



Mayor's Message – May 2023

May Day was originally a “maypole celebration” marking the season changes between the Spring and Autumn equinoxes. In the 1920s, it became a distress call signal used to alert all to impending harm. **Today, in the Bay**, it is a time to prepare for population shifts (hundreds of our “snowbirds” will leave next month for cooler climates, as summer visitors arrive to enjoy our lake living), a time to ready our homes for Texas heat, and a shared end the month commitment to memorialize those who gave their all - in service for our freedom.



City News

- **5 minutes of amazement** is requiring hours of planning. **The Great Eclipse of 2024** (April 8) is anticipated to bring millions to Texas...primarily focused on the Texas Hill Country since this will be the best viewing/weather location. It occurs rarely for total visibility and isn't expected to be in US prime viewing again for decades. The Eclipse of 2017 brought millions from across the country/internationally. And now, with the 2024 epicenter being located in a destination viewing amid beautiful hill country experiences, it is anticipated to increase the travel load of visitors even more. Get your ‘glow in the dark” golf balls ready!

Regional officials have been planning for over a year with two viewpoints. Businesses expect a boom in visitor dollars for the local and State economy (already the resort and many VRBOs are booked to capacity for that weekend). *Fun fact: Amazon alone sold nearly a quarter of million \$\$ in sun viewing glasses for the 2017 Eclipse.* That eclipse (which was the first fully visible eclipse in 38 years in the US) reflected a positive impact overall, but planning for potential extremes was essential. Behind the scenes management of traffic, stress on water/sewer resources, police/fire/ambulance needs, and enforcement of behaviors (such as random camper parking, trash, gridlock angst) call for preparation. **Our Emergency Operations Committee/EOC met this week to review each potential challenge** to ensure we are prepared, ordering resources early. State support for the lake traffic management, state road congestion, and emergency staffing were all reviewed. Our collaboration with Fredericksburg/Hill Country Alliance has us feeling as prepared as possible for our “guests”. As the time nears, **there will be a significant Public Information Campaign for all residents** so we can all enjoy the event while continuing to live our daily lives safely and comfortably. For more info, visit: www.bctxeclipse.com ; <https://hillcountryalliance.org/eclipse>

- **MARK your CALENDER for the Multi-Modal Trail Open House at City Hall - May 9th** (9:30 am – 12:30 pm). The opportunity for a \$5-10 million dollar grant is being pursued to fund the first phase of trails throughout the city for hiking, biking, golf carts. This is one of the last remaining Long-Range Plan (2017) priorities based on community survey – development of a trail system across all POAs, amenities, and businesses. **Additionally, the Utilities Department will use this Open House for a presentation (10-11:30)** on our area water issues and future plans to adapt to the growth effects on our water supply, both quality and quantity. Displays of trail paths will be made available in the Council Chambers for a walking

tour before/after Utilities discussion. Be on the lookout for more information in the Beacon and the City's webpage on this interactive community event. **Come get informed/engaged!**

