

## **COUNCIL AGENDA ITEM BRIEFING DATA**



## **AGENDA ITEM**

Discuss and Consider an Ordinance Granting to One Gas, Inc. a Fifteen (15) Year Non-Exclusive Franchise Agreement to Install, Operate and Maintain a Gas Distribution System for the Sale of Gas to Customers and the Public Generally-First Reading

**DATE: November 14, 2017**

### **TYPE AGENDA ITEM:**

Ordinance

### **BACKGROUND:**

In 2002 the City entered into a gas franchise agreement for fifteen years. That agreement has effectively expired as of September 3, 2017. The past few months staff has been in negotiations regarding the terms of the agreement, and has finally reached the proposed agreement that is satisfactory with both parties.

As per the City Charter Section 10.02 all ordinances granting, amending, renewing, or extending franchises for public utilities shall be read at two separate regular meetings of the city council, and shall not be finally passed until thirty days after the first reading; and no such ordinance shall take effect until thirty days after its final passage. This is the first reading of the franchise agreement, and the second will be read during the regular council meeting on December 5, 2017.

### **POLICY CONSIDERATIONS:**

This is consistent with what has been done in the past.

### **FISCAL IMPACT:**

This will increase the annual gas franchise revenues from approximately \$16K to \$32K.

### **STAFF RECOMMENDATION:**

Staff respectfully recommends the approval of this ordinance.

Review:  
Kristina Vega  
City Council

Completed  
Pending

11/07/2017 7:03 PM  
11/14/2017 6:00 PM

**ORDINANCE NO. 2017-19**

**AN ORDINANCE GRANTING TO ONE GAS, INC., ACTING BY AND THROUGH ITS TEXAS GAS SERVICE COMPANY DIVISION, AND ITS SUCCESSORS AND ASSIGNS, FOR A PERIOD OF FIFTEEN (15) YEARS FROM APPROVAL AND ACCEPTANCE OF THIS ORDINANCE, A NON-EXCLUSIVE FRANCHISE AND RIGHT TO ENTER THE PUBLIC WAYS TO INSTALL, OPERATE AND MAINTAIN A DISTRIBUTION SYSTEM WITHIN, ALONG, ACROSS, OVER AND UNDER THE PUBLIC WAYS OF THE CITY OF GONZALES, TEXAS FOR THE TRANSPORTATION, DISTRIBUTION AND/OR SALE OF GAS TO CUSTOMERS AND THE PUBLIC GENERALLY IN THE CITY; DEFINING THE WORDS AND PHRASES THEREIN; PROVIDING FOR ASSIGNMENT, SALE OR LEASE OF THE FRANCHISE; PROVIDING THAT THE CITY MAY ENACT AN ORDINANCE CHARGING PERSONS TRANSPORTING GAS THROUGH GRANTEE'S DISTRIBUTION SYSTEM A FEE ON THE CALCULATED VALUE OF SUCH TRANSPORTED GAS; PROVIDING FOR USE AND REPAIR OF THE PUBLIC WAYS; PROVIDING FOR REGULATION OF SERVICE; ESTABLISHING DEPTH OF PIPELINES; ESTABLISHING RIGHTS AND DUTIES IN THE MOVEMENT AND ALTERATION OF PIPELINES; PROVIDING FOR INDEMNIFICATION OF THE CITY OF GONZALES; PROVIDING FOR GRANTEE'S RULES AND REGULATIONS; PROVIDING FOR INSPECTION OF GRANTEE'S RECORDS; REQUIRING GRANTEE TO PAY A FRANCHISE FEE; PROVIDING FOR CONDITIONS OF THE FRANCHISE; PROVIDING FOR CONSTRUCTION OF THIS ORDINANCE UPON THE INVALIDITY OF ANY PART THEREOF; PROVIDING FOR ACCEPTANCE OF THIS FRANCHISE BY GRANTEE AND BOTH AN EFFECTIVE AND AN OPERATIVE DATE THEREOF; REPEALING ALL OTHER ORDINANCES DIRECTLY IN CONFLICT HEREWITH; AND PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY.**

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF GONZALES, TEXAS:

**SECTION 1. DEFINITIONS**

As used in this Ordinance, the following words and phrases shall have the following meanings:

- A. "City" means the City of Gonzales, in Gonzales County, Texas, a municipal corporation, hereinafter also referred to as "Grantor".
- B. "City Secretary" means the City Secretary of the City or other such officer of the City designated to serve as the filing officer for official documents and records of the City.
- C. "City Council" means the City Council of the City as the governing body of the City.
- D. "City Engineer" means the City Engineer of the City or such other officer of the City designated to approve engineering plans and designs for construction within Public Ways.
- E. "City Manager" means the City Manager of the City or such other chief administrative

officer of the City designated to hear appeals from the decisions of other City officers.

