

Council Comments.....

It's Tuesday evening, 81 degrees, the sun is shining, the cocktail lamp is lit and your scribe is hard at work. Ok, it's not really hard work and I do enjoy composing the prose. Here we go.

Reverend Pete prayed, we pledged and the Mayor convened the Council, promptly at 3 o'clock. Drew Crosby kicked us off with an announcement that this month's Horseshoe Bay Business Alliance *Koffee Klatch* would be held at A Taste of Thyme on 9-29 at 9 a.m. He also announced they had received their 503(c)6 non-profit status.

Horseshoe Bay POA Prez Tom Schmersahl presented the Council with a request to amend our agreement to forgo any payment of the POA's annual street agreement in 2011 and repay the 2011 payment in 2012 and 2013. This agreement will allow the POA to update and expand Quail Point. The amendment was necessary due to contractor bids exceeding original estimates.

Horseshoe Bay's outstanding Fire Department provides, on a contract basis, fire-fighting services to neighboring communities such as Oakridge, Blue Lake and others. In the past, due to concerns related to their water infrastructure, our City has declined a request by Deerhaven to provide similar services. Since our FD is their only real alternative, the Council agreed, under certain conditions, to provide the service in the coming year. The conditions are important and need to be well understood.

Due to Deerhaven's infrastructure problems our firefighters will only be able to fight any potential fires with the water we bring on our two trucks. A capacity of 2,000 gallons (1,000 per truck) will provide water for approximately 10-14 minutes. All Deerhaven home owners should be aware of this limitation which will be well defined in the Deerhaven contract and in letters to every home owner. Secondly, the Council will review during the one year life of this contract the progress made by Deerhaven in addressing the water infrastructure issue and others. Subsequent contract negotiations will take that progress into consideration.

An extended discussion was then held concerning the City's 2011 budget and the associated property tax rate. Alderlady Claudia and Alderman Phil expressed real concerns about when and if the City would get on with improving the Horseshoe Bay POA road system acquired in 2009. Their concern was that by lowering the current tax rate of 33¢ per \$100 to 25¢, the City's ability to finance the much needed street improvements would be jeopardized. Early this year a spirited community debate concerning this issue had led the Council to defer future decisions on this issue until the economy improved. Even though the economy still struggles, there seems to be a consensus that we need to develop a plan utilizing current approved standards (asphalt and ribbon curbs) and a new financing scheme, possibly utilizing ad valorem taxes to finance a bond issue. Aldermen Babcock and Robinson responded that reducing the current City revenue surplus was a priority and the proposed 25¢ rate would allow the City to meet all current obligations and finance (P&I) a bond issue to improve the first 20 miles of the 60 miles of populated roads. While Claudia and Phil favored a 27¢ to 29¢ rate, the Council passed the 25¢ rate by a vote of 3-2. Folks, this is an extremely important issue that all Council members agree needs to be addressed. As always, the devil is in the details. My educated guess is this discussion will continue in earnest with a road

workshop in the immediate future. If a bond issue is chosen as the financing method, each of you will vote your opinion on funding a street upgrade. Lots of discussion, formal and informal, will occupy the coming months. All Alderpeople want to improve the roads and all supported a tax decrease. As your scribe has written before “good folks with good intentions can disagree and still pursue a common goal.”

On to the more mundane. Barring a big rain, Bay West southbound should open Sunday. Llano County will chip seal on Wednesday.

A question has been raised as to why several lots in a row are cleared and then one is not. And the answer is lot owners were offered the opportunity to clear the lots themselves and given time to do so. If lots are not then cleared, the City will do the job. Lot clearing continues in HSB West and is now pointing to Hi Mesa and the Airport area. The pace has increased significantly.

The bid process continues on the Bay West Bridge (a catchy name) and the new Police Department station.

City Manager Stan reported that “The Bay” has been chosen as one of 14 cities designated with a Scenic City Certification in 2010. The City was required to submit its application and meet several stringent criteria. We did it! Good job Stan.

The day ended with a 5-0 vote to rezone the six lots adjacent to the City Hall parking lot as GUI (Governmental). Two of these lots are the future home of the Horseshoe Bay PD.

With that we adjourned at 4:20, as do I at 7:45. Enjoy Fall.

Your scribe -

Jeff Robinson