



City of Hitchcock

Newsletter October 2021

REPORT FROM THE MAYOR

I would like to give you all a progress report on the City. Around the end of the fiscal year (end of September), citizens can expect an annual report from me detailing some of the things the City of Hitchcock is doing. Sort of like a City of Hitchcock Address. Below is a summary of things that have happened... and things still to come. None of the items below are individual accomplishments but were made together as a team with the other members of City Council and staff...it takes everyone working together (past and present) to accomplish all of the positive things going on in town.

- For the second year in a row, we lowered the property tax rate to \$0.053 per \$100 of taxable value. The average homestead this year is \$159,656.00 so that comes out to \$846.18 or \$2.32 per day for city services.
- We have a healthy fund balance. Before Ms. Gelles arrived about two and a half (2 1/2) years ago, the fund balance was at \$94,852.00; and with the current budget that was just approved, we estimate to have \$5,646,374.00 in the fund balance at the end of this fiscal year.
- In the past 2 and 1/2 years, we have been awarded over \$7,000,000.00 in grant funds. We have also been applying for any grant that we are eligible for.
- Completed mill and overlay of Jackson, Neville, Bulldog and Lawrence and base reconstruction of Hacker, Burns, and Renaud. Total cost of this project was \$1,111,111.11 and the city portion was \$269,598 and the rest was covered by the County bond.
- TxDOT is working on the contract execution and then construction will begin work on FM 2004. The length of the project will be 6.9 miles from SH 6 to the Brazoria County Line. It includes widening the shoulders, adding passing lanes, and adding some turn lanes at various locations. Pavement improvements are also included in the construction.
- The county has been doing drainage improvements around Jay Rd. and Blimp Base Rd. called the Highland Bayou Jay Road Ditch Improvements and cost around \$731,000.00. They have also been working on the diversionary canal behind Sunset Creek. That project is called Highland Bayou Slope Stability Project and cost \$598,000.00.
- New subdivision off 2004 north of Highway 6 should be completed by December 2021. These are rental properties to make affordable housing available to middle class families. They are not low-income properties.
- Scottish Inn and Suites is anticipated to be completed by the end of the year. The city collects a hotel occupancy tax on hotel stays within the city limits. This tax can be used for things that can help promote our town.
- Started replacing street signs around town and TxDOT replaced all of the signs along Highway 6. We will be replacing sections of town each year until all street signs have been replaced.
- We purchased a building that will become the new city hall at the corner of Highway 6 and Delany. We will also add a parking lot at that corner along with completely renovating the inside of the building.
- CenterPoint will be upgrading our streetlights to LED over the next year.
- We (the voters) approved updating our charter last election which updated a lot of items that were outdated. A change was also made to become a council/manager form of government, which guarantees we will always have a professional running the day-to-day operations.

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DATES TO REMEMBER

- 10/18/2021 City Council Meeting and Public Hearing at 6:00 p.m.
- 10/26/2021 Planning and Zoning Meeting at 6:00 p.m.

REPORT FROM THE MAYOR (CONTINUED)

- We have a new Economic Development Corporation (EDC) board, new EDC director, new website, and new logo. The EDC is funded by sales tax, which does not take away from the city funds. It is funded in addition to what the city receives in sales tax. The EDC is in the process of purchasing the old school board building; which will become the new EDC office. We are still dealing with some issues that will need to be resolved, but I can guarantee you that moving forward every decision made will have our community at the forefront.
- We have been updating our current city boards and committees with new members who want to serve the community.
- Harborwalk TIRZ – We were finally able to figure out that this will end Dec. 31st, 2030. Unfortunately, the city has received zero (0) property taxes from that development as the TIRZ was setup to refund the developer 100% of the tax revenues until they get their investment back or the TIRZ expires. College of the Mainland (COM) and the County agreed to a TIRZ at 20 years, so their last payment was made in December 2019.
- Possible new subdivision development coming to 2004 at the county lines. It is called Gulf Breeze, but we are still working through the details. The deal would need to benefit the city and developer equally. The development has several benefits to west side of 2004 (south of Highway 6); like drainage improvements and water and sewer extended along 2004 to the end of the city limits. Also, the additional rooftops will help attract businesses and possibly a grocery store. Currently, the city collects less than \$50 from taxes from the 300 acres that may be developed. After development, we would collect over 1 million which could be used for projects around town, plus additional staff to support the increase in residents. We have created a team of attorneys and financial personnel to help lead us through the process (paid for by the developer but chosen by the city). Also, with the increase in rooftops, we have the potential to keep lowering property taxes as more residents share the cost of city services.
- New resort style RV Park coming soon. Hopefully construction will start in the next couple of months. When completed, there will be around 645 RV spots.
- We ended the lease agreement between the city and chamber so that the chamber is in full control of their property. The city and chamber are working together to bring back the community feel and there is a lot of excitement with the plans for the grounds.
- New police equipment, additional staff, plus pay increases and adjustments were included in the new budget. We have slowly been closing the pay gap and the police department has been upgrading/purchasing new equipment over the last couple of years to provide additional safety to the officers.
- We are doing a lot of work on the water towers and tanks, plus creating a PM schedule so that all water towers and tanks are maintained properly.
- We have been adding new equipment to the public works department to help with various maintenance issues and projects around town.
- We have a 5-year capital improvement plan as well as a vehicle and equipment replacement plan for our fleet so that we can spread cost/replacements out over years.

