

Good Afternoon Horseshoe Bay ---

Another record-setting short Council meeting today. I don't know if we're just getting better at the process or having less controversial issues. Probably a little of both.

Anyway, Reverend Johnny kicked us off with prayer and then we did the pledges – Again fumbling our way through the state version.

The mayor then announced the hiring of a new City Manager. Stan Farmer, currently City Manager in Selma, North Carolina, is a UT grad, former Marine and holder of a Masters in Public Administration. He will report for duty on May 5 and relieve Mayor Bob of his management duties. Thanks Bob and welcome to the Bay, Stan.

Pending final negotiations and contract signing, Lockwood, Andrews and Newnam will be the firm designated as City Engineer for the City of Horseshoe Bay.

Sam Martin gave us the latest on Skywater. Ri-Con is the new contractor for infrastructure build-out at Skywater. Skywater will be the site for the Parade of Homes next spring and contractors have been selected to build 67 villas (lot size approximately 125 x 70), beginning soon. The golf course will open in October 2009, following grassing next spring. Fore!

A petition for the annexation of the Space Center property, to be developed by Mike Walsh, was accepted and will be acted upon in the coming weeks.

The amended Animal Control Ordinance was passed 5-0. Maybe, next to P and Z, the longest running issue in the Bay.

The final issue discussed and voted upon was the Resolution concerning our city's lack of land-line high speed internet, cable TV and advanced broadband services. Meetings were conducted by Alderman Babcock, citizens Haydon, Schmersahl and Browning along with yours truly with Verizon, Northland Cable, Time-Warner and Zeecon. One early result of these meetings was to remove the issue of service quality of existing services. This issue, while occasionally a problem, is not the main thrust of our efforts. The total lack of advanced services is the problem for many of our residents.

While none of the vendors offered a definitive what, when and where as to delivery of advanced services, progress was made. Roadblocks such as capital (money), regulatory hurdles, enabling computer systems, access to right-of-way, and lack of available high speed distribution networks were discussed. While each of the reasons has validity, they are certainly not insurmountable by deep-pocket corporations like Verizon and Time-Warner. Time-Warner, who has an agreement with Escondido and working on one with Skywater, has agreed to do a site review of the City of Horseshoe Bay to evaluate their response. They also recently filed with the PUC for a city franchise in our community. Few legal or regulatory avenues are available to alleviate our problems, but perhaps with Senator Fraser's invaluable support and a little lobbying at the PUC and the legislature (meets in January 2009), we can position Horseshoe Bay on the "Information Super Highway." As we closed our discussion today and passed the Resolution 5-0, the comment was made that after all, these services have been available in big city Texas for 15 years. Lots more to come on this issue.

Adjournment at 3:40. We could get spoiled on this routine. But alas, this too shall pass and we will once again have the opportunity to do the "Bays' Bidness" into the evening. But until then, let's all enjoy our few remaining weeks of spring.

Your scribe,
Jeff Robinson