- F. “Customer” means any individual person, corporation, company, partnership, firm, unincorporated association, trust, municipality, or public or private entity located within the municipal corporate limits of the City and serviced by the Grantee through any use of the Public Ways.
- G. “Franchise Fee” or “Franchise Fees” shall mean the sum of fees to be paid to the City by Grantee under Section 11 of this Ordinance.
- H. “Gas Sales” means the sale of natural gas to Grantee’s Customers located within the corporate limits of the City by use of the System.
- I. “Gas Transportation” means the transportation of Transport Gas for redelivery to Customers with re-delivery points located within the corporate limits of the City.
- J. “Grantee” shall mean ONE Gas, Inc., an Oklahoma corporation acting by and through its Texas Gas Service Company division, and its successors and assigns.
- K. “Gross Receipts from Gas Sales” shall constitute and include Grantee’s total receipts from the sale, distribution or transportation of gas to Grantee’s Customers. Grantee’s Gross Receipts from Gas Sales subject to the Franchise Fee shall specifically exclude, without limitation:
  - [1] receipts from gas sales or services to Customers located at delivery points outside the corporate limits of the City;
  - [2] receipts from gas consumed or transported by Grantee for its own use;
  - [3] bad debt or uncollected accounts;
  - [4] receipts collected for gas utility taxes;
  - [5] receipts for any taxes, assessments, charges or fees of any kind charged by a governmental entity and collected by Grantee from the Customer by a pass through charge on the gas bill, except for Franchise Fees and gross receipts taxes;
  - [6] receipts for construction advances or contributions in aid of construction;
  - [7] receipts for maintenance of appliances, machinery or equipment;
  - [8] receipts for compensation for damage to Grantee’s property;
  - [9] receipts from sales of materials, appliances or equipment, and
  - [10] receipts from any non-regulated utility or non-regulated services or products.
- L. “Gross Receipts from Gas Transportation” shall constitute and include Grantee’s total receipts from its transportation of Transport Gas, consisting of receipts from cost of service. Grantee’s Gross Receipts from Gas Transportation subject to the Franchise Fee shall specifically exclude, without limitation:
  - [1] receipts from gas transportation services to Customers located at delivery points outside the corporate limits of the City;
  - [2] receipts from gas transported by Grantee for its own use;
  - [3] bad debt or uncollected accounts;
  - [4] receipts collected for gas utility taxes;

- [5] receipts for any taxes, assessments, charges or fees of any kind charged by a governmental entity and collected by Grantee from the Customer by a pass through charge on the gas bill, except for Franchise Fees and gross receipts taxes;
  - [6] receipts for construction advances or contributions in aid of construction;
  - [7] receipts for maintenance of appliances, machinery or equipment;
  - [8] receipts for compensation for damage to Grantee's property; and
  - [9] receipts from any non-regulated utility or non-regulated services or products.
- M. "Permit" means the authorization to Grantee:
- [1] for the opening of the streets, avenues, alleys, other public places or Public Ways shown on maps or plans submitted by Grantee to the City Engineer, showing the streets, avenues, alleys, and other public places and the locations thereon wherein Grantee proposes to construct new mains and pipes,
  - [2] for the new construction or laying of the new mains and pipes by Grantee as shown on plans, and
  - [3] to perform all work on existing Grantee facilities or the System within the Public Ways or other City rights-of-way.
- N. "Public Ways" means the present and future streets, avenues, boulevards, parkways, lanes, alleys, bridges, sidewalks, parks, easements, highways, and any other public place within the municipal corporate limits of the City, whether dedicated or not.
- O. "System" means Grantee's system of mains, pipelines, conduits, valves, feeders, regulator stations, laterals, service lines, measuring devices, and all other necessary plants, attachments, land, structures, facilities and appurtenances for the purpose of selling, storing, supplying, conveying, transmitting, distributing, and/or transporting natural gas and any gas, including the equivalent substitutes, for all other lawful purposes in, through, upon, under, and along the present and future streets, avenues, alleys, bridges, sidewalks, parks, easements, highways, and any other public place within the municipal corporate limits of the City.
- P. "Transport Gas" means gas owned or controlled by a user or its designee (i.e., gas that is purchased or otherwise acquired by a user from someone other than Grantee) and delivered by such user or its designee to Grantee at a point on Grantee's System, such point of delivery to be defined by Grantee, and carried, delivered or transported through Grantee's System at a point of redelivery within the municipal corporate limits of the City by Grantee to the user for a fee.
- Q. "Utility Regulated Service Charges" shall consist of charges for services (but not for natural gas sales or transportation services) that:
- [1] Grantee provides to its Customers located within the corporate limits of the City and
  - [2] which are or may, from time to time, become subject to the rate regulation of the applicable regulatory authority.

