

## **From the Mayor's Desk May 2021**

### **Employees of the Year**

I take special pride in announcing that Steven Fried, Water Supervisor and Brian LeJeune, IT Manager were selected as our employees of the year. We have a large number of heroes and heroines in our ranks this year who managed everything from COVID 19 to a winter weather emergency to a systems breach that impacted more than 100,000 business entities in the country. Those circumstances make the selection of Steven and Brian even more significant than usual. I have had the privilege of working with both of these gentlemen and I will tell you they are truly outstanding. Congratulations Steven and Brian.

### **Winter Weather Emergency**

We conducted a Response to Winter Storm review with council and staff on March 29<sup>th</sup>. The first finding was that our staff performed magnificently in some very difficult circumstances. We did not lose service to our utility customers and we provided assistance to residents who receive service from other utility providers.

Significant ideas raised to make us more resilient included:

- We need to move forward with an Elevated Storage Tank (EST). This would not only provide water resilience for Zones A and B in the north and central part of the city; it would free up other water plants to serve Zone C in the south.
- We should revisit the idea of an on-site fuel station for our city vehicles. It was not possible to secure fuel at some points. Additionally, we were within 12 hours of running out of propane for emergency generators at one point with no prospect of getting additional deliveries until the roads cleared. That may encourage us to re-visit our propane storage capacity also.
- Our budget cycle should include adding in some four-wheel drive vehicles as we go through our normal replacement cycle.
- Our communications worked well but were hampered by communications distributed to unplanned recipients outside of the authorized city communications channel. This caused confusion and additional staff work to correct misinformation that got distributed.

### **State of the City Address**

The new format for delivering the State of the City Address worked very well. If you would like to get a good retrospective on the past six years as well as a good update on what happened during the winter storm event, please go to [fairoaksranchtx.org](http://fairoaksranchtx.org) and click on the rotating banner for State of the City. I was very proud of our staff members who contributed to the production of this address.

### **Water Rights Project**

Subject to delays from the winter weather emergency, we have begun follow up on the remaining wells and easements that need to have curative documents signed. We are also making arrangements for a handful of surveys that still need to be done of access easements and sanitary control easements. We have received good cooperation on finalizing these arrangements.

Tobin Maples, our City Manager, asks anyone needing to discuss specific issues with him to please call him at City Hall at 210-698-0900 or email him at [tmaples@fairoaksranchtx.org](mailto:tmaples@fairoaksranchtx.org). Additionally, our Special Legal Counsel is available to answer questions (Rhonda Jolley at 210-598-5406 or Joe Davis at 210-598-5414).

### **Boerne Ranch Estates, L.L.C. (The Reserve)**

There is no additional activity to report on this item at this time.

### **Planning and Zoning Commission**

The P&Z Commission began a diagnostic review of our Unified Development Code on March 25<sup>th</sup> at their regular meeting. Their meetings have targeted house-keeping corrective changes, clarification and statutory requirements, policy review, electronic usability and readability improvements. It is important to review and make updates to the UDC in order to organize and coordinate development processes by removing inconsistencies and eliminating outdated policies. P&Z will report back recommended changes to Council for final approval.

### **Pavement Preservation Plan**

Mike Garza, our General Engineering Consultant, presented a report on the state of our road pavement at the April 1<sup>st</sup> council meeting. This was a very interesting presentation focused on applying advanced analytical techniques to help define where the city needs to make investments in pavement preservation. The recommendations will ultimately include a combination of preservation, preventative maintenance, rehabilitation, and reconstruction. This project is a good example of the shift we have made as a city from "best guess" approaches to using sound engineering techniques to help us make good decisions regarding infrastructure investments.

### **Branding Committee Recommendations**

The Branding Committee presented its recommendations regarding Phase 1 deliverables of core values, mission statement, and vision statement to council. This sparked quite a lively conversation, just like we had in the working group that developed these deliverables. Ultimately, a majority of the council voted to accept the recommendations. I got to work on this project with several staff members as well as council members Laura Koerner and Snehal Patel. This was a very interesting project which was a significant step out from the kinds of work in which we usually engage.

### **Code of Conduct**

We completed our call for volunteers to serve on a committee to write the Code of Conduct. At a special meeting on February 25<sup>th</sup> the council selected the following five people to serve on this committee: Joe duMenil, Mike Lyle, John McCune, Shane Stolarczyk, and Jane Burton. This committee met via Zoom on March 23<sup>rd</sup>. They performed basic organization steps and elected Joe as the Chair of the committee and Jane as the Vice Chair. They agreed to meet bi-weekly for the first month in hopes of making a status report to council on May 6<sup>th</sup>. At their second meeting on April 7<sup>th</sup> they reviewed codes of conduct from other organizations and discussed core values. Their next work session is scheduled for April 21<sup>st</sup>. As agreed by council, all of the group's work sessions are private and their work will be shown in periodic presentations to council in public meetings.

### **BISD Demographic Update**

Rich Sena from the Boerne Independent School District Board of Trustees presented a demographic update from the school district. The basic story is that growth is accelerating and likely to continue.

