

LETTER FROM MAYOR CHRIS RILEY

12/9/22

LIGHTING UP LEON VALLEY FOR THE HOLIDAYS!

On Monday of this week, the City Council, Staff, Citizens, Santa & Mrs. Claus and Blue Santa from the Leon Valley Police Department, all helped bring in the holiday season with our annual Tree Lighting ceremony at the Community/Conference Center greenspace. We began with entertainment from John Marshall High School (JMHS) Jazz Band, with free donuts and coffee donated by Dunkin Donuts and free hot chocolate from our Kettle Corn sponsor, while supplies lasted. We had a GREAT turnout!

Following the music from JMHS, I read a Proclamation declaring the opening of the holiday season with a count-down to turn on the multi-colored lights in this area. Entertainment continued in the Community Center by the Leon Valley Elementary Choir and the Pat Neff Middle School band. Santa was there to meet and speak with any child who wanted to sit on his lap.

Special thanks to the Public Works department, under the leadership of Director Moritz, who painstakingly wrapped lights around all the trees, plus built and set up other decorations on the grounds, including a huge Christmas tree. Every year Public Works has expanded the lighting in the area and it shows! Please drive by and take a look. The lights will be on through January 2, 2023.

Thanks to our Community Relations Director, Crystal Miranda, for organizing this event, including obtaining sponsors and entertainment and communication of this event on our various social media sites. Let the festivities begin!

CITY COUNCIL MEETING –DECEMBER 6TH

The following are highlights of council actions from the December 6th council meeting:

We started with an executive session for another update of the **Vista Del Rey Apartment lawsuit** filed by the City of Leon Valley to address and correct various code enforcement issues. We also had a discussion on the lease with Cha Cha's New Gen Cafe on Evers Road; its lease term is expiring at the end of January, 2023.

After the executive session, the council heard four presentations:

1. Discussion on Proposed Skate Park, including Budget and Procurement Method. The proposed skate park is located at the Crystal Hills Park at the end of Shadow Mist Street, across the street from the soccer field. The 2.75 acres was dedicated to the city in 2005. The plan is to build a permeable paver parking lot on 1.5 acres and to add a skate facility on the remaining .75 acres. Staff presented three proposals received by the City of Seguin for a similar project with a budget of between \$300,000-\$500,000 and recommend that the City hire Spa Skate Park for a design/build project. The City budgeted \$70,000 for a skate facility from American Rescue Funds (ARP) in this year's budget. Council has requested a representative from the company to make a presentation to council at the next council meeting, if possible.

2. Cost Estimates for New Park Amenities – Public Works Director Moritz presented cost estimates on the following items for Council's consideration: Replastering/Plumbing of (2) Leon Valley pools: \$180,000; Rock Climbing Wall; \$24,640; and adding Pickle Ball at existing tennis courts, including resurfacing, restriping, and equipment; \$50,000. Council consensus was to go forth with getting bids for the two pools and pickle ball courts, in addition to the above action on the skate facility.

3. Open Meetings Act Training – The Open Meetings Act (OMA) Applies to city councils *or* any city committee or board which has rulemaking or quasi-judicial power. It was clarified that, in addition to city council, this would apply *only* to the Zoning Commission and the Board of Adjustment. All other city committees are advisory only and are not required to take the training under the OMA, but it is encouraged. Council moved by a vote of 4-1 to make the OMA Training optional for all city advisory committees.

4. Townhall Meeting Topics for January 28, 2023: Council discussed adding the following topics to be addressed at the 12th Annual Town Hall: How to spend the remaining \$1.6 million dollars in ARP funds; Preparing for a water and/or electric shut down; Annual report from the Leon Valley Historical Society; Update on the Bandera Road re-development project; and City Manager annual report. Discussion was held as to what is the best day and time to hold this meeting for maximum participation. What do you think? Please give us your feedback.

REGULAR AGENDA

1. Follow up discussion to Amend the Leon Valley Code of Ordinances **to Dissolve the Tree Advisory Board and Assign those duties to the Park Commission.** Council requested the Park Commission and Tree Advisory be advised of this agenda before action be taken. After a lengthy discussion, council voted to consolidate the Tree Advisory with the Park Commission giving Council the direct authority for hearing variances. Staff will develop a policy and by-laws defining the scope for the Earthwise Living Committee (since the committee has operated without formal structure since it was established in 1989).

2. Council **approved a Resolution of the Leon Valley City Council authorizing a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the City and the Leon Valley Historical Society.** This is a continuation of a partnership to work together on the restoration and eventual opening of a museum at the Huebner-Onion Homestead and Stagecoach Stop. Term of the MOU is for seven years, with annual reporting and a yearly requirement that Form 990 with the IRS be submitted (which the Society has already been doing).

3. **Approved an In-Kind Grant Assistance to the AARP Foundation for Tax Preparation Services.** Free tax assistance will be held every Tuesday and Thursday in the Community Center, beginning Feb. 7, 2023, through April 13, 2023. The hours are 9 am – 3 pm.

4. Council **approved funding of \$10,000 from the Economic/Community Development fund to cover part of the costs of a Backflow Prevention Device** at We Care Shopping Center on Bandera Road.

5. Approved an updating of the **Leon Valley Public Library Policy reallocating the final decision on challenged materials from the Library Director to the City Council.**

Our next regular city council meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, December 20th, 6:30 p.m. at city hall. Our January 3rd meeting has been cancelled due to the holidays. Our first meeting in 2023 is scheduled on January 17th, 2023.

DID YOU KNOW?

- **Blue Santa Project** – The Leon Valley Police Department created this program to provide local families in need with assistance in providing their children with Christmas gifts. If you know of a family who could benefit from this program or if you would like to volunteer, please contact the Leon Valley Police Department at **(210) 684-6557**.

- Do you want to know what's going on in Leon Valley? Sign up on the **NOTIFY ME** link on the city's website at www.leonvalleytexas.gov for ENEWS and council and committee meeting agendas.

The Council and I thank you for the trust you have placed in us as your elected officials. Know you can call on us if you have a city issue. Please stay safe, healthy and cherish every day.

Sincerely, Chris
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