

LETTER TO LEON VALLEY CITIZENS

From Mayor Chris Riley

October 20, 2023, 2023

HAPPY AUTUMN!

Early Voting for the November 7th Election on 14 Constitutional Amendments begins on Monday, October 23rd and ends on November 3rd. Please see Early Voting Calendar in today's ENEWS. **An application for a Mail-In Ballot must be received at the Elections office by 5 pm on October 27th.**

Saturday, October 28th – Coffee with Mayor & Council – 9 -11 am at the Leon Valley Conference Center. No specific agenda except to hear from our citizens and answer questions factually or on a specific policy. Hope to see you there!

Saturday, October 28th – Halloween at the Huebner-Onion Homestead from 5:30 – 7:00 pm – games and spooky stories for the kids. At 7 pm a Movie – 1949 Horror Comedy Classic will be shown on the grounds. Bring your blanket and chair. 6613 Bandera Road. Free Admission. Park at City Hall.

CITY COUNCIL MEETING –OCTOBER 17, 2023

The following are highlights of council actions from the October 17th council regular meeting beginning at 6:30 p.m.:

Citizens to Be Heard – Council heard from 9 citizens who spoke against a potential development on 18 acres in the City of San Antonio (COSA) at the dead end of Huebner Road and along the back yards of homes on Grist Mill. Two planning meetings were set in COSA, but were cancelled. The problem is the land is landlocked in San Antonio and the developer may want to open up Huebner road as a way for those potential homes to exit that subdivision. Once we know more information, a public meeting will be held.

PRESENTATIONS

Award of Appreciation – presented to Yvonne Acuna who is retiring after 23 years of service with the City of Leon Valley as a Utility Billing Clerk, Public Works Administrator and Assistant Finance Director.

Proclamation in recognition of Municipal Court Week, November 6-10, 2023 was presented to the Leon Valley Court Clerk staff and new administrator, Tiffany Guterrez. Our Municipal Court was established in 1955, and its goal is to impart fair and impartial justice to all citizens.

Short Term Rental Discussion on Draft Ordinance - Last summer at council's direction, the city attorney drafted a short term rental ordinance (STR). After an initial discussion and no consensus reached, each council member was to redline the draft ordinance on what they wanted to delete from the ordinance. The summary table reflecting each councilmember's red lines were presented and discussed at length. There were differing opinions expressed. In the spirit of compromise, the city manager suggested a very basic draft ordinance which would include registration, distance between STR's; and a brochure on safety concerns as a start. The council agreed (4 ayes, 1 nay) for the manager to proceed in bringing back another draft ordinance at the November 7th council meeting. The council heard from citizens at the meeting, and received numerous emails from citizens in the community on this issue. The City Attorney expressed the opinion that this is a very new area of the law with some legal questions unsettled.

Leon Valley Library designated as a Family Place Library – The library received a grant from the Texas State Library and Archives Commission to become a Family Place Library. This is an initiative which promotes a national model for transforming public libraries into welcoming, developmentally appropriate early learning environments for young children, their parents and caregivers. The designation supports early brain development and encourages parents as first teachers and addresses all aspects of a child's development to help build a foundation for learning during the important first years of life. Regina Reed, librarian, is trained through this program to help develop learning activities for parents and their infants up to 18 months of age, expanding the programming in our library. Congratulations!

Leon Valley Monthly Financial Report ending September 30, 2023 was given by Carol Goering, Finance Director. Overall, the city's revenues and expenditures are all within what was budgeted for FY 2023. A budget adjustment transferring monies not spent in FY 2023 to FY 2024 will be brought back by the end of the year for council action.

Creation of a New Building and/or Façade Improvement Grant Program was presented by Roque Salinas, Economic Development Director. The objective of this program is to enhance aesthetics and promote economic development in our city. There are 15 eligibility criteria which applicants must meet, including the commercial building must be at least 20 years old. Examples of exterior improvement projects are façade restoration, signage, awnings and canopies, exterior painting and window and door repair/replacement. Funding will be on a case by case basis, which may include direct financial assistance (subject to available funds) and/or tax abatements.

REGULAR AGENDA

Discussion on Granting a Fence Variance in Seneca Estates - The applicant requested construction of a 6 ft. fence in his front yard, which the code does not allow. After looking at google maps, the fence would be constructed along his side yard and encroach into the front yard, in a cul-de-sac. Council tabled this item and asked the applicant to talk to his neighbors and bring back in writing their position on constructing his fence.

Approved the Updated Leon Valley Public Library Meeting Room Policy – The policy clarified the guidelines for public use and does not apply to the library programs sponsored or co-sponsored by the library or the City. No commercial, sales or profit-making uses of the meeting room is allowed. Additionally, the meeting room may not be used for any political event, open forums, town halls or campaigns, unless sponsored by the library or City. The meeting room cannot be used for any private event such as a wedding, showers or birthday parties. Reservations are on a first-come, first-served basis and must be free and open to the public.

Kinman House has a New Tenant: Poppy's Café! Council voted to direct the City Manager to enter into a Lease Agreement with this Café. More details will be forthcoming regarding when they will open, hours of operations, etc. Welcome to Poppy's Café!

*Our next regular city council meeting is scheduled for **Tuesday, November 7th at 6:00 p.m.** at city hall. At the annual conference, a seminar on how to improve the efficiency of our council meetings, was attended by the majority of counsel. Ideas from the seminar will be discussed and possible action may be taken.*

The cooler weather has been a wonderful relief from the unbearable hot weather we experienced this summer. Now we need rain!

We are here to serve you. Please do not hesitate to contact me or any councilmember if we can be of any assistance.

Sincerely, Chris
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