Here are a few items for this year and some of this is funded through grants:

General Fund

Municipal Complex - \$1,050,000
Police Vehicles & Equipment (Gov. Capital)- \$52,339
Street & Drainage Equipment (Gov. Capital)- \$78,391
Street Maintenance- \$300,000
Downtown Revitalization Grant Project- \$470,282
Drainage Projects- \$50,000

Utility Fund - Sewer

WWTP Improvements GLO CDBG MIT GRANT-
\$3,634,655
American Relief Funds- \$1,960,978
Equipment Replacement- \$29,427
New F750 Truck W/Crane (Gov. Capital)- \$31,487
SCADA System (Lift Stations)-\$60,000
Smoke Testing and I&I Repairs- \$200,000
Sanitary Sewer Improvements- \$100,000
Upgrade Lift Station Controls and Electrical- \$36,000
Rehab 2 WWTP Manholes- \$55,000

Utility Fund - Water

Equipment Replacement (Gov. Capital)- \$29,472
Replacing Undersized Water Lines- \$402,500
CDBG Disaster Recovery Grant- \$378,389
Recoat Elevated Storage Tank – Neville- \$375,875
Rehab of Elevated Storage Tank –Redfish- \$ 480,490
Neville Ground Storage Tank- \$162,982
Upgrade Water Tower – MLK- \$165,288
Water Line Replacement- \$90,000
SCADA System Upgrade for Water System - \$35,000

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REPORT FROM THE MAYOR (CONTINUED)

I would like to thank the City Council, City of Hitchcock staff, community volunteers, and previous Mayors and Council members. Without you, none of these accomplishments would have been made possible. If you have any suggestions or ideas on what you would like to see the City of Hitchcock accomplish, please email me at mayor@cityofhitchcock.org.

Below are some of the department's major accomplishment:

City Secretary's Office:

- ⇒ Assisted in obtaining over \$1.8 million dollars in grant and federal relief funding.
- ⇒ Making progress on digitizing City Records, Minutes, Agendas, and contracts at this time.
- ⇒ Creation of a monthly newsletter for the citizens of Hitchcock.
- ⇒ Maintain the City Website and public alerts.

Police Department:

- ⇒ Started a Marine Unit with a donated boat.
- ⇒ Four officers received training to become Certified in Boat Operations.
- ⇒ Continued Chief of the Week training officers.
- ⇒ Officers attended Emergency Vehicle Operations Course in Angleton.
- ⇒ Officers attended Tactical Building Search Training.
- ⇒ Completed HGAC grant period for Environmental Compliance Officer.
- ⇒ Mass Gathering Ordinance written, presented, and passed by the City Council.
- ⇒ Purchased a new patrol vehicle for Traffic Interdiction.
- ⇒ Prohibited Parking Ordinance written, presented, and passed by the City Council.
- ⇒ Graduated five officers now TCOLE certified Training Instructors.
- ⇒ Graduated one TCOLE Certified Firearms Instructor.
- ⇒ Three supervisors graduated from FBI-LEEDA with the Trilogy Award.
- ⇒ The Police Department implemented a Criminal Investigations Division with two investigators.
- ⇒ Implementation and successful completion of the TAPS Program at the Middle School.
- ⇒ Continued success with the R U OK Program for Seniors.
- ⇒ Graduated the 2nd Class Citizens Police Academy.
- ⇒ Hosted Vaccine Sites for the City of Hitchcock.
- ⇒ Two vehicle seizures for felony related offenses.
- ⇒ The Police Department worked with local media to produce positive stories regarding the city.
- ⇒ Spear-headed two successful mural projects as part of Citywide Beautification Program.
- ⇒ Conducted major investigations resulting in the seizure of multiple stolen trailers.
- ⇒ Received grant funding for ammunition from the NRA.
- ⇒ Received grant funding for Ballistic Vest.
- ⇒ Numerous food and water distribution points during the Pandemic.
- ⇒ Maintained continuous public safety operations during the Pandemic and the Winter Freeze.
- ⇒ Multiple arrests for Illegal Dumping with City Limits.

