

Hello Neighbors!

YOUR City Council worked together today from 9 am to 5:30 pm (with short lunch/afternoon break) to focus on key issues of fiscal responsibility, safety, planning for the future, and citizen service. The morning focused on preliminary budget for FY2019 with an eye to being mindful of 5-year forecasts in areas of quality levels for city operations and utility services.

The budget review included presentations by the city health benefit broker. Nationally, benefit costs are escalating and all were appreciative that the staff benefit packages were able to be maintained for a surprising 11.2% increase (less than half original considerations). With salary and benefits representing over 75% of all costs (benefits alone at nearly \$1 million annually), all planning considerations must begin here. Maintaining quality staff with strong comparable compensation is essential for all service areas.

Additional considerations included two key projects. First - a system wide technology integration program to increase communication, efficiency, and effectiveness across all departments which is long overdue for a growing city. Second was to begin work on the five-year plans for departmental strengthening – this year the fire department.

Joe Morris, Fire Chief, thanked all who assisted with the recent fire....his own team that worked round the clock, the police who went door to door alongside area assistance, the utility department, and the many city staffers who stepped up in the small details necessary in an emergency. A special thanks goes to citizens Carrie Foran and Angie Wardlow who took leadership of organizing support for evacuees to Quail Point. The Chief apologized for the Code Red initial alert (sent by external entities without authorization) and assured us that this process has been corrected. The City of HSBay will be your primary source of immediate direction in an emergency. While all landline phones are automatically included in the database, it is imperative that you go on-line to www.warncentraltexas.org and register your cell phones. Also, for City notifications you must register for NOTIFY ME at www.horseshoe-bay-tx.gov and check out all the other alerts/general information updates available through the NOTIFY ME alert system.

Chief Morris shared the five-year plan for his department, beginning with the results of his needs assessment from the past three years. This year there is a construction extension to the main fire station for better operations and public access. His plan prioritized training, staffing, response to citizen need, and collaboration with area partners. The city has included in next year's budget a training facility to be built for coordinated preparation for structural fires. This is for the safety of the firefighters AND the benefit of more qualified response. Additionally, area volunteer teams who assist HSBay in times of need will be able to train with HSBay for a stronger coordinated response effort. For this next year, the city is also reviewing the expense of adding three more firefighters (one per shift).

To varying degrees, other departments have long had five-year plans – and most are in high standard levels in equipment and staffing. The Utility Department has some large-scale costs being addressed now – and once completed should place the city in good shape for years to come (waste water treatment plant upgrade, water towers, water system expansions). Some staffing impact may emerge, but of immediate need is to address the utility rate deficit so that it will remain stable in the coming five

years. This year will most certainly require a % increase – though the average impact to a homeowner of a 2,500-3,000 sqft home would be about \$40 annually. This is still under review as the final budget and tax rate will not be set until the September council meeting. The Utilities Services Director, Jeff Koska, was applauded when he shared that a partnership with a contractor has been secured to help with the heavy load of water tap requests (increase from 86 last year to over 200 this same time this year). He reported that for the first time in a long time the city is current with zero citizens on the waiting list. (Applause here!)

The afternoon council meeting began with blessings from Church of HSB Pastor John Duncan followed by comments from the Mayor in appreciation for a safe result for the weekend challenge. One citizen, Don Hunt, stepped forward to ask the council to review the safety needs for the intersection of Broken Hills/Fault Line and Bay West Blvd – noting the line of site blindness due to inclines for those turning and the potential for accidents.

The consent agenda was approved, with the Mayor pointing out the very real value of the Highland Lakes Legacy Fund for community support. While it did not meet the standard for use of public funds by a city – all were encouraged to consider individual support as city partners. Several public hearings were held for zoning requests as well as updates to ordinances.

The Public Works Director, Tim Foran, reminded all that seal coating will resume September 10th impacting roads west of Bay West Blvd (including Apache Tears, Broken Hills, etc.). Details will be provided to individual citizens/neighborhoods with notifications prior to beginning. In addition, in keeping with the city's agreement to improve the streets that meet the criteria of 15 houses per mile or pro rata, 1.6 miles qualify this year and are currently being improved with ribbon curbing and improved surface as were the original 55 miles of streets .

The growing problem of some builders not meeting time requirements for completing homes was again addressed. While HSBay is blessed to have growth – and excellent builders – it remains important to consider the needs of neighbors who are impacted by building site activity. Generous timeframes have been provided for building the homes – with two extension permits provided upon request prior to reaching the city council. A third extension must come to the council with explanation. Two requests presented at the council were approved, but with strict time guidelines and fines of \$5,000 and \$10,000 respectively. The hope is to encourage the completion of projects while also underscoring the seriousness of completing in a timely manner for neighbors.

A full day following a full weekend for much of the city staff. As harrowing as the fire event was (within minutes of destroying the airport and much more) – we all experienced the positive side where neighbors reached out to help neighbors and all were willing to roll up sleeves where needed.

Even in trying moments, it is always a great day to live in our Horseshoe Bay! (Be safe in the upcoming Labor Day holiday.....and think cooler days ahead!)

Cynthia Clinesmith, Council Member and Public Information Officer