman Ray Gonzles – Yes
- Alderman Josh Ritchey – Yes

Motion Carried 5-0.

**Maintenance & Operations Portion**

Alderman Michael Hernandez made a motion to adopt a tax rate component of 0.486400% for maintenance and operations.

**Vote (Roll Call):**

- Alderman Harold Lance Jr- Yes
- Alderman Michael Hernandez – Yes
- Alderman Jeff Miller – Yes
- Alderman Ray Gonzles – Yes
- Alderman Josh Ritchey – Yes

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Motion Carried 5-0.

**Total Combined Tax Rate:**

Alderman Michael Hernandez made a motion to adopt a tax rate increase of 0.590000% representing an effective rate of 4.06% increase.

**Vote (Roll Call):**

- Alderman Harold Lance Jr- Yes
- Alderman Michael Hernandez – Yes
- Alderman Jeff Miller – Yes
- Alderman Ray Gonzles – Yes
- Alderman Josh Ritchey – Yes

Motion Carried 5-0. City Attorney Thomas Cate said that the vote on the budget and the tax rate, will be put into two ordinances for the Mayor's signature by the next business day.

The fifth order of business was to consider and act upon approving Go Medina Economic Development Foundation Annual Membership Fee.

- Council discussed participation in the Go Medina Economic Development Foundation at the required Gold-level membership, based on population. Alderman Josh Ritchey does not feel that City of Devine has certain attributes that Go Medina is looking for at this time. Alderman Jeff Miller feels that we need to do what we can do to get the City of Devine more exposure in the area of Economic Development.
- Discussion included benefits of continued regional exposure, ongoing development opportunities, and the City's lack of a standalone economic development entity.

Alderman Michael Hernandez made a motion to approve Go Medina Gold-level membership in the amount of \$4,324. Alderman Jeff Miller second the motion.

Motion passed 3–2, with Alderman Josh Ritchey and Alderman Ray Gonzales voting no.

The sixth order of business was informational items.

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- Public Works Director Pete Sanchez provided a detailed explanation of recent water main failures, caused by valve closures during contractor work that resulted in excessive pressure on aging asbestos cement lines.
- City staff will compile labor, equipment, and materials costs for reimbursement from the contractor.
- Council and staff discussed public communication challenges and expressed strong appreciation for Public Works crews' efforts.
- City staff reported an average \$32,000 monthly increase in water revenue since February.
- Approximately \$650,000 of a prior \$1.1 million deficit has been recovered.
- Phase II of the water rate increase is expected to be implemented in October, primarily to meet debt obligations.
- Council discussed equity impacts on lower-income residents and tiered usage rates.
- City Administrator reported upcoming meetings with ESD leadership and the Devine Volunteer Fire Department regarding the future of fire code enforcement and potential contractual arrangements.

The seventh order of business was adjournment.

Alderman Jeff Miller made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Alderman Michael Hernandez seconded the motion. Motion carried 5-0.

  
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City Secretary

  
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Mayor