

Council Comments.....

Oh, what a beautiful morning!! Not original but apropos. The sun is up. The skies are clear. The air is clean with a slight chill. And how about those Blue Bonnets? Best I can ever recall. I'm looking forward to a drive into Austin this evening with an opportunity to see if the Pedernales Puddles have become a creek or stream. And now, onto yesterday's business of the Bay.

Reverend Johnny prayed and we all pledged. The day began with a packed house, standing room only - by adjournment we were down to less than ten. Honored three of the Bay's outstanding employees as a kickoff. Firefighter Cliff Grant and Asst. Police Chief Glen French were awarded the Hill Country 100 Club "Officer of the Year" plaques for their contributions during 2011 - Robert Abernathy was recognized for his 15 years of outstanding service. Redundant as I may be, we are truly blessed to be served by these dedicated folks.

During the public comments phase of the meeting, Bill Wines discussed the two petitions he has presented to the City for inclusion on a November ballot to:

1. Amend the City Charter to allow for a petition by 5% of registered voters to call for an election by registered voters to amend the Charter.
2. Amend the City Charter to call for a vote of registered voters on any proposal, under considerations by the City Council, calling for acquisition of the airport by the City.

While the first petition addresses an issue already stipulated by state law, it is not so stated in the City Charter. Citizen Wines stated that he had more than twice the number of signature required for his petition. Following verification of petition language and the associated signatures, the council will discuss the petitions at next month's meeting.

Craig Haydon then made a brief statement concerning the open discussion held over the seven year life of our city. He emphasized that the council has always encouraged dialog with the citizens on any topic, large or small, addressed by the council.

LCRA representative Mike McCluskey, described the new technology associated with the soon to be rebuilt Ferguson Power Plant and how the project will proceed. Not to exceed my engineering expertise, but the new plant will replace 1960's technology with a more efficient, modern, reliable, dependable and economical double duty, natural gas fired and steam driven three turbine electricity generating power plant. A mouthful, but pretty much a verbatim description. The plant to be built by Flour Inc. will produce 1/3 more juice with the same gas input. On to the more important points of how this effect city residents. Ferguson Road will be expanded from 2 to 4 lanes by the LCRA (outgoing) and Flour (incoming) to allow for heavy truck traffic and afternoon evacuation by the workers. Workers at the peak construction period, mid 2012 to early 2014, will number 450. City police officers will be actively involved in traffic control during peak periods. The turn-key construction is scheduled to be complete by mid-2014. More to come on this major project.

Jim Long, a member of the seven person committee appointed by the Council two years ago to evaluate the potential acquisition of the airport presented an interim report. (The full report is on the city website <http://www.horseshoe-bay-tx.gov>) In addition to the key considerations of zero city dollars being expended for the acquisition, the committee looked at profitability,

capital expenditures and impact on the folks in the airport neighborhood (through the fence). Legal, social, economic and environmental issues were included.

Four specific goals were defined: 1: The Airport would be acquired at no cost to the City. 2: The Airport must be projected as profitable or revenue neutral and have a positive cash flow. 3: Specifically identified future capital projects must be paid for by the Resort net of any FAA funding. 4: The “through the fence” and airport real estate issues would have to be resolved to the satisfaction of those citizens effected.

If any of these goals could not be met further discussion of the acquisition would be aborted. These goals concurred with direction given to the committee by the council at its inception.

As the committee’s work progressed, modifications, required by the FAA, were identified that would require significant capital expenditure by the Resort prior to acquisition. Because of the expenditures, the Resort, in March 2011, placed further discussion and evaluations on hold. No further action is anticipated until the Resort decides to proceed.

If the project proceeds, the committee will continue its evaluation and present a report to the City Council. The council will then hold numerous public workshops and council meetings on the possible acquisition. It has been my experience that a project of this magnitude will take 6 - 12 months to obtain final approval.

Again, the Bay is fortunate to have folks like Jim Long, John Bird, Evan Roberts, Jim Thorne, Ken Lindgren, J. T. McMahan and Bob Mark who have the expertise and will dedicate the time to lead the city to a correct conclusion. “Surprise, surprise”, as Gomer used to say, a work in progress.

The Oak Ridge POA has formally requested a temporary release from the City’s ETJ in order to allow them to modify their deed restrictions, similar to a request by Deerhaven in 2008. The Oak Ridge POA does not require mandatory participation by property owners. Marilyn Westerheid, a non POA member and property owner, opposed the POA’s effort due to lack of communication as to the request and it’s intent. Dale Hoffman, the POA President, stated that the deed restrictions were ancient, and the primary purpose was to establish a requirement on all property owners, not just POA members to participate in funding the Fire services provided by the Bay. Evidently, that is not currently the case. Mayor Bob asked the folks in the Ridge to develop a list of proposed changes and communicate with all the property owners in order to attempt to achieve concurrence. As is often the case, a little discussion goes a long way toward alleviating disagreement.

Chief Lane then discussed an ordinance to establish “safety zones” where children might gather and keeping registered sex offenders from residing within 2500 feet of such locations. Neighboring cities, the Falls, the Shoals and Burnet, have recently passed such ordinances and sex offenders might migrate to areas without restrictive ordinances. Discussions continued as to how our entire city might be made a safety zone, but legal issues call for a wait and see attitude on a more restrictive ordinance. One of our stellar PD officers, Jason Graham, did the ground work on this issue. A unanimous 4 - 0 vote quickly followed.

You’ll be pleased to note that the September 2011 financial audit found no conditions or material weaknesses in the way the city handles the dollars. Mayor Bob, a serious accounting

guy, proposed that Councilman Dick, another serious accountant, could give us a very detailed review if we so desired. We declined.

We then approved plats, replats and variances. Most prevalent of which was Jamail's. It's going to open soon and I for one can't wait. More to come - very soon!!

We adjourned, as now do I. Spring has arrived, enjoy it because you know what comes next! How 'bout those Blue Bonnets??? Have a good one -

Your Scribe -

Jeff Robinson