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### **City Council approves annual budget**

*City Council approved a budget for the 2018-19 fiscal year beginning Oct. 1, that invests in public safety, emergency management, the city's Parks and Recreation system and more.*

On Monday, the City Council approved a budget for the 2018-19 fiscal year beginning Oct. 1, that invests in public safety, emergency management, the city's Parks and Recreation system and more. The City Council also voted to maintain the property tax rate at \$0.7350 per \$100. Some property owners may see their city tax bills rise if the assessed values of their property increased.

The approximately 96.5 million dollar budget includes \$647,000 to adjust the city's public safety step plan and to make merit-based pay adjustments to civilian positions equivalent to about 3% of civilian payroll.

Several public safety related positions have been added with the approval of the 2018-19 fiscal budget. A new school resource officer will be assigned to STEAM Middle School (Burleson ISD shares the cost for this position), an emergency management coordinator position was also added, this will be the first time in the city's history that a position will be dedicated to emergency management. Funding was added for a telecommunicator position in Dispatch, an additional firefighter and an IT technician that will focus solely on public safety.

This year's budget also sees a new unique expense. The city will be embarking on a \$50,000 rebranding project that will highlight all the great things Burleson has to offer. This project will bring together community input and determine what aspects of our community make it stand apart from all others. The rebranding project will assist in economic development recruitment and tourism efforts.

Other portions of the budget continue funding for important upgrades to the city's infrastructure. These include the continued five-year neighborhood street rehabilitation program along with the annual sidewalk program that provides the city's youth safe routes to school. A stormwater study will be funded in this year's budget that will focus on Upper Village Creek and Willow Creek.

The budget plans to continue enhancing the parks system by adding new playground equipment and additional water fountains. The Senior Activity Center will also receive new furniture in this year's budget.

Even though the city's property tax was maintained residents will see an increase in the city's water and sewer rates. These services are funded through user fees and those fees are adjusted accordingly to cover the cost of the services. The average homeowner will see an increase from \$15.13 to \$16.04 as minimum water base rate and an increase from \$17.06 to \$18.08 in the monthly minimum sewer rate. This increase is due to two factors, one is the City of Fort Worth is increasing their wastewater rate by 12%

(Burleson purchases its water from Fort Worth). The other factor is maintaining the city's ability to construct needed water and wastewater improvements. There is a continuing need for the replacement of old and failing water and sewer lines, and rehab projects are scheduled for multiple streets in the coming year. The construction of new lines to meet the needs of a growing city includes several projects, such as sewer lines in the Oak Valley area, in Village Creek, along Hulen toward Tantarra and water lines along McNairn along with a new storage tank at the Turkey Peak water facility.

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