- **Water is always on our mind** as we approach Memorial Weekend and summer heat. **One water adjustment approved at this month council meeting** is getting the irrigation schedule more clarity. You will receive notice about your particular address, but essentially it will mean if you water on Tuesdays...it is on Tuesdays (morning or late evening). No longer will Tuesday mean Tuesday night/Wednesday morning. They are balancing out the loads on the tanks to assist the risk of overtaxing water pressure by massive drawdowns at the same time....so **PLEASE adhere to the schedule**. If you are watering more than allowed, you are cheating your community. Stringent monitoring will be in force to ensure we can all share the water and provide for home maintenance. *Note: There will be no irrigation on Mondays so as to allow for maintenance needs.*
- *A major concern has arisen from our legislators actions. This week they passed HB 2127 which removes local control "home rule". Mayors across the state are stunned as this ordinance will deny the right of local communities to set their own standards, especially with regard to zoning, construction standards, and daily living practice. Legislators imply the intent is to get 'uniformity' for the business community (i.e., construction industry) so they don't face variances. But this opens up removing our ability to restrict what is built next door to your home. Over 100 amendments were proposed, all denied. Many spoke to the reality that this runs contrary to Texas beliefs in local control to set their own standards based on their voters' desires (it would be like the National government revoking State rights). We are reaching out to our representatives for explanations, with hopes it will not pass the Senate/SB 814 (HB 2127 already passed) – or that the Governor will veto. Efforts to get at least current standards 'grandfathered' were denied. Our larger concern is legislation supporting denying the development agreements we have in place along Hwy 71 which allow us to manage what can be developed on our city border. Both Senator Flores and Representative Murr have been invited to Horseshoe Bay to offer clarity though, understandably, their 'in session' schedule limits travel options. Our hope is that the scope of the action will be focused on a few key areas, leaving local control over the rest and that the impact is less than it seems. If you know your representatives from other districts in Texas, reach out to them for clarification/explanation of their vote on this or SB 814.*

Community News

- **BOND Election Llano ISD** schools. Early voting has been in progress, but if you haven't voted – **Sat., May 6** at City Hall is your opportunity to support the efficient use of your taxes AND the quality of education for Llano County children. Careful budget management allows for this bond to be secured **WITH NO TAX RATE increase**.

Using a bond election funding for long-term maintenance needs is the smart approach since all funds generated by the bond are kept locally. General funds collected through property taxes (where over 50% is sent back to the State by law) can then be used to fund

teachers, benefits, and daily operations. If the general funds are used for building upgrades (on some over 25 year-old gyms, buildings), then that reduces the funds for competitive salaries, increased operational costs such as bus fuel, teaching materials, training. Much of the bond will also upgrade security and technology for the schools.

A unique benefit for Horseshoe Bay (who has less than 50 students in the schools) is the commitment to use some of these bond funds to expand trades programs for both students AND adult learners. For over a decade the Workforce Network (led through the generous volunteer efforts of HSbays' Gail Davalos) has sought grants to provide for training/tests/licensure/materials, etc. **to get adults trained as plumbers, electricians, certified nurse assistants, welders.** These adults are currently working in low wage jobs such as fast foods that do not provide for independent support of themselves and/or families. Getting adults in our county independent from government support not only helps financially and toward the pride/parenting quality for these individuals – but it provides for a workforce of much needed trade/career paths in our area. Grants secured for this effort do not allow for building a facility (**crazy**, I know) so the challenge has been to find physical space to put the training equipment and classes. While the county, schools, and Highland Lakes Builder's Assn have lent vacated spaces as possible – this bond will build space for multiple trades training, equipment storage and purposeful class space. **We all benefit from a healthy workforce.**

- So proud of a core group of the **Horseshoe Bay Mah Jongg players** who organized a fundraiser (and day of fun play) **for the Helping Center.** Last year over 3500 individuals were served weekly by the helping center – with meals, education in nutrition, job searches, parenting, life support needs. **This \$20K will go a long way** in the coming year. The work training program will allow many to gradually move to independence overall.

So many charitable volunteer efforts are supported by our neighbors. If you haven't gotten involved, check into the many opportunities to lift up others (see city website "things to do")! You will find yourself personally enriched by giving, however possible – whether financially or through hands-on sweat equity or even "stay home help with 'tele-care' morning calls to isolated neighbors! It all matters....and is what makes us COMMUNITY.

It's May in the Bay, when we celebrate our moms, attend graduations, head back out to the lake life, and get ready for a Memorial Day celebration...*full American Style!* Be safe - and take a moment to look around at this life you are living – this month is the embodiment of vibrant green living amid fresh crisp air in a quality of life community. **Blessed indeed.**

cc

Cynthia Clinesmith, Mayor

City Website - www.horseshoe-bay-tx.gov