Such Utility Regulated Service Charges shall not include receipts by Grantee from its Customers in the City, if applicable, for appliance sales, appliance light-ups, maintenance of Customer equipment or facilities and any other receipts that are not legally subject to

the rate regulation of the applicable regulatory authority.

## SECTION 2. GRANT OF FRANCHISE

- A. The Grantor hereby grants to Grantee for the term of fifteen (15) years from the passage and approval of this Ordinance and the filing of a written acceptance by the Grantee, the right to enter upon the Public Ways to install, operate and maintain a System along, across, over and under the Public Ways for the privilege of transporting, distributing and/or selling gas to Customers and the public generally within the municipal corporate limits of the City, and including any territory that the City may hereafter annex, acquire, purchase; and to distribute, sell, store, supply, transport, carry and/or convey natural gas and any gas through Grantee's System in the City to other cities, towns, communities and areas outside the City and to inhabitants thereof, for the full term of this Franchise Ordinance.
- B. The Ordinance shall have the effect of and shall be a contract between Grantor and Grantee and shall be the measure of the rights and liabilities of Grantor as well as Grantee.
- C. The Franchise granted by this Ordinance shall in no way affect or impair the present or future rights, obligations, or remedies of the City or Grantee under the Texas Gas Utility Regulatory Act, as amended.

## SECTION 3. FRANCHISE ASSIGNMENT, SALE OR LEASE

Grantee shall not sell, transfer or assign the franchise granted hereby, or any part of this franchise, to any person, entity or corporation without the approval of the City Council expressed by ordinance, and such approval shall not be unreasonably withheld. The successor shall assume the conditions, obligations and duties as describe in this franchise agreement.,

## SECTION 4. USE AND REPAIR OF THE PUBLIC WAYS

- A. Grantee's System shall be erected, placed, and laid or otherwise installed, operated and maintained in such a manner as will, consistent with reasonable necessity, least interfere with other public uses of the Public Ways. This Ordinance shall constitute the Permit to perform all work on existing Grantee facilities or the System within the Public Ways or rights of way.
- B. Except in the case of an emergency, within the City's full purpose jurisdiction, when Grantee desires to lay any new mains hereunder, and before commencing its new construction work on mains, it shall submit to the City Engineer, or other proper authority, a map or plan showing the streets, avenues, alleys, and other public places and the locations thereon wherein it proposes to construct such new mains and pipes. The City Engineer, or other proper authority, shall by written notice, either issue or deny the Permit to Grantee. Approval by the City Engineer, or other proper authority, shall constitute the Permit to Grantee for the opening of the streets, avenues, alleys and other public places shown on the map or plan, and for the new construction or laying of the new mains and pipes by Grantee as shown on the plan. If the City Engineer, or other proper authority, does not respond within ten (10) calendar days, the Permit shall be deemed approved.

