

Good Evening to the fine folks of the Bay -

What a fine day. Sunshine, blue skies and that followed a rainy weekend. How long since anybody has been able to say that! Well, that's too long!!

Anyway, your City Council met today and did some final budgeting, taxing and contracting for the coming year. But first we pledged and prayed with Reverend Johnny.

Lots of recognitions today. Josh Nail, Horseshoe Bay firefighter and Josh Hisey, a utility plant operator, were awarded 10 and 5 year service awards respectively. The recipients of the Marble Falls Rotary Club Patriot's awards this year were PD Sargent Chip Leake and Firefighter Travis McDaniel. Congrats Guys!! Chief Lane then introduced his newest crime fighter, Kevin Ard, a 22 year veteran officer. Welcome Kevin!

The mayor announced that the Summit Rock Communities developers had withdrawn their request for sign variances. I have mixed emotions on this rather contentious issue. While no one likes to make a somewhat unpopular vote, I really hope the community realizes the importance of this projects success. They will need our support as they navigate through difficult economic times.

On consecutive 5-0 votes the council approved the upcoming year's budget and tax rate of \$.25 per \$100. While this years rate is consistent with the past year, next year's rate will probably require an increase to deal with unforeseen street improvement developments. The council will discuss and report in more detail on these requirements as the year unfolds.

More favorable financial news followed as water rates will rise for only those high-end users of this valuable resource. More rain, please. This is a culmination of the plan put in place in 2006 to allow our utilities to be financially self-sufficient. This differentiates Horseshoe Bay from many cities, in that no subsidy bucks flow either way from city utilities to city operations. Also, solid waste (garbage) rates will decrease by 6.1% to \$11.75 per month per residence next year as the council approved a contract with Progressive Waste Solutions (such an upbeat name for garbage bidness). Allied Waste, our former contractor has done a fine job, but a 6.1% Progressive decrease (\$.77) beats an 8.1% Allied increase (\$1.08). For you english majors, that's a savings of \$1.85 monthly. That will equate to a bottle of very nice red wine next year for each household.

The next two items discussed were courtesy of yours truly and will be on next month's agenda for a vote. They are both sign related. Yes, those dreaded signs. The first would allow those seeking a sign permit or variance to simultaneously file for approval with the City and the appropriate POA Architectural Control Committee. This should simplify and shorten the time period necessary for the new business to obtain their permit. It will also guarantee the requestor an open meeting to make their case.

The second amendment to the sign ordinance would allow a commercial property owner to place a "Space Available and Telephone Number" in their existing monument signage to inform prospective lessees that they have space available. Our current sign ordinance allows no such useful information.

The consent agenda was approved 5-0. The contract with Deerhaven was approved to provide firefighting services. A brief discussion was held concerning the progress our neighbors have made in addressing firefighting concerns raised a year ago by Chief Fiero. While improvements have been made and an election will be held in November to approve funds to improve water availability, there is still a significant concern about "too much cedar and brush" throughout the community. Continuing progress in removal of these combustibles will be monitored by the Chief.

By a 5-0 vote, the council approved a Municipal Maintenance Agreement with TxDOT for 2147. While these maintenance expenses funded by TxDOT will save the city big bucks, concerns were raised related to their unwillingness to adjust speed limits to our satisfaction and approve curb cuts to allow growth in this vital commercial corridor.

The council then approved a new and improved Code of Ethics for elected and appointed officials and city employees. This will also discourage the horde of high paid lobbyist prevalent in Austin and D.C. The last sentence is of course - a joke!

Escondido did some re-zoning and we approved new parking, stopping and standing rules related to traffic and vehicles. The bottom line is Chief Lane's folks will find it easier to enforce ordinances already on the books. New regulations concerning parking and parking lots are included. So---- you people parking, stopping or standing --- beware!

A lengthy discussion was then held concerning whether or not three developed properties roadways had been left out of the Street Improvement Plan. This was not a simple discussion and could result in additional dollars. I will not elaborate, except to say it involves residences beyond the planned termination of streets to be improved. A more extensive discussion will be held on this topic in October. We adjourned.

Have a really good month and enjoy the fall weather.

Your Scribe -

Jeff Robinson