

Council Comments...

Oh, what a beautiful morning, Oh, what a beautiful day – and yesterday was not only San Jacinto Day but also a very big day in the life of our community.

The day began with a Council workshop to discuss several much needed upgrades to our water and wastewater systems. Three projects, two of which will address increased water usage in our western environs and one to rehab a wastewater facility, will be engineered, financed and completed during the next 27 months. Jeff Koska, our excellent Utility Director, and City Manager Stan gave the Council not only an excellent presentation on what, why and when we need to do these projects, but also a primer on Water and Wastewater 101. We learned much about membrane filtration, high turbidity, MGD's, pumping and distribution. Related to wastewater, we learned about lift stations, grinder pumps, effluent, sludge and BOD's – don't ask, wastewater discussions very quickly evolve into "too much information." Anyway, the Council approved proceeding with the three projects.

Following a brief adjournment for lunch, the Council reconvened at 2 p.m. for a very special signing ceremony. Declarant Wayne Hurd, Sam Tarbet, Ron Mitchell representing the Resort, POA President Fred Owen and Mayor Bob, each signed the final document transferring ownership of the 122 miles of roads from the Horseshoe Bay POA to the City of Horseshoe Bay. The signing was the culmination of many hours of hard and sometimes contentious effort by many folks in this community. While it was occasionally contentious, it was never mean spirited and was always done with the sort of good behavior and intellect we expect from our city leaders, whether they represent the POA, the Resort, the Declarant or the City, all had their eyes on the final objective and were willing to make the concessions necessary to achieve that objective. This was truly an example of why our country's method of government is the "best on Earth." On another very pleasant note – as I said before – Wayne Hurd was in attendance, looking good and making his first outing since his broken hip. Way to go Wayne – and thanks for all you've done to make Horseshoe Bay the "Gem of the Hill Country!"

Okay, after the Mayor gaveled us to order promptly at 3 p.m., the day was somewhat anticlimactic. Not unimportant, just anticlimactic. Reverend Johnny prayed and we pledged.

First on the agenda was introduction of new Police Officer, Candice Simon; service anniversary awards to Jeremy Schwartz – 5 years, Megan Garcia – 5 years and Jimmy Jones – 30 years – wow Jimmy, you must have been right on Wayne's heels in arriving at the Bay. Welcome Candice and congrats to Jeremy, Megan and Jimmy.

Next, I was given the opportunity to welcome Carl Erhart – President, Southwest Region and James Hines – Director, Governmental Affairs of Verizon. As the Council has discussed, and I have written, Horseshoe Bay, Llano, Marble Falls, and our local school districts have been long in need of upgrades to our land

line telephone network. The need for high-speed, high capacity data, video, internet and all the other broadband services on the horizon is here and now. And in the future, the need will increase. Following a call to me several month's ago by Carl, briefly outlining Verizon's plans for a Hill Country upgrade; I invited him to the Bay to share the good news.

Carl described the central office switching upgrades that Verizon has committed to which will bring DSL (Digital Subscriber Line) and its associated speeds and capacities to the Hill Country. He also outlined several technology restraints which will limit its range of deployment. He further informed us of the "Bundling of Services" including voice, data, internet and Direct TV which could result in significant cost savings to the folks in our area (and the schools). They hope to have the installations on line in late August and begin providing more info and begin marketing these offerings at that time. Folks – this is a very large first step to improvements in this area. There will be subsequent steps involving other technologies such as wireless. Much more to come, but we are now on the access ramp to the Information Super Highway. By the by – special thanks to Ronnie Rudd, Llano ISD Board Chairman, Jim Beasley, Llano ISD tech guru, Bill Hussey, City of Llano ad hoc representative, your Horseshoe Bay Committee – Jim Browning, Crag Haydon, Neal Yonkers, Tom Schmersahl, Jim Babcock and Senator Troy Fraser. And equally important – Thank You to Verizon – it takes a team to build a highway.

Okay – what else – this is getting long. Don't forget to vote for the Home Rule Charter – lots of good work by more of your fellow citizens on this effort. One result of passage of this proposal will be the formation of a Planning and Zoning Commission. This will be another opportunity for those of you seeking a rewarding, but non-paying job. That seems to be the only kind of work we have in the Bay.

A brief discussion was held on requiring performance bonds on single family residences. This would be to alleviate the current situation of unfinished houses sitting idle for months. Much discussion with local builders and investigation by Eric Winter to come.

The Escondido Member Club, a prestigious concierge style project was approved 5 – 0. This project will have 10 condominiums, each with 10 separate owner interests.

A sign ordinance variance was requested and granted to the upcoming Highland Lakes Parade of Homes for additional signage.

Time to adjourn – all and all, a really red letter day in the Bay. By the way, personally, I like City Streets better than City Roads – just a thought.

Have a good day -

Your Scribe -
Jeff Robinson