

Council Comments.....

Good morning, Horseshoe Bay -

The May 2011 version of the HSB City Council meeting was kicked off by a prayer by music minister Larry from the Church at Horseshoe Bay. Larry commented that since the Church Board had met that morning, he had the opportunity to pray for guidance for yours truly twice on Tuesday. The council crowd seemed to view that as a good thing. As did I.

The lead off topic was the planned removal of a limited number of trees currently residing in the middle of certain HSB streets. The Mayor presented a proposed Tree Policy and a discussion of that policy by Councilman Phil followed. Phil commented that three issues would be of prime consideration in the removal plans. Safety related to potential collisions comes first followed by the impact of the street improvement plan on the tree's survivability and, finally, cost. Chief Lane and his staff have identified 5 trees that, due to location (limited sight lines), were considered a serious hazard. These will be removed. Two other mesquite trees would also be removed. The mighty oaks will have the priority. Chief Lane also outlined plans for reflectors to be embedded in the pavement on both sides of the trees which would allow for improved visual recognition at night. The use of 12 to 18 inch plastic, collapsible delineator poles and raised curbing were tabled for further consideration.

This effort is being made to protect citizens and the trees, and also to limit any future liability to the city. On a case by case basis, all efforts will be made to protect the trees during the Street Improvement Project. But, as we all know, trees, asphalt and heavy machinery do not make a good combination. Some will likely not survive this project. Of the remaining 67 trees located in through streets some may be located in such a way as to not allow adequate roadway to accommodate traffic. Others may be diseased. Bottom line is, we will "save the trees" where possible. Since the inception of Horseshoe Bay, these trees have added beauty and ambiance to our community, and the objective is to continue those characteristics.

As with most elements of the Street Improvement Plan, the trees, the engineering, the interview and hiring of project managers, and the financing considerations are all works in progress. And, there will be more to come.

The agreement for the city to assume ownership of the streets in Pecan Creek was approved 5 - 0. On a separate vote the acceptance of the street from Bay West to the entry gate of Pecan Creek was also approved 5 - 0.

Plans for the Bay West Bridge were discussed. Two bids will be sought. One bid will be for the original arch bridge proposed last year and one for the alternative TxDOT standard bridge. Both would have a HSB rock facade. The plan is to include in the bid package a 90 day window for closure of Bay West at the bridge with incentives for a reduced closure time. The council agreed the 90 days would begin on December 1, 2011. As usual - more to come!

Randy Lane, the Bay's Animal Control Officer has arranged, along with local vet Dr. Garrett Craig, to provide reduced cost rabies vaccinations for your dogs and cats. The cost will be \$8 instead of the normal \$14. Saturday morning (May 21), 9 - 12 a.m. at the Martin Park are the pertinent details. Dogs on a leash, cats in crates, please.

Manager Stan reported that the fencing and playground equipment for Martin Park should arrive next week. Also, vacant lot mowing will begin in June.

The budget of the Llano Country Appraisal District was voted down by a 4 - 0 vote. The line item resulting in the dissenting vote was the \$100,000 for litigation. These bucks would likely be primarily used for the County's court cost related to appraisal appeals brought by citizens of the Bay. Our vote is not likely to effect the final approval of the budget, but the message is in the mail.

The contract with VisiCom to place an eight foot antennae on the west water tower was approved 5 - 0. The hope is that this new provider will provide improved internet service and coverage in the Bay (at a reasonable price). The antenna is unobtrusive and placement should begin next week with service available within 30 days. They have secured office space in the La Bahia building and will be looking for customers soon. VisiCom will pay the city \$5,000 in year one and \$7,500 in years 2 - 5 per this agreement. If demand is adequate, other remote satellite antennas may be located in Horseshoe Bay.

The council agreed to allow the owner of a house under construction in HSB South (2401 Saddle Gun) to continue construction until the August Council meeting. Further discussion will occur at that time.

A variance for a rock and iron fence on Lighthouse Drive was approved 5 - 0. Objections raised earlier had been withdrawn.

All is all, a good day for the council, the citizens and the Trees of Horseshoe Bay! Have a good one.

Your Scribe -
Jeff Robinson