In the event that the Permit is denied, the City Engineer, or other proper authority, shall advise Grantee of the reasons for the denial and all necessary steps to secure approval of the Permit. Grantee shall have the right to immediately appeal the non-issuance of the Permit to the City

Manager, and if not approved within ten (10) calendar days by the City Manager, Grantee may appeal to the City Council and be heard at a public meeting held in compliance with applicable law. If the City Council fails to act on the appeal within ten (10) calendar days, the appeal will be deemed to be denied unless agreed otherwise in writing by Grantee and the City. Appeal of any decision made by the City Council shall be made to the District Court of Travis County, Texas, and an appeal from any decision of the District Court shall be as in all other civil actions.

This Subsection 4 (B) shall also apply to all other facilities and equipment of Grantee to be constructed or installed on public property within the City's full purpose jurisdiction.

- C. It shall not be necessary for Grantee to secure a Permit for the laying of service pipes from the mainline pipes of Grantee to its Customers.
- D. After any excavation or disturbance, Grantee shall, with due diligence and dispatch, place the Public Way and any infrastructure damaged while laying or repairing service lines in a condition in compliance with the Grantor's reasonable standards and specifications.

#### SECTION 5. REGULATION OF SERVICE

The System of Grantee shall at all times be installed, operated and maintained in accordance with accepted good practice and in such condition as will enable the Grantee to furnish adequate and continuous service as required by the orders, rules and regulations of the Railroad Commission of Texas or other regulatory authority having jurisdiction. The requirements set forth in this Section shall not relieve Grantee of any other obligations set forth herein.

#### SECTION 6. DEPTH OF PIPELINES

After the operative date of this franchise, Grantee's main or lateral lines installed or replaced in Public Ways shall be installed or replaced at depths which comply with all applicable state and federal rules and regulations establishing minimum safety standards for the design, construction, maintenance and operation of pipelines. Depth shall be measured from the lower of existing grade or proposed future grade as set forth on plans or other specifications existing at the time such lines are installed or replaced.

#### SECTION 7. DUTY TO MOVE OR ALTER LINES

A. Grantor reserves the right to lay or permit to be laid cables, electric conduits, water, sewer, gas or other pipelines and to do or permit to be done any underground work deemed necessary and proper by the Grantor, along, across, over or under the Public Ways. In permitting such work to be done, the Grantor shall be liable to the Grantee for any damage to Grantee's pipelines and facilities caused by Grantor or its agents' or contractors' negligence.

B. When Grantee is required by Grantor to remove or relocate its mains, laterals, and other facilities to accommodate construction of streets and alleys by the Grantor, and Grantee is eligible under federal, state, county, local or other programs for reimbursement of costs and expenses incurred by Grantee as a result of such removal or relocation, and such reimbursement is required to be handled through Grantor, then Grantee's costs and expenses shall be included in any application by Grantor for reimbursement. Grantee will provide the Grantor its appropriate cost and expense documentation prior to the filing of the application.

C. When Grantee is required to remove or relocate its mains, laterals or other facilities to accommodate construction of streets or alleys by the Grantor without reimbursement, Grantee shall have the right to seek a surcharge to recover relocation costs pursuant to Section 104.112 of the Texas Utilities Code or any other applicable law or regulations.

D. If Grantor shall require the Grantee to adapt or conform its System or in any way to alter, relocate or change its property to enable any other person, firm, corporation or entity (whether public or private), other than the Grantor, to use the Public Ways, the Grantee shall be reimbursed by the person, firm corporation or entity desiring or occasioning such change for any and all loss, cost or expense occasioned thereby.

#### SECTION 8. INDEMNIFICATION

Grantee shall indemnify, save and hold City harmless from and against any and all claims for damages for which the City shall or might become liable to the extent caused by any negligent act or omission of Grantee, its agents or contractors in the construction and operation of the System; provided, however, that in the event of such claim or claims being prosecuted against the City, Grantee shall have the right to defend against the same, and to settle or discharge same in such manner as it may see fit, and the City shall give prompt written notice to Grantee of the presentation or prosecution of such claims. The indemnity provided for in this paragraph shall not apply to any claim or liability resulting from the acts, omissions, or negligence of the City, its employees, agents or contractors.

