

Hello Neighbors!

YOUR City Council met in a celebratory mood to applaud the 10 years of service of Bobby Havins with Development Services and Municipal Court, as well as to say farewell to the exemplary 4 years of city service provided by David Pope (plus years with the POA). Both were recognized, with council members and staff adding commentary to the behind the scenes attention to detail and ethical counsel provided by Councilman Pope. He left us with a reminder to “always listen to the people, ask questions, and make reasonable decisions.” Horseshoe Bay is blessed with a wealth of talent and commitment to service.

Attention turned to matters of concern and consideration for the city. The recent transition of garbage collection has brought some challenges – particularly for those in multi-family environments. The recognition that such facilities have constructed enclosures too small to accommodate new trash bins or single car garages was addressed by representatives of Republic, the new providers. They indicated that all will be resolved (though not overnight). Already citizens have the option of a second container and/or VIP services for those with physical limitations. Other than the bright blue color impact, most of Horseshoe Bay has experienced a seamless transition of services. Once all is resolved, the city ordinance requiring trash bins to be placed out of sight except for collection times will be enforced again.

Johnny Campbell, Executive Director of the Command Team for the Emergency Management Services provided a review of those services provided to five cities and the Emergency Service District (ESD) for Burnet and Llano (of which Horseshoe Bay is a partner). He shared details of the call volumes by area (a total of nearly 5,000), transport destinations, and the commendable average response time of 5.5 minutes. He spoke with pride of the exemplary levels of training of his team, noting that in its 40 years of operation it has moved from an all-volunteer entity to full service operation of 49 employees. On hand to be recognized were representatives of the ESD Boards, including Rhett Ruiz, Jerry Clinesmith, Fred Thurman (Llano County) and Neal Younkens (Burnet County).

Larry Anderson provided the good news of the quarterly financials, showing that the city is on track in the balance of its anticipated revenue and expenditures. Councilman Gray underscored the fiscal integrity of the operations evident in the year-end budget coming in nearly \$295,000 under budget. Mr. Anderson then brought to the council the request for “an establishment of a minimum balance of \$300,000 to be maintained in a segregated rate stabilization account” which would require city council approval to be used/dropped below the \$300K level. These funds, to be exclusively used to maintain the utility rate level, will provide a cushion of up to 6% should the utility rate be in need of increases in the future. If funds are used to offset rate stabilization needs, the fund will be prioritized for replenishment.

Several positive forward movements were highlighted. The long awaited hiking trail, made possible by the generous donation of land by Wayne and Eileen Hurd (and the acquisition of a Texas Parks and Wildlife grant) should open in the near future with word coming in the next few weeks. New signage will be posted at the trailheads. It is a beautiful hike through the nature of our hill country home, but rugged and challenging in areas – so dress/plan accordingly.

Another positive arrived in the acceptance and approval of the Long Range Plan (LRP) for the City of Horseshoe Bay. After 18 months of deep work (including surveys, interviews, town hall meetings, data collection/analysis, and report development by the LRP Advisory Committee), the Plan was developed and approved by the Planning and Zoning Committee prior to being forward to the full city council. The council heartily approved the Plan with the minor adjustment of adding language as recommended by the Planning and Zoning Committee to underscore desires for development of restaurants, senior living facility, and public recreational sites while maintaining a managed growth position. The Plan is available for viewing (along with supportive data to include the LRP Advisory Committee Report) on the City of Horseshoe Bay website.

Finally, the council met and approved the hiring of a new city secretary, Ms. Kerri Craig. Ms. Craig currently serves as the city secretary for the City of Dripping Springs. With her husband working in Llano, they were both excited about the prospect of relocating to the area. Ms. Craig brings an extensive background which includes work with the City of Corpus Christi and Incarnate Word Academy and both the University of Texas/San Antonio and the Texas A&M University/Corpus Christi (where she earned her Master's in Public Administration degree).

As I said, Horseshoe Bay is a community wealthy in talent and commitment to service. As his final act of service, David Pope made the motion to adjourn (typically a right reserved by Craig Haydon!) which earned a laugh of camaraderie and a reminder – it is always a good day to live in our Horseshoe Bay.

Cynthia Clinesmith
City Council member/Information Officer