### **Council Actions**

We had a number of city council actions in the past couple of meetings that I have not covered separately. They are summarized below:

April 1<sup>st</sup> meeting:

- Approved first reading of an ordinance allowing for landscape irrigation systems for leak appeal consideration and ratifying temporary waiver of plumbing permit requirements for repairs from the winter storm.
- Authorized the City Manager to sign a Professional Service Agreement (PSA) with Malone and Wheeler for engineering consulting services for solids handling volute dewatering press system. This will reduce the need for costly sludge hauling and should reduce the odor issues we have been encountering.

April 15<sup>th</sup> meeting:

- Authorized City Manager to develop a Strategic Action Plan for the Dietz Elkhorn Road Corridor
- Approved first reading of an Ordinance amending the City's Water Conservation Plan
- Authorized the City Manager to submit an application for and to accept Federal Funds from the Federal Emergency Management Agency related to the winter storm event (anticipated \$30,000). This is reimbursement of 75% of the relevant costs such as overtime.
- Authorized the City Manager to submit a grant application and accept payment of Federal Funds related to the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (allocated \$2,100,000). These funds can be used for a variety of projects related to infrastructure.

- Authorized City Manager to sign PSA with Matrix Consulting Group for a Police Standards and Cover Utilization Study
- Authorized City Manager to sign PSA with Emergency Services Consulting International for a Fire and EMS Standards of Cover and Utilization Study
- Accepted grant from Kendall County Citizen's Law Enforcement Academy Alumni Association to FORPD

I encourage you to read about these items in the council packages on our website. They are significant pieces of work that have been in the works for quite a while.

### **Oak Wilt Season**

Please note that per city ordinance, the maintenance of ALL oak trees, including pruning, trimming, cutting and removal, is prohibited February 1<sup>st</sup> through June 30<sup>th</sup>. This timeframe is when fungal spore formation and nitidulid beetle (insect vector of the disease) are highest!

Exceptions to the rule include the following: clearing of branches posing a danger to life or property; for purposes of residential or commercial development; for maintenance performed by utility, phone and cable services; AND clearing of branches damaged due to the winter storm.

If you have an eligible project or have any questions, please contact the City's Environmental Project Manager at (210) 698-0900.

### **Declaration of Local Disaster**

We have had no changes in the declarations since the last time we reported. We drafted the Emergency Ordinance to be continuing.

As most of you know, the Governor created a rule that outdoor gatherings of more than 10 persons within city limits requires the approval of the mayor. **That rule has now been eliminated so there is no need to fill out these requests any longer.**

I want to once again thank our residents and our businesses for their cooperation during these difficult times. **Please keep wearing your masks in public places where social distancing is impossible.**

It is still taking time to get vaccines, but City of Boerne has established a sign up list. I have gotten good reports about how well these sessions are being run.

### **Election Information**

Voting for our municipal elections began on April 19<sup>th</sup>. It is my understanding that a total of 264 people voted on the first day. Early voting runs through April 27<sup>th</sup> with Election Day on May 1<sup>st</sup>. The voting this year will be at the historic schoolhouse on

the grounds of Van Raub Elementary School on Dietz-Elkhorn. The historic schoolhouse is on the left front of the campus as you face the school.

We want to thank Fair Oaks Ranch Homeowners Association (FORHA), Keith Domke from *The Boerne Star*, and the Hill Country Conservative Neighbors for presenting forums in which residents could meet the candidates for public office. These were good opportunities for residents to hear the candidates discuss their views on various topics of public interest. We also want to thank the candidates who participated in these forums for making themselves available.

### **Resident Volunteers/City Staffers at Work**

- Facebook fans can find us at City of Fair Oaks Ranch, TX. In the last month we reached about 4,500 people with our posts. A little over 1,600 people reacted to the postings by liking, sharing, or posting them. We have had 24 new page likes and 27 new page followers in the past month.
- We now have a little over 4,800 residents accessing us through Nextdoor and we had almost 10,000 impressions on this tool during the month in which we had 12 posts.
- The State of the City address has had 102 views as of the time I am writing this.

### **Adios**

This is my final edition of *From the Mayor's Desk*. As I return to private life, I want all of you to know that it has been a privilege for me to serve as the mayor of our city for the last five years after serving one year as a council member. I have appreciated your support and the many kind comments I have gotten on this publication.

As residents, we are blessed with both a very talented city staff and an outstanding group of citizen volunteers, drawn from all over our city. That is the true strength of our city. We really do look after each other on The Ranch.

I also want to recognize my wife, Dedie, for her fine service as First Lady of Fair Oaks Ranch. Dedie has always been willing to go the extra mile to get volunteers organized to do things like holiday decorations of our campus. She also made a very fine Mrs. Claus several times! As I mentioned on the State of the City address, she has been both my strongest supporter and my most vocal critic!

We will be canvassing votes on May 11<sup>th</sup>. As the elections get completed, let's all come back together as neighbors and work for the good of our city. Let's continue managing growth responsibly and protecting our quality of life.

All the best to you and your families,

Garry Manitzas  
Mayor  
Fair Oaks Ranch