

Hello Neighbors!

A festive celebration of the season atmosphere filled YOUR City Council today as people dressed in their “Ugly Sweater Day” attire in anticipation of the 1st Annual Tree Lighting to follow the meeting. Ben Bales, City Plant Operator, won the ugly sweater contest with his Ugly Elf sweater with a mirror for the head! (Daring all to take a look and see the “Ugly Elf” reflected back!)

The Council and attendees recognized the 10 years of service of Senior Plant Operator Michael Pope. Michael had previous near decade work in Kingsland sewer plant work – as well as a near decade serving his country in the Army. Since joining HSBay, he has grown his certifications and is a critical resource for maintaining “the safety of drinking water/wastewater at the level expected by the community”.

A second public hearing was held for the replat of Lot #H25001, but once again it was ‘carried forward’ to the January 15th Council meeting due to incorrect posting in the newspaper. One community member did show up to speak to the replat, but noted the discussion will have to be delayed.

With no public comments requested, the City Manager gave updates on the departments. He highlighted that the road improvements are nearly complete, with the final work on Golden Nugget due this week. He also shared that the speed limit for FM 2831, much now within the city boundaries, will move down to 55 miles per hour.

The business portion of the meeting centered largely on the annual filling of vacated positions on various appointed committees. Horseshoe Bay is blessed to have a bounty of talented leaders and field experts willing to share their skills. Special appreciation goes to the following citizens for stepping up willing to serve:

- Planning and Zoning Commission – Re-appointed as Chair, Neil Andrew; re-appointed Pat Bouchard and Scooter Lofton to join returning members Brent Lane and Mark Hazlewood.
- Board of Adjustment – Re-appointment of Jim Babcock and assignment as Chair; appointment of Dale Amstutz to replace retiring David Pope and Mike Thuss to fill the vacated term of Elaine Waddill (who was elected to City Council in November), who will join Frank Gracely, Jr. and Lee Peterson.
- Parks Advisory Committee – Re-appointment of Beth Dop and appointment of Ben Wyly to replace retiring Patti Woolard; returning members include Charlie Sugg, Carrie Foran, and Chair Michael Widler.
- Fuchs’ House Advisory Committee – Re-appointment of Michael Widler; Jim Jorden to assume retiring Donna Bateman’s role, and Ronald Nicholas will complete retiring Virginia Roberts term. They will join Chair Francie Dix.
- Capital Improvements Advisory Committee – This committee consists of the Planning and Zoning Commission (above) and a representative from the ETJ (Extraterritorial Jurisdiction) of the City (i.e., lives outside city limits, but in our ETJ). The Council approved re-appointing current member Casey Burns.
- Broadband Advisory Committee – Former Council Member Craig Haydon (who served as the Council liaison to the committee since its inception) was approved as a member to fill a vacant position. Mayor Pro Tem Jerry Gray will assume the Council liaison role vacated by Mr. Haydon.
- Llano Central Appraisal District Board of Directors (as the City of HSBay’s rep) - Stan Smith accepted the appointment to complete Jim Jorden’s term, who has shifted to the Fuchs’ House Advisory Committee.

A discussion ensued about the quality of applicants being received. The Mayor indicated that the January workshop would examine the current process to ensure that the city is taking advantage of skill sets aligned to specific committee needs.

A house in Escondido requesting a 4th re-permit (which will take the construction of the house to nearly 3 years) was granted with a \$30,000 fine (with an option of 50% return if the house is completed prior to May 31st).

The Mayor shared his concern for the citizens needing access to improved postal service within Horseshoe Bay West – and the year long battle that has ensued in efforts to get Horseshoe Bay properly served with our own Post Master. In an effort to move forward, while the federal debate rages on, a proposal was put forward beginning January 1, 2019 to add a \$100 fee to all new home building permits to help offset the costs of building kiosks and placing mailboxes in community areas near where homes exist. Currently, all of the mail boxes in West are full and there is a backlog of requests. Some people are given mailboxes across town in a different area than where they live. Many others have mail delivered to general mail and stand in line daily at the post office to retrieve mail. None of these are good answers to service. Horseshoe Bay residents deserve to be treated with respect. Currently, the HSBay Annex has 700 empty boxes for rent. The fees (on new residences moving forward) will offset the costs of the city taking on the delivery of these cluster kiosks/mailbox access. Some POA/HOAs have provided for their own cluster kiosks and fees from homes built in their area will be used to help offset future needs. Applehead Island, Bay Country, Pecan Creek, The Hills #1 and #2, The Trails, and The Peninsula have already installed their own along with other HOAs. Escondido, Applehead, Summit Rock, and The Hills #3 are in the process of adding their own cluster kiosks for the convenience of their residents. Unlike the other POAs, HSB POA does not have the ability to collect membership fees/dues and their revenue is restricted to the Maintenance Fees they are allotted. As a result of the City taking the responsibility for expanding the mail delivery service in West, residents who have been adversely affected will soon recognize the improvements and all residents, we hope, will find shorter lines at the Post Office.

Mayor Jordan updated all on the issues related to recent flooding. While Llano County has received \$100K to help with recovery (70% targeted to water damage), it is not likely that any formula will result in HSBay receiving funds given the extensive need across Llano County. Jim McNabb shared that Applehead Island has already spent over \$100K cleaning their own canal/yard areas which were overrun with debris, boats, and vegetation. The Mayor said he had received a commitment from LCRA that the lake will be lowered down by the maximum 4 feet (pushing to 5 feet as safety for the electrical plant allows) beginning on Dec. 30th. This will give homes on the water an opportunity for deeper cleaning and to mark hazardous areas not seen below the surface with buoys for later clean-up.

Following an executive session adjournment, Mayor Pro Tem Jerry Gray officially moved for closure. Council Members then joined the crowd out in the brisk (wind free) night where the Christmas Tree lighting (where toy donation options, hot chocolate, and lots of ugly sweaters awaited).

Dianne Jones, our new Citizen of the Year – just returning from one week following hip surgery – stepped forward and turned on the lights of the lovely tree planted just south of the Police Department. For years to come – as we grow as a city – we can gather around annually to our continually growing tree and celebrate the season....and under the stars be reminded that it is always a great day (or night) to live in Horseshoe Bay.

Cynthia Clinesmith, Council Member and Public Information Officer