

Hello Neighbors!

YOUR City Council met today following a full Monday Budget Workshop. While it wasn't as lively as last month discussing Doug the Rooster and his harem of chickens....it was a day of good work and causes for pride.

Dr. John Duncan, Co-Pastor of The Church at Horseshoe Bay, led the invocation. He **invited all to the upcoming *Celebration Services***, a series of contemporary worship services to be offered on August 5th, Sept. 2nd, Sept. 30th, and Oct. 21st. The church is exploring offering dual service options, traditional and contemporary, as a means of opening arms to the community diverse worship approaches. These four dates will allow current members and new community neighbors to determine their preferred worship approach. Services are held at 8:30 and 11:00 a.m.

As always – community comment was welcomed. Two rose (with five others in attendance) to speak to **support consideration for a Dog Park** (in response to the news article requesting community to express interest). The Mayor recalled prior efforts to have a committee examine the process and options without success. The citizens were encouraged to develop their proposal, based upon review of other similar city parks, and identify level of community interest through a self-formed study group. One individual, not present, provided a letter of opposition to a park with a listing of concerns and information from other community park challenges.

Lew Cohn, Managing Editor of the Highlander newspaper and Secretary of the Hill Country Community Theatre, encouraged all to come enjoy the musical performance of ***Rodgers and Hammerstein's State Fair***, beginning Thursday, July 19th. A diverse cast of all ages is prepared to lift up song and dance and overall spirits for attendees (with Lew taking a key role in the action!) **Go enjoy live theatre courtesy of your talented neighbors!**

The manager of the Hole in One Bar and Grill requested the Council consider amending its current policy forbidding the use of **Open/Close signs** (even unlit). She stated their efforts to communicate and encourage customer engagement was hampering business success. The council will take this up for review at the August meeting.

Kristen Woolley, Finance Director, presented the third quarter financial report for 2018 which reflected all departments on track and compliant within the approved budget. Kirsten and her team were saluted for the excellent budget packets and organized data/information presented at the workshop on Monday as well. That workshop also provided an opportunity to hear updates from the Technology Team internal planning for future use and security, the status of Phase I upgrades at the Fire Department, and reports from each department regarding anticipated needs for the upcoming fiscal year. These reports will inform and guide decision-making as the council looks to set the final budget and tax rate in the coming months.

The City Manager departmental reports offered general updates. Of note was the completion of over 3500 lots mowed prior to July 4th to let HSBay shine for guests. Other reviews underscored the level of proactive work by our police and fire, averaging over 20 calls per day per department. It was a good

time to applaud the first responders of the positive feedback council receives about the professionalism and positive approaches of the teams.

Several items surrounding construction were discussed. With the amount of building across the city, the staff and council want to be sure policy supports the most efficient and safe standards – without imposing excessive restrictions to successful cost and time management by builders. The council expressed its appreciation to a sub-committee of the quality home builders in the community who took it on themselves to review concerns and offer their suggestions and commitments as neighborhood partners.

As a result of presentations by staff and builder input (including representation by the local Homebuilders Assn), the council:

- Approved raising building standards from the current required 2012 codes to the 2015 codes to support the city commitment to expectations of highest quality building safety and efficiency. While there will be some cost impact for the builder, the new standards set the tone for staying current in best practices for HSBay homes.
- Set aside recommendations to restrict building timeframes (around holidays). Currently builders may work between 7 am and 7 pm (Monday through Saturday). Most of the quality builders here are also homeowners/neighbors and respect the need for responsible building during high volume holiday/family celebrations. While there was a legitimate concern raised on one building site with excessive noise on the Saturday prior to Easter, this was deemed the exception to the rule. With the challenges of securing subs and scheduling work around weather and material delivery, etc. – the council did not want to delay construction completion if this is not a major issue. The builders group offered a self-monitoring approach to responsible building, noting there will be rare exceptions, but most work around holidays will focus on non-noise based tasks. Citizens are encouraged to contact the police if violations or excess becomes an issue.

The final item of the agenda was to propose a tax rate for fiscal year 2019. This proposed tax rate sets the “highest” level for the tax rate next fiscal year. Since the city is required to set this highest rate prior to receiving its final property valuations (July 25th), a conservative rate is proposed. This year the council proposed a rate of \$0.27 (above the current rate of \$0.26), recognizing that once all figures are in and final budget reviewed, this rate can be lowered to a final rate recommendation at a later budget meeting in August or September.

It is good to note that in nearly a decade the tax rate for the city of HSBay has risen only 1 cent (around a total of 3%). Our current tax rate is significantly lower than any surrounding city while still providing exceptionally high levels of service to meet the expectations of our citizens.

Yes....it is indeed always a great day to live in our Horseshoe Bay! (Wishing you shade and breezes!)

Cynthia Clinesmith, Council Member and Public Information Officer