

LETTER FROM MAYOR CHRIS RILEY

10/07/22

The City Council has had a very busy week. Monday, October 3rd was our city council meeting, changed to allow the council to participate in National Night Out on Tuesday, October 4th. Congratulations to the Pavona Place, Adair/ Countess Adria and Forest Ridge neighborhoods for hosting neighborhood parties to get to know their neighbors and meet council and city staff, including police and fire department personnel.

On Wednesday thru Friday, the Mayor and Council, with the City Manager, attended the annual Texas Municipal League conference in San Antonio. We attended seminars on how to make our city safer, attract new businesses, and improve quality of life through our parks and green space, among other interesting topics.

Our key-note speaker, Dr. Rick Rigsby, (*The Responsibility of Leaders in Times of Uncertainty*) emphasized returning to basics. Start where you are, with the resources you have and do what you can. Don't blame others or make excuses - own it. Do not judge others, be early, be kind, and be a servant. Ego is the anesthesia that deadens the pain of stupidity. Elected officials are here to help and serve the citizens.

CITY COUNCIL MEETING – OCTOBER 3RD

The following are brief highlights of council actions from the October 3rd council meeting:

- **Proclamation to NISD in Recognition of World Teacher's Day** given to Marshall High School teacher Courtney Schermerhorn. The City of Leon Valley encouraged the members of our community to "Be a Light for Leon Valley teachers" by placing a light blue ribbon outside your homes or businesses the week of October 5th in support of all our educators.

- **John Marshall High School Traffic Calming Discussion** – The problem is student traffic before and after school in the Monte Robles neighborhood. Leon Valley Public Works Director Moritz, NISD Board of Trustee M'Lissa Chumbley, City of San Antonio (COSA) traffic engineer, Chris Georges, and Leon Valley Fire and Police Chiefs Naughton and Gonzalez, all presented on the issue of the impact of one entrance into John Marshall High School at Eckhert & Bluebird. The City Council also heard from a number of citizens in and around the Monte Robles area, as

well as the Pastor at Grace Fellowship Church on Bluebird. The costs of closing the roads by either gates, putting in a culdesac or a hammerhead configuration ranged from \$96,000 - \$2.4 million. After a lengthy discussion, there was consensus the three options for closing the streets were cost prohibitive and alternative methods of traffic calming should be explored. Specific suggestions include increasing the timing of the COSA traffic light at Eckhert & Bluebird, and/or adding a crosswalk and school zone on Huebner Road with flashing yellow lights. We are committed to work with NISD, COSA, Grace Fellowship Church, and parents and citizens of Leon Valley to determine acceptable solutions. The goal is to **reduce** speeding, the number of buses, and traffic congestion around school hours in the Monte Robles neighborhood. NISD has already reduced the number of buses in the neighborhood from 38 to 22.

We are working collaboratively to set up a joint meeting in the near future with all entities involved and will give ample notice as to the date/time selected. I want to thank everyone who came to the meeting and participated. It was a civil dialogue between all parties and a true example of democracy in action!

- **Capital Facilities Oversight Committee Final Report** – Melinda Moritz, Public Works Director, summarized the recommendations of the committee to council which has been meeting since mid-2021: Construct a new Public Works administrative building with funding (estimated at \$2 million). Funding would be from a bond election once interest rates have lowered or at Council’s discretion. Both the Forest Oaks and Leon Valley Community Pools are in need of improvements, including ADA compliance. The committee recommended that the City demolish the Forest Oaks pool building, replace it with a prefabricated building, correct ADA issues and replace baby pool with splash pool.

The citizen survey was very evenly split between whether one of our pool facilities should be replaced with a recreational facility, and how to fund improvements. The Library Annex is recommended to be demolished and a new building installed on a site near the library. The committee recommended naming the building the Carol Poss Archive and Education Center. They recommended this be part of a bond package and/or grant funding. The Raymond Rimkus Park restrooms were recommended to be replaced with prefabricated buildings and funded through a grant from the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department. The Council voted to sunset this committee until a bond election, the time to be determined.

- **Annual Christmas Tree Lighting** – Council voted to hold the event on **Monday, December 5th** with the lighting held outside and the entertainment inside the Community Center. This will include the Beethoven Band, as well as Leon Valley Elementary Choir and Pat Neff Middle School Band. Of course, Santa Claus will arrive in style for the children who attend. Please mark your calendars!

- Heard a request for a **budget adjustment for \$633,167 from the Stormwater fund balance to fund Engineering and Design of a Flood and Erosion Control Project in Huebner Creek**. Final approval of this item will be voted upon at the October 18th meeting.

- Council voted to **amend and renew the Juvenile Curfew Ordinance** to remove the prohibition of minors to be in any public place in the city between the hours of 9 am and 3:30 pm, and to change the prohibition of minors in any public place in the city between the hours of midnight (changed from 11 pm) and 6 a.m.

Our next regular city council meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, October 18th at 6:30 p.m. at city hall. The City is changing from the Granicas streaming program to Municode for council meetings. Please bear with us as we get all the kinks worked out. Thank you to James Lee, Helotes Echo, who live-streamed our October 3rd council meeting on YouTube. Those of you who tried to get online in the usual manner and could not find the meeting, please visit our city's website to get the link from this week's council meeting. Our apologies for any inconvenience this may have caused.

DID YOU KNOW?

1. **Tuesday, November 11th is the last day to register to vote for the November 8th state and local elections.** Visit the votetexas.gov website or call Bexar County elections department at (210) 335-8683 for assistance. Pick up a voter registration card at city hall. You can also request a mail in ballot if you are over 65 and/or will be out of town on November 8th.

2. **Early voting for the November 8th election runs from October 24th thru November 4th.** The Leon Valley Conference Center is an early voting polling site.

Hope you are enjoying the cooler weather! Any questions/concerns, especially with regard to the Home Rule Charter ballot language which is on the November ballot? Please call or email me or any of your council members. Thank you.

Sincerely, Chris
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