Community Development:

- ⇒ Development and Implementation of a SOP for FEMA Damage Assessment Process is almost complete.
- ⇒ Implementation of Floodplain Development Permit requirement.
- ⇒ Creation of Indoor Firing Range Ordinance.
- ⇒ Hiring of full time Building Inspector.
- ⇒ Team Building activity with PW associates..

Public Works:

Water Operation ~

- ⇒ Water storage tank rehabilitation and maintenance program (project to start Q4 of 2021).
- ⇒ Water system web-based SCADA (project completed).
- ⇒ Neville elevated storage tank MOV replacement and new piping and valves (project completed).
- ⇒ Neville plant MOV supply valve replacement (project completed).
- ⇒ Neville plant SCADA system control and transducer replacement/upgrade (project in process).
- ⇒ Neville plant motor replacement for pump 5 (project complete).
- ⇒ Blimp Base plant MOV supply valve replacement (project completed).

Wastewater Projects ~

- ⇒ Oxidation ditch clean-out. Removal of 150 Cubic yards of silt removed.
- ⇒ 3.6 Million-dollar grant award for the Rehab of the Wastewater Treatment facility.
- ⇒ 1.9 Million-dollar American relief funding for continued rehab.
- ⇒ 1.2 Million-dollar sanitary & drainage grant project .

Street & drainage ~

- ⇒ The 900K purchase of new equipment for the Public Works operation.
- ⇒ Galveston county assisted bond project which rehabbed 5 of the City streets & facilities
- ⇒ Supplemental Environmental program via TCEQ which allowed the Scada implementation @ 5 City Lift Stations. Main WWTP, Blimp base, Delesandri, Fairwood & little Bend LS).

FLOODPLAIN DEVELOPMENT

If you are proposing development of any kind, within the City of Hitchcock (constructing a new building, modifications to an existing building, clearing land, placing fill dirt, grading land, etc....) that is in a floodplain or Coastal High Hazard Area (Zones V1-30, VE, and/or V), you must submit an application for a Floodplain Development Permit to the Community Development Department. Depending upon the type of development you are proposing, additional forms may be required. For example, all new buildings and substantial building improvements in the city require an Elevation Certificate to document that the lowest floor of the building is elevated to a certain height relative to the anticipated flood crest of the “base flood” event.

Typically, an applicant completes Section I of the Floodplain Development Permit Application and submits the information to the City of Hitchcock Floodplain Administrator (FPA). The FPA reviews the submission and determines whether, or not, additional information is needed. If it is, the FPA will request the additional information from the applicant. Once all required materials have been submitted, the FPA will make a permitting decision and either issue or deny the requested Floodplain Development Permit.

Please understand that a Floodplain Development Permit is only a permit to allow the proposed development activity. It is not a permit to, for example, build a house, construct a baseball field, install a drainage ditch or septic system, or to grade a parcel of land. Before the house can be constructed and occupied, or the developed land used, a Building Permit must be obtained for the actual construction.

The FPA will perform an inspection after the project is completed, or perhaps several inspections throughout the progress of the project, to make sure that the development is compliant with the requirements of the local Flood Damage Prevention Ordinance. Once the Compliance Certificate has been issued, the process has been completed.

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ANIMAL CONTROL			(409) 948-2485
MOSQUITO CONTROL			(800) 337-4289
GARBAGE COLLECTION	AMERIWASTE	customerservice@ameriwaste.net	(281) 331-8400
AFTER HOUR WATER/ SEWER/WWTP			(409) 795-7595
NON EMERGENCY POLICE			(409) 986-5559
STREET LIGHT OUTAGES			(800) 332-7143