



Mayor's Monthly Message

Mayor Elsie Thurman - September 2024

By Mayor Elsie Thurman

Am I the only one who cannot believe September is here? Summer is over, and school zones are in force. The older I get, the faster time passes.

This has been a busy summer for our City. We started out with fears of water shortages and the curtailment of irrigation. We made it through, and the lake levels are doing much better. Lake Buchanan is 56 percent full, and Travis is at 47 percent. The combined storage is at 1,124,946 acre-feet of water, and we will not be moved back to Stage 2 (once-a-week watering) unless that number falls below 900,000 acre-feet.

We had a mechanical problem with our pumps at the West Water Treatment Plant in late August and put out a plea to conserve water. Our wonderful citizens responded, and there was no loss of pressure or water availability. The staff is analyzing what went wrong and will put more measures in place to ensure redundancy in the system so this won't happen again.

Also, on the topic of water, citizens recently received a letter informing us of a "failure to meet minimum treatment technique requirements." The wording of this notice is confusing and a requirement of TCEQ. Operators discovered a "mechanical error that, once corrected, allowed the system to initiate and pass the required integrity test" that caused this non-compliance and immediately self-reported the issue to TCEQ. This was not an acute issue; rather, our staff was diligent in reporting. There was no real threat to the water supply, and again, corrective actions have been taken to avoid a recurrence.

Plans are progressing to start construction on the City Center in September, and the remodeling of the West Fire Station will follow soon after. We hope both projects will be completed by the end of 2025. This expansion project cannot come fast enough as you may have noticed a temporary building between City Hall and the Fire Station. This building was purchased because all of the closets and hallways in City Hall are already utilized as workspaces, which created the necessity to add the new building after our latest staff member joined the city team.

Many of you have met David Milligan, our Water Conservation Specialist, who helped residents evaluate their irrigation systems. David has many talents and has advanced to the Building Official position. In that role, he will coordinate inspections and code enforcement and do some of the inspections himself. His presence will create efficiencies and oversight in the building process, benefiting neighbors, people building new homes, and their builders. When the portable building is no longer needed, it will be used for offices at the Reclamation Center or sold.



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The city's fiscal year ends September, and, as in the past, we will hold a Town Hall meeting on September 18 at 3 p.m. at the Resort Yacht Club Ball Room. We will share plans for the City Center and West Fire Station Construction, and all department heads will be there to field questions and interact with residents. In addition, the very hard-working members of our Land Use and Development Advisory Committee (LUDAC) will be there.

They have developed a survey asking for input from all residents of Horseshoe Bay. This survey will be available at the Town Hall meeting, and a link will be included in the September utility bill. It can be completed online, or printed copies can be picked up at the Utility Desk at City Hall. It will be "live" for about three weeks. This committee is working on a long-range land use plan for undeveloped property within the City and our extraterritorial jurisdiction (ETJ), which includes most of the property along Hwy. 71 extending almost to the hospital. This is very important, and I hope residents will take the survey.

Also, with the year-end planning comes the budget. Our staff and council have been working hard to develop a budget for next year to cover the immediate needs and allow for future improvements. The budget will be passed in September. The most significant cost is always the water and wastewater facilities and streets. The new budget will cover these needs and address traffic issues within the City. Unfortunately, we do not have control of FM 2147. Still, we will continue to do everything we can to influence TxDOT to focus on the needs of Horseshoe Bay concerning this important corridor through our City.

Welcome home to our "summer evacuees." I look forward to a huge gathering of residents on September 18.

Elsie Thurman, Mayor

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