

Horseshoe Bay Council Comments

By Council Member Elaine Waddill

The City of Horseshoe Bay City Council meeting was held Tuesday, November 16th, and was called to order by Mayor Cynthia Clinesmith – followed by an invocation by Pastor Lanny Tanton of The Bible Church of the Lakes and the pledges to the American and Texas flags.

Mayor Clinesmith presented a Proclamation celebrating the 100th Birthday of Fern Johnson declaring October 23, 2021 as FERN TRUE JOHNSON DAY in the City of Horseshoe Bay. The City Council, city staff, and the Horseshoe Bay community all join in celebrating the life of Fern Johnson and offer sincere admiration for a life well lived.

The newly elected officials for the City of Horseshoe Bay were sworn into office before assuming their official duties. City Secretary, Kerri Craig, swore in Mayor Cynthia Clinesmith and Council Members Frank Hosea and Randy Rives. Additionally, the results of the election were declared official via an ordinance included in the Consent Agenda. Appreciation for the support of the sales tax propositions was shared.

Chief Rocky Wardlow announced with pride that Lieutenant Cole Reasor has been appointed to serve on the Capital Area Council of Governments (CAPCOG), Law Enforcement Education Committee (LEEC) as nominated by Llano Judge Ron Cunningham. The committee is comprised of 12 members who represent all the law enforcement agencies in the CAPCOG region spanning across south central Texas. The LEEC provides valuable insights and guidance on law enforcement updates and revision of policies, setting standards for the Basic Peace Officer Course. Lt. Reasor will be one of only 6 officers on the committee for the region.

Jeff Koska, Interim City Manager, presented Kerri Craig with a 5 Year Service Award. Kerri has served the Horseshoe Bay community since November 2016 when she was appointed to the City Secretary position by City Council. The City Secretary is one of four Charter Officers in Horseshoe Bay, along with the City Manager, City Attorney, and Municipal Judge. Functioning much like the Secretary of State, the City Secretary is the local official who maintains the integrity of the election process, ensures transparency and open government, facilitates the city's legislative process, acts as the compliance officer for federal, state, and local statutes, and is the recorder and preserver of local government history. Prior to joining the City of Horseshoe Bay, Kerri served as the City Secretary for the City of Dripping Springs. She graduated with a Master of Public Administration (MPA) degree in 2007 and earned the Certified Public Manager (CPM) designation in 2020. She earned the distinguished Texas Registered Municipal Clerk (TRMC) designation from the University of North Texas in October 2016 and the Master Municipal Clerk (MMC) designation from the International Institute of Municipal Clerks in 2021. Kerri has been voted as the Municipal Clerk of the Year by her peers three times since 2018.

Stephanie Black, HSB Fire Marshall, presented the 5 Year Service Award to Jake Esquivel. During his five years of service, Jake has risen rapidly through the ranks to the position of C-Shift Lieutenant at Fire Station two. Jake has a passion for training and continuously seeks to improve the department through his own continuous learning and management of the training program for others.

During the Public Comment portion of the meeting Melanie Aaron expressed concern regarding the deer management process utilized in Horseshoe Bay. She indicated that other communities utilize a variety of other ways and would like an opportunity to meet with someone from the city to discuss the issue. Mayor Clinesmith said the City has reviewed the process approximately every two years, including outside review teams with the result being a recommendations that the current process provides for the safe culling of the herd to keep a healthy and safe shared living space for the City. She directed Ms. Aaron to the city website for a detailed explanation, but noted that the city is always open to alternative ways for management and asked that she call for an appointment to discuss.

The City will be completing the process of appointing members to various Boards, Commissions, and Advisory Committees in December. Each individual in attendance at the Council meeting today indicating an interest in serving was given an opportunity to introduce themselves and indicate the position or positions in which they were interested. Horseshoe Bay is proud of its bounty of highly qualified professionals willing to give their time and talent to the benefit of others.

An FY21 4th quarter financial report showed the expenditures for General Fund were at 98% of budget. The Utility Fund expenditures for the year were at 101% of budget. Some departments exceeded their budgets due to working overtime during the winter storm. The other large expenditures are the water and sewer tap connections due to the current growth in residential building. Overall, all departments did well in working within their budget despite the winter storm event in February and working through the pandemic. This was made possible by a 75% salary rebate for overtime served as a result of the pandemic through the American Rescue Plan Act/ARPA.

During the Business portion of the meeting a number of appointments were made as follows: Interim City Manager (Jeff Koska); Mayor Pro Tem (Elsie Thurman); City Council Public Information Officer (Elaine Waddill); Public Funds for Public Purposes City Council Subcommittee (Jerry Gray and Elsie Thurman). Finance Director Margie Cardenas presented a resolution to amend the Depository Accounts Delegated Authority on the City bank accounts at First United and at the two Investment Pools: TexPool and Texas CLASS. The amendment will remove Stan Farmer, (former) City Manager and replace with Jeff Koska, Interim City Manager. The other authorized representatives will remain the same: Margie Cardenas, Finance Director, Elaine Waddill and Elsie Thurman, Council Members.

Development Services Director Sally McFeron presented a proposed Ordinance amending the current tree protection and tree trimming regulations. A community identified goal of the Long-Range Plan was to “Responsibly Manage Horseshoe Bay’s Water, Land and Other Resources”.

The Ordinance extends and clarifies current standards as it defines “Grand” trees and “Protected” trees; prohibits the planting of red oaks in the city limits; requires a tree survey for site and construction plans with commercial development; requires a building permit/site plan/construction plan to cut down a viable Protected or Grand Tree; and requires “visible paint” on tree wounds.

Interim City Manager Koska discussed the recent water system event and indicated that issues were found and remediated. He also stated that an outside consultant has been hired along with an engineering firm to assist in a full evaluation. The age of the current system and the rapid growth of our community merit a full analysis of our systems. While the Utility Department feels confident in their processes, they are committed to 100% availability and quality of water and believe an external review will ensure they are using all best practices with dependable equipment.

Mr. Koska shared information regarding upcoming Christmas and Holiday Events. For the first time, HSBay will join in the Marble Falls Christmas Light-Up parade scheduled Saturday November 20th at 6:00 p.m. Everyone is invited to attend the parade and show Horseshoe Bay pride!! Mayor Clinesmith reminded everyone to also come out for the Holidaze in Horseshoe Bay event scheduled for December 2nd beginning at 5:30pm. There will be music, tree lighting, hot chocolate and a lot of Christmas cheer alongside booths by the HSB Business Alliance members. Santa is expected to stop by to help kick off the Christmas season in Horseshoe Bay.

With cooler breezes blowing and talk of the holidays coming, it looks like Horseshoe Bay will have busier days ahead. We encourage you to end the year on a positive note by taking the time to attend the December 7th, last opportunity of this year, City Council meeting. Happy Thanksgiving!