

Council Comments.....

Good Morning Horseshoe Bay

The Council gathered at three o'clock on Monday to once again discuss ----- the "Roads/Streets." Standards for upgrade construction, assessment methodology and street selection criteria were discussed and approved by unanimous votes. I will hit some highlights of these three discussions, and more detail will be presented in your Christmas Eve Beacon. I'm sure there's something humorous or ironic I could say about that, but it escapes me.

The Construction Standards are those presented by Tony Plumlee, our contracted street engineer, six months ago. Included are 22-24 ft. wide streets, 1½"- 2" inches hot mix asphaltic concrete, an improved base where necessary, improved drainage and ribbon curbs on all streets. The ribbon curbs are aesthetically pleasing, but more importantly they will provide structural integrity; prevent grass incursion, also edge break-away and base water damage, and save short and long term maintenance costs to the City.

The Street Assessment Methodology approved will be as previously discussed. It will be based on street front footage with adjustments for corner lots, irregular shaped lots and multi-family residences. The comprehensive (really) study recently completed by Integra Realty Resources of Austin indicates that all property values in the Fairways would have been enhanced by a dollar amount in excess of the proposed assessment. Anecdotal comments by local realtors support these findings. A study with help from the City's financial advisor indicates that the use of ad valorem taxes to fund a street upgrade project for the 94 miles of streets on which we have residents would result in a property tax increase of \$0.15 per \$100 valuation. For a \$300,000 valued property, this would result in an annual tax increase of \$450 or \$9,000 for 20 years. The street assessment methodology would result in a cost of \$500 per year over 6 years – a total of \$3,000 plus nominal interest. More details will be provided in next week's Beacon.

The Council approved the use of a standard petition to be submitted by folks on those streets requesting a street upgrade. Registered voters of Horseshoe Bay will be eligible to petition the City for a street upgrade.

There is still much to be communicated and decided, including payment plans. Initial plans were also discussed for the upgrade of Horseshoe Bay Blvd. and Bay West Blvd. Opportunities for upgrade on cul-de-sacs and smaller streets intersecting those two streets were also discussed.

It is likely that this project will continue for many years and be cussed and discussed many times. Many details remain to be worked out. But, the desire for better streets communicated through the effort to move ownership of streets from the HSB POA to the City needs to move forward. The POA was capable of maintaining the streets in their current condition. The City has financing options that will allow

the streets to be commensurate with a world class resort and residential community. As always – lots more to come.

The December meeting of the Horseshoe Bay City Council began promptly at 3 o'clock. Mayor Bob is a stickler for promptness. Pastor Pete prayed – we pledged. Lt. Richard Baum, a valuable asset to your HSB PD, was recognized for 5 years of service to our community.

The owner/contractor at 116 Arollo Court reported that through extensive inspection and remedial work, all mold has been removed from the site and work would continue to complete the project. Later in the meeting, it was reported that the manufactured home at 2100 Crooked Run had been cleaned up and repaired, and is now ready for occupancy. Three other manufactured homes in HSB South have been removed and the lots cleaned and graded. Significant progress has been made on completion of the five houses on Sunray, originally reported as abandoned by Dale Rodman a year ago. Four will be completed by the end of February and the other by the end of May.

A request was made for a waiver to the maximum number of animals per household as outlined in our Animal Control Ordinance. The Council voted 5-0 to allow the homeowner 30 days to reduce the 11 cats and one dog living in her residence to a total of four animals and therefore be in compliance with the city ordinance. Numerous complaints by neighbors have been lodged concerning this situation.

City Manager (CM) Stan reported that a very constructive meeting was held with local building contractors to discuss future implementation of the contractor registration procedure. Stan intends to meet with this group several times a year to discuss items of mutual interest. Stan also reported that for fiscal 2009, revenues in both the General and Utility Funds exceeded budget and expenses in both funds were less than budgeted. This represents a good job by City Departments in managing their budgets during a difficult time. This was aided in no small part by a reduction in fuel costs.

Jeff Koska, our Utility Director, reported that construction of the expanded water main to West was on schedule. One noise complaint had been received and quickly rectified. Many positive comments from nearby residents have been received concerning the clean and orderly construction site. A good job by Jeff's staff and our contractor.

The Council approved by unanimous vote the selection of Horizon Blue with a black HSB logo for the décor of the new 1,000,000 gallon elevated reservoir (that's a big water tank in the sky) to be built in West. Even though your scribe was allowed to vote, his color blind affliction was the source of much derision. The construction will be completed by March 2011.

Jeff also led a discussion of the status of our current LCRA Stage 3 water restrictions, in place since September 1. Recent outbursts of precipitation have prompted the LCRA to vote to lift those mandatory restrictions. This would allow us

to remove all restriction, both mandatory and voluntary. The Council then agreed by a unanimous votes (lots of 5-0 today) to remain at Stage 1. In order to be good lakeside citizens in a locale that will probably always be experiencing a drought or the threat of drought, good responsible water use habits are a must. Watering at night, finding and fixing leaks promptly and efficiently using this necessary and wonderful resource just makes good sense at all times. You will receive several postcards (suitable for framing) during the year as reminders of water conservation.

The resignation of our City Attorney was then accepted by a 5-0 vote. Monte Akers has been with us since and through incorporation. We thank him and appreciate his diligent efforts. His firm will remain with us until a new firm is selected. Mayor Pro Tem Jim, City Manager Stan and two lawyer volunteers from the community will present a vetted short list of candidates for Council review and selection.

The Council then went into Executive Session to discuss the construction of a new Police Department building and the annual performance appraisals of our Department Heads. Adjournment occurred shortly before dark.

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

Your Scribe -
Jeff Robinson