

Horseshoe Bay Council Comments

By Council Member Elaine Waddill

The Horseshoe Bay City Council meeting was held Tuesday, December 7, 2021 in the City Council Chambers. Mayor Cynthia Clinesmith welcomed those in attendance and invocation was given by Reverend Dr. Malcolm McQueen, followed by the pledges to the American Flag and the State of Texas Flag.

Mayor Clinesmith offered an opportunity for Public Comment. There were no public comments at this time, but Mayor Clinesmith did use this open comment time to recognize audience member Jim Jordan who was recently named Citizen of the Year by the Business Alliance for his expansive volunteer work – including publications documenting the history of this area, development of the City and the protestant church.

She then introduced representatives from the Highland Lakes Crisis Network, a network of churches who work to meet the physical, emotional, and spiritual needs of our community during times of crisis and disaster. The Network assisted during the flood three years ago and have been actively providing support during the COVID outbreak. In addition to providing meals to individuals who have food challenges, they also assist those in need of emergency shelter and homes. The Network also works with schools to identify and meet the needs of children and their families who are homeless and in need of support. Their goal is to provide a hand up (not hand out) for families to help themselves. Recently they have opened emergency facilities to house foster children. They indicated that there are children sleeping on office floors because of the need for more families who are willing to foster. A meeting to join future planning meetings in January was provided to the Council.

Patty Gillean, of HSB One Realty, presented an update on the real estate market in Horseshoe Bay. Patty shared that we have the lowest inventory of single-family homes, condo/townhomes, and unimproved lots in HSB in over 16 years. She stated that at this time there are 104 active single-family homes listed as compared to 184 in October 2020. She also shared that waterfront property, as well as median price single family home prices are up almost twenty percent. We currently have approximately two months of inventory. The price point with the biggest increase in buyers is 500K to 749K range. Additionally, Patty shared that lot sales have increased and the price of lots have increased sixty-nine percent. New construction currently has a median price of 800K with the average price of \$286.00 per square foot. At this time Patty stated that it appears that the market will continue to be strong for at least the next six months. She indicated that prices are beginning to level off and predicts that current prices will become the “new normal”. She also feels that the current interest rates will continue to hold and the demand for homes in Central Texas will continue to be strong.

Interim City Manager, Jeff Koska, provided an update regarding POA Mailbox Revenue. The City collects \$100.00 in permit fees for mailbox kiosks. The City paid for construction of two kiosks, one in Horseshoe Bay West and the other in Proper for a total of \$37,420. These two locations are part of the HSB POA. The City is collecting the \$100 mailbox kiosk fee from each new home built in this area to recover construction costs. Funds for new homes built in other POAs will be returned to those POAs to assist in Kiosk management.

Fire Chief Brent Batla provided an update on the ISO inspection of the Fire Department. He indicated that the November inspection provided valuable insight to improving department performance. The overall goal of meeting the highest ISO standard has some significant equipment costs which will be achieved over time with long range capital planning.

The Council reviewed and discussed approving a recommendation to allocate the City's 27 votes for Burnet Central Appraisal District. Each of the five current district candidates will receive a portion of the votes allocated. The Council voted to approve the Resolution.

Several applicants offering to serve on City Boards, Commissions, and Committees were given an opportunity to introduce themselves and speak prior to Council recommending final appointments after Executive Session. After the Council discusses and determines appointments everyone will receive a notification of placement decisions. This community offers a wonderful array of talented individuals willing to give their time and skills to support the growth and development of our community. We are truly blessed by their caring commitment to Horseshoe Bay. After Executive Session discussion of the Planning and Zoning and Board of Adjustment membership, public votes were held to finalize the 2022 Boards as well as all other committee assignments.

This time of the year often brings us to a reflective moment. As we look back at this year, it is our hope that your year has been an A+ in every way. We wish you peace and joy as we say good-bye to 2021 and send you hope for an even more spectacular year ahead as we welcome in 2022. As always, we invite and welcome you to join us January 18, 2022 to kick the New Year off at our next Horseshoe Bay City Council meeting.