

Hello Neighbors!

Amid the bustle of celebration of the season, YOUR City Council convened with a light, but important agenda. All proudly applauded the 15 years of service of Captain Bradley Casey, who recently completed his credential work in the four-year Executive Fire Officer Program at the National Fire Academy. Additionally, Captain Casey will be recognized at the upcoming Hill Country 100 Club Event.

The City Manager provided updates on multiple department projects/activities, including:

- Deer trapping will end for the season next week. This short interval to keep the herd at a healthy, manageable level has been successful to date. However, there was report of increased deer collisions with vehicles which will be monitored for next year.
- Financial reports were solid with a positive note being that the Utility Rate Stabilization fund is now fully funded at just over \$300K – a goal to help manage annual utility rates.
- The first Citizens' Academy (HSB 101) graduated its charter participants with praise for the quality and depth of information provided to attendees. The extra time given by city staff to share the backstory of daily workings in all departments begins a network of fully informed citizens to assist their neighbors' understandings. It also provides for a potential future leadership pool. The next Citizens' Academy (HSB 101) will begin February 2. **So go to the city website** to fill out an application and express your interest in being a new participant in the 9 week (2 hour/Thursday) sessions. GET INVOLVED and INFORMED.

The Mayor and some council members requested TXDOT to come and respond to concerns. Jason Cavness came to listen and offer clarification as possible. Two key topics included:

- The recent resurfacing/seal-coating of Hwy 2147 has resulted in increased noise and gravel across the road. The city had not been notified that such action was to begin on this State/County owned road – and reiterated the disappointment in the quality and scope of the work. The Mayor underscored that the goal was to have a different surface covering AND the addition of a continuous left-hand turn lane through the city reaching Hwy 71. Increased turning challenges into the post office and new businesses have raised the need for this safety zone. TXDOT expressed that this new lane and improved surfacing was not approved as yet – but indicated this feedback would be taken seriously. Council Member Gray requested that TXDOT return to the city council meeting in January for an update.
- The proposal by Burnet County to build a \$20 million bridge from Marble Falls (west 1431 nearer to Granite Shoals) was discussed with regard to the potential impact of traffic moving from the Granite Shoals/Kingsland corridor to Hwy 2147. TXDOT was asked to bring forward queries about the benefits for both Burnet and Llano County (in particular the most impacted – Horseshoe Bay).

The annual process of appointing/reappointing members to approved City Council Committees was completed, including:

- Pat Bouchard and Wayne Anderson were reappointed to the Planning and Zoning Commission.

- Patti Woolard was reappointed to the Parks Advisory Committee. A new member, Beth Dop, stepped in for Brian Pokluda who no longer lives in Horseshoe Bay.
- Michael Widler and Donna Bateman were reappointed to the Fuch's House Advisory Committee.
- The approval of the creation of a Broadband Advisory Committee with six members; Mayor Pro Tem Craig Haydon, who has a background in telecommunications, will serve as the City Council liaison.
- Frank Gracely, Jr., Jeffrey Guy, Frank Hosea, Nick Summitt, and Christopher Williston were appointed as members of the new Broadband Advisory Committee to begin work in January.

One variance review resulted in a 3-2 approval with dissenting votes by Council Members Jerry Gray and Cynthia Clinesmith. The variance, for Dean Blaine, allows an expansion of speculative home building from the current city ordinance limit of 2 unsold developments at a time to 10 speculative builds. Previously, Blaine and two other developers had received a limited expansion to 5 homes. Mr. Blaine has shown success in his quality and time management so that some Council members felt comfortable in expanding the limits of a reputable builder. Mr. Gray and Dr. Clinesmith both agreed with the credibility of Mr. Blaine, but felt that any expansion of speculative building was not in the interest of the city. Dr. Clinesmith, in particular, was concerned that the development of lower cost homes in large volumes ran contradictory to the expressed wishes of the citizens in the Long Range Plan where a primary goal was for 'managed growth' to reflect the unique nature of Horseshoe Bay as a destination/lifestyle community rather than another high growth bedroom community.

The council moved to executive session to review the annual evaluations of the Police and Fire Chiefs and City Manager. Following a return to session, the council adjourned – wishing all a safe and Merry, Merry Christmas. All left holding close the understanding of the reason for the season – and the added blessing of knowing it is ALWAYS a good day to live in Horseshoe Bay.

Cynthia Clinesmith  
Council Member/Chief Information Officer