Grantee's undertakings shall be subject to its ability, by use of due diligence and normal business methods, to obtain and place in service the necessary materials and facilities. Moreover, Grantee shall be excused from failure or delay in performing such obligations if and to the extent occasioned by an act of nature or "act of God," fire, explosion, flood, act of a public enemy, contagion or contamination hazardous to human life or health, legal restraints, labor difficulties, material shortages, interruption or deficiency of gas supply not attributable to default of Grantee or, without limitation, any other cause or combination of causes not reasonably within Grantee's ability to anticipate or control. The Company shall notify the City promptly and in no case less than thirty days of its intent to utilize this provision of this Ordinance.

#### SECTION 9. GRANTEE'S RULES AND REGULATIONS

The Grantee shall have the right to make and enforce such reasonable rules and regulations as it may deem necessary for the extension of its facilities, the sale of its gas and the conduct of its business, provided that such rules and regulations shall neither be in conflict with the laws of the State of Texas, with the orders, rules or regulations of the Railroad Commission of Texas or other regulatory authority having jurisdiction, nor with the ordinances and regulations of the Grantor insofar as they are consistent with the jurisdiction of the Railroad Commission of Texas or such other regulatory authority. Grantee shall supply natural gas and provide regulated services at the rates and under the terms and conditions specified by such rules, its tariffs filed with the City, and as provided herein.

#### SECTION 10. INSPECTION OF RECORDS

Grantee shall permit Grantor or its agents to inspect, during regular business hours, the books, papers and records kept by Grantee in the ordinary course of business and pertaining to the natural gas business carried on by it in the City, such as plats, maps and atlases identifying Grantee's pipelines in the City, and the books and records necessary to verify the franchise fee payment provided for in Section 11 hereof. Notwithstanding the obligation herein, Grantee shall have the right to the reasonable protection of proprietary information and to provide redacted documents or require Grantor or its agents to enter into such agreements pertaining to confidentiality as may reasonably protect the proprietary information of Grantee but which do not unreasonably frustrate the purposes of this Section. Grantor shall promptly notify Grantee in writing of areas newly annexed into or de-annexed from the corporate limits of Grantor, and Grantee shall update its records for the purpose of payment of franchise fees as soon as

reasonably practicable after receiving such notice.

#### SECTION 11. CONSIDERATION FOR FRANCHISE: FRANCHISE FEE

A. As full consideration for the rights and privileges conferred by this Ordinance, Grantee agrees to pay Grantor as follows:

- (1) Grantee shall collect the Franchise Fee from its Customers and shall pay Grantor a Franchise Fee the sum of which is equal to Four Percent (4%) of the Gross Receipts received by Grantee, per billing period, from the transportation, distribution, and sale of natural gas for consumption within the municipal corporate limits of the City. The Franchise Fee shall include only Gross Receipts from Gas Sales to Customers located in the City; Gross Receipts from Gas Transportation to Transport Gas Customers with re-delivery points located in the City; plus, Gross Receipts from Utility Regulated Service Charges. All sums due from Grantee shall be in lieu of all other franchise fees, licenses, or occupational taxes, which may be levied or attempted to be levied on Grantee by the City.
- (2) Grantee shall pay such Franchise Fee collected from its Customers to the Grantor under the terms of this Ordinance, based upon meters read on or after the effective date of this Ordinance. During the term of this Ordinance, Grantee shall collect from its Customers and pay the City in January and July for the preceding six months. Grantee shall include with the Franchise Fee payment a statement showing its collections of Gross Receipts from Gas Sales and Gas Transportation in the City, and Utility Regulated Service Charges in the City, including the calculation of the Franchise Fee for the subject time period. Collection and payment of Franchise Fee shall be final as to both parties unless questioned by written notice provided by one party to the other within one year after payment thereof has been made.

It is expressly agreed that the Franchise Fee payments shall be in lieu of any payments for the right to use the Public Ways or other public rights-of-way of the City, including expressly the charge permitted to be levied by the Texas Tax Code Sections 182.021-182.026 and 182.081-182.082, or any successor statute permitting such a charge, however designated. The Franchise Fee shall be in lieu of and accepted as payment of all of Grantee's obligations to pay all other franchise fees, licenses, easement or occupation taxes, levies, exactions, rentals, street-cut fees, inspection fees, right of way inspection fees, permit fees, franchise fees, easement taxes, or charges of any kind whatsoever which may be levied or attempted to be levied in general by the City for the use of City's Public Ways and other rights-of-way, with the sole exception of sales taxes, ad valorem taxes and special assessments which are made without reference to or dependence upon Grantee's franchise or occupancy of the streets and public right of way, e.g., special assessment paving liens.

