

Horseshoe Bay Council Comments

By Council Member Elaine Waddill

The Horseshoe Bay City Council met Tuesday, February 15, 2022 at 3:00 p.m. Following the invocation by Pastor McQueen and pledges to the flags - Mayor Clinesmith renewed the City's commitment to the Mayor's Monarch Pledge. The City of Horseshoe Bay has made protecting the environment a priority. During the past 25 years there has been a sharp decline in the population of the Monarch butterfly. The Pledge is a national effort by the National Wildlife Federation to preserve the Monarch butterfly.

Fire Chief Brent Batla presented a 20 Year Service Award to Joe Bates. Joe came to the area with service years spent at Pampa and Wylie Fire Department. He started with the LBJ MUD in 2002 before the City was established and has been a dedicated and loyal employee and works to fill a variety of roles. Joe promoted to the position of Engineer for C-Shift serving out of Station 2. He holds TCFP Advanced Structure Firefighter, Advanced Fire Inspector, Inspector II, Fire Officer I, Incident Safety Officer, and Driver Operator-Pumper.

As all Horseshoe Bay Fire Department members must be dual certified, Engineer Bates holds TDSHS EMT-B certification as well. His program oversight is our PPE Testing & Maintenance Program. He is certified to perform the bi-annual cleaning and annual testing of all structural fire protection gear for the department to comply with TCFP mandates. By becoming certified and performing this testing in house, Engineer Bates has saved our taxpayers approximately \$18,000 a year over the last five years.

During the Public Comment portion of the Council meeting, two residents addressed the issue of an illegal attempt to open access from 26th street to Highway 71 through the south area of Horseshoe Bay. Each of the residents stated that they were concerned, as are most others in their area, and requested that the City be diligent in preventing this. One resident indicated that he had spoken to many others in the area and they also did not support a roadway being built and offered to provide a petition in support of the current litigation of the City against the developer trespassing across private property. The other resident stated that she was concerned about the safety for the children playing in the area.

High Ten Capital representatives provided a presentation for a proposed 200 acre development off Hwy 71 within our existing Extra Territorial Jurisdiction (ETJ) in an area close to the existing Baylor Scott White hospital. They shared the design of their proposed project and to discuss the specifics of whether it would meet the requirements for the Horseshoe Bay community. There would not be an entrance directly into the primary areas of Horseshoe Bay. The design allows for garden homes, half acre lot estate homes, and some mild commercial on the frontage of Hwy 71 – with greenspace berm and setback to maintain the required ambiance. The plan includes a club house, ponds, walking and biking trails, two parks, a butterfly garden, and a six-hole golf course.

Jon Watson of the auditing firm Brooks Watson presented the Audited Financial Report for the year ended September 30, 2021. The City received the highest rating “unmodified” for financial integrity in practice. The Audited Financial Report is available at City Hall or on the City's website.

Development Services Director Sally McFeron presented a request to the City Council to approve a Resolution directing the City Prosecutor/Attorney to file a petition with the Court regarding the status of a substandard property in Horseshoe Bay. The request is that the property owner or their representative will attend the Municipal Court hearing and provide information regarding the vacation, demolition and removal, their ability to have the work done, and a schedule for completing the work. If the work is not able to be completed by the owner, the Court will authorize the City to contract for the work to be completed and if not reimbursed by the property owner, file a lien on the property. The Council voted to approve the request.

Jeff Koska, City Manager, announced that Rick Williams has been selected to serve as the new Utilities Director. Rick took over as the Interim Director when Jeff Koska assumed the City Manager role. Rick has risen quickly through the ranks of the Utilities Department due to his work ethic, communication skills and technical abilities. In 2020, Jeff Koska began mentoring him for management as part of the department's succession planning. He has a history of excellent job performance and dedication to serving the Horseshoe Bay community and is in the process of completing his degree in Civil Engineering.

Following executive session, the Council voted to approve some key mid-year adjustments in salaries. Both the Fire and Police Depts were provided interim 'gap' adjustments to bring current salaries more in line with other area communities that have increased salaries. A full salary review for all staff is being conducted and will be a part of the financial planning for the 2022-23 year. It is anticipated to make significant costs impact as personnel salary/benefits constitutes nearly 80% of operating costs. There is also anticipation of an increase in insurance costs since last year negotiated no increase.

February has been another busy month for the city of Horseshoe Bay. We continue to work to provide the best quality service possible as we look forward to meeting the needs of a rapidly growing community. Remember that this month kicks off Oak Wilt prevention efforts and **NO TREE TRIMMING** is allowed until July. As always, we invite you to join us and share your thoughts and ideas about how we can improve as we move forward. Our next City Council meeting will be March 15, 2022, so mark your calendar and join us.