

## **Council Comments.....**

Good evening Horseshoe Bay!

August 28 was a long day for your City Council. The Budget Workshop began at nine, the council meeting concluded at six. We did have a three hour early afternoon respite, but now the HSB cocktail hour has arrived and your scribe is composing the prose.

Renewal of the city's solid waste collection contract was first on the agenda. That's garbage to the uninformed. Our current provider, Allied Waste, currently provides service at \$12.52 per resident/month and bid \$13.60, an 8.6% increase for the first year of a new five year contract with at 3% max increase in each of the following four years. Progressive Waste's bid was \$11.75 under the same terms. Questions concerning Progressive's heavier trucks and their possible impact on our brand new and improved streets influenced the council to defer this decision until September in hopes of receiving additional info on potential street damage.

Next up was a discussion led by our new benefits advisor Lee Cameron of Frost Insurance. Blue Cross/Blue Shield, our current employee benefit provider initially asked for a 6.6% increase in rates, but with several tweaks to coverage and good wheeling and dealing by Lee, BC/BS agreed to a 0% increase with the tweaks and no RFP by the city for other bids. BC/BS also has as many, if not more, medical providers to provide services in our neighborhood to our employees. Approved 5-0 in the later council meeting.

The budget for Martin Park was reduced from \$30,000 to \$15,000 due to ADA (disabled) expenditures that will be done this year instead of next. The park looks good and is getting better. Also, the Mayor was given verbal authority to proceed with acquisition of the beautiful creekside trail running from the mausoleum, behind the Church at HSB, down to 2147. This land will be donated by Eileen Hurd with smaller parcels also contributed by the Resort and the HSB POA. Thank you all!! This will be a long term work in progress as the city seeks grants and corporate contributions to help with funding.

Cedar/dead tree removal for next year was budgeted at \$50,000. That is the same as was spent in the current year and City Manager Stan's estimation is this will complete the job in HSB West, where most of these fire hazards reside. By the by, noticed many other small hill country communities are jumping on the bandwagon.

As the deer population is on the upswing in the Bay, \$60,000 was budgeted for the trapping and removal of 400 deer.

Due to the 2006 utility rate plan to allow utility rates to rise gradually in order to allow utility revenues to pay for utility services, the current rate stabilization fund and rate increases for high usage customer will fund capital construction projects in the coming year - since 80% of water usage in the Bay is for irrigation, high end residential users (in excess of 50,000 gals, per month) will experience a slight increase and are encouraged to reduce usage. Our average residential usage is 15,000 gallons per customer/month, putting us second highest in a study of 12 similar cities.

Incoming councilman Steve reported the skeeters from Bay West Creek are driving he and his bride off the porch each evening. Not a good thing at all, especially in light of the recent influx

of West Nile Virus to Texas. If you are experiencing a mosquito problem and live near a creek, pond, pool or other water hazard, please let manager Stan know. This is a problem that can be and needs to be dealt with.

Negotiations are underway with the LCRA for the city to assume ownership of Ferguson Road following the power plant redo. Mayor Bob is also negotiating for some LCRA funding support on upgrading the road to HSB standards following construction of the new facility. Lots of big trucks on that avenue.

As a reminder, the tax rate for the coming year will be \$.25/\$100 valuation, the same as the current year.

Lunch time - we adjourned till three.

Ok, now it is three and Rev Larry prayed and we pledged.

And then we began---

First up, the discussion of the Summit Rock request for a variance for ten signs not meeting the City Sign Ordinance. Prior to several well informed and to the point citizen comments, Ron Mitchell, VP-Summit Rock, stated that in response to citizen concerns, Summit Rock would only be requesting a variance for four of the ten signs. The other six would be removed from the request. Ron, a noted sign disliker, said that due to the size of the project (1,500 acres), lack of constructed amenities, and youth of the project, a master planned temporary development sign package was necessary.

The four signs requested would be allowed on a temporary basis (3 years). No expense has been spared in the design and quality of the signs. Probably most important, none of the signs should be visible from 2147 and only the sign at the future main entrance to Summit Rock would be visible from Hiway 71. Following Ron's remarks, the citizens commented on concerns about setting precedents and heading down a slippery slope to more signs out of step with the Bay's traditions and ambiance. As Ron and the many folks in the room discussed the new "4 sign plan", there seemed, to this observer, to be a bit more acceptance. A resident of Summit Rock commented that she hoped to one day have neighbors and if these signs helped bring more folks to the Rock, she was all for it. All seemed to agree that the success of Summit Rock was a good thing for the Bay. A work in progress, that will be on September's agenda for further discussion and resolution, perhaps.

Amendments to the traffic and vehicle ordinance will provide our PD with an enhanced ability to enforce regulations related to parking of vehicle, boats, trailers, trucks, and RV's. Regulations concerning the location and time allowed for parking will be enforced. Penalties can include towing, immobilization or criminal prosecution. This will also be on the September agenda for consideration.

The certificate for unopposed candidates was approved 5-0. Incoming, unopposed candidates Craig Haydon, Steve Jordan, and David Pope will be sworn in at the November Council Meeting. Congratulations Guys!!

While the General Municipal Election is cancelled, a Special Election will be held to address amendments to the City Charter.

A good day, a productive day and as Buddy Schrader commented - it was democracy in action.

Nights are cooler - football begins this weekend - Hey - does it get any better?? Not for me!

Your Scribe -

Jeff Robinson