The rights, privileges, and franchises granted by this Ordinance are not to be considered exclusive, and City hereby expressly reserves the right to grant, at any time as it may see fit, like privileges, rights, and franchises to any other person or corporation for the purpose of furnishing gas in the City. In the event any entity (other than Grantee) providing gas sales or gas transportation service to Customers within the City is subject to a lesser franchise fee than is required to be collected and paid by Grantee in this Ordinance, then with respect to such gas sales or transportation service to those Customers, Grantee's Franchise Fee obligation on sales or



transportation service to those Customers will be reduced to a rate equal to the franchise fee rate required to be paid by such other entity.

Unless expressly set forth herein, or otherwise provided by law, by accepting this Ordinance, Grantee does not agree to be responsible for the payment of franchise fees other than as expressly set forth herein, or for the payment of franchise fees owed to the City by any other entity, corporation or firm.

#### SECTION 12. CONDITIONS OF FRANCHISE

This contract, franchise, grant and privilege is granted and accepted under and subject to all applicable laws and under and subject to all of the orders, rules, and regulations now or hereafter adopted by governmental bodies now or hereafter having jurisdiction.

To the extent that all or any other existing ordinance shall conflict with any provision of this Ordinance, this Ordinance shall prevail upon passage, adopting and acceptance of this Ordinance.

#### SECTION 13. INVALIDITY OF ORDINANCE

If any clause, sentence, or section of this Ordinance shall be held to be invalid, it shall not affect the remaining portions of this Ordinance, which shall remain valid and effective as if such invalid provision did not exist, although the parties shall be entitled to a judicial interpretation or construction of this Ordinance to address the validation of such provision by minimal amendment thereof. Further, should any governmental body now or hereafter having jurisdiction determine that Grantee shall not be permitted to collect in whole or in part the compensation due Grantor by others for Transport Gas as set forth in Paragraph (2) of Subsection A of Section 11 of this Ordinance, Grantee shall thereafter have no obligation to make such payment to Grantor and Paragraph (2) of Subsection A of Section 11 shall be of no force and effect with regard to the sale of Transport Gas.

#### SECTION 14. EFFECTIVE DATE AND TERM

This Ordinance shall be read at two separate regular meetings of the City Council and shall not be finally passed until thirty days after the first reading. The ordinance shall take effect thirty days after its final passage and the acceptance hereof in writing by Grantee as herein provided. This Franchise Ordinance shall continue and remain in full force and effect for a period of fifteen years from the effective date.

#### SECTION 15. ACCEPTANCE BY GRANTEE

Grantee shall have sixty days from the execution of this Ordinance within which to file in the office of the City Secretary its consent to and written acceptance of provisions and conditions of this Franchise Ordinance.

#### SECTION 16. REPEALER

Each and every other ordinance or part thereof which is directly in conflict with any provision herein as to the grant of a franchise for natural gas services and the regulation thereof is hereby repealed.

#### SECTION 17. SEVERABILITY

The provisions of this Ordinance are severable, and if any part or provision hereof shall be adjudged invalid by any court of competent jurisdiction, such adjudication shall not affect or impair any of the remaining parts or provisions hereof.

#### SECTION 18. NOTICE

The full text of the Franchise Ordinance shall be published as prescribed by state law once each week for four consecutive weeks no later than thirty days after final passage of the Franchise Ordinance. The expense of such publication shall be borne by the Grantee.

**Severability.** If any word, phrase, clause, sentence, or paragraph of this ordinance is held to be unconstitutional or invalid by a court of competent jurisdiction, the other provisions of this ordinance will continue in force if they can be given effect without the invalid portion.

All ordinances and resolutions or parts of ordinances or resolutions in conflict with the ordinance are repealed.

**PASSED, ADOPTED, AND APPROVED** this 14th day of November, 2017.

---

Mayor, Connie L. Kacir

ATTEST:

---

Kristina Vega, City Secretary

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

---

Jackie Williamson, City Attorney