

CITY COUNCIL RECAP



June 18, 2024

The Seawillow Ranch Development Agreement, city election format, the Fire Station No. 1 remodel project and funding for nonprofits were all discussed during Tuesday night's meeting.



Back row (L-R): Councilmember at-large Brad Westmoreland, District 1 Councilmember Juan Mendoza, District 4 Councilmember Jeffrey Michelson, District 2 Councilmember John Castillo

Front row (L-R): Mayor Pro-Tem Angie Gonzales-Sanchez, Mayor Lew White, Councilmember District 3 John Lairsen

Upcoming meetings

July 2 – Regular Session

July 16 – Regular Session

Aug. 6 – Regular Session

Seawillow Ranch Development Agreement:

Council voted to approve a development agreement with Red Oak Development Group to authorize the development of the Seawillow Ranch Project. The approximately 588-acre project is located east of FM 1322 and south and west of Seawillow Road, with 88 acres of the project currently within the Lockhart city limits. Details of the agreement include the creation of single family and multifamily units, Lockhart ISD uses, commercial/retail areas, and parks and open space improvements. In addition, the agreement includes architectural, landscaping, and fencing design standards and transportation, traffic, water, and wastewater improvements. The development will also require the creation of a Public Improvement District (PID) and a Tax Increment Reinvestment Zone (TIRZ) as partial financing mechanisms, in addition to Red Oak's financial contributions, for the utilities, roads and other public improvements associated with the project.

City Election Format:

Council chose not to move forward with a proposal from Councilmember Castillo regarding a City Charter amendment on the Nov. 5, 2024 election that would require all Lockhart elected officials to be elected by a majority — meaning more than 50% of the total vote. Under the existing charter, four councilmembers who represent the city's four geographic districts are elected by majority, but two at-large members and the mayor are elected by plurality — or the most votes without requiring more than 50% — which allows the city to avoid the cost of a runoff election in races that sometimes involve more than two candidates.

Fire Station No. 1 Update:

Council authorized the City Manager to negotiate and finalize terms for Construction-Manager-At-Risk (CMAR) services for the Fire Station No. 1 remodel with D. Wilson Construction Co. The Fire Station No. 1 project scope includes safety upgrades such as fire sprinklers, fire alarm system, diesel exhaust removal, enhanced living and working quarters on the second floor, exterior upgrades and asbestos abatement.

Texas Gas Service Rate Update:

Council approved a resolution suspending the date of a July 8 Texas Gas Service Company rate increase request filed with the Railroad Commission of Texas (RRC). TGS is seeking to increase its revenues in the Central Gulf Service Area by \$25.8 million, which is an increase of 9.83% including gas costs, or 15.59% excluding gas costs, and has filed a statement of intent to raise rates. The resolution suspends the effective date of the Company's rate increase request for 90 days, the maximum period permitted by state law, to allow the city and other similarly situated cities to evaluate TGS's filing. TGS is required to reimburse the cities for expenses related to this evaluation.

ETJ Jurisdiction Expansion:

Council approved a petition to expand the City's current extraterritorial jurisdiction (ETJ) by approximately 88 acres to add the entirety of the property that is the site of the Juniper Springs subdivision, located to the west of the City Limits south of SH 142 and north and east of Borchert Loop.

Water meters:

Council awarded a bid to Hydropro Solutions, LLC of Georgetown to furnish and install new residential water meters throughout Lockhart. The project is funded by a Community Development Block Grant (TxCDBG).

Juneteenth:

Mayor White presented a proclamation recognizing June 19 as Juneteenth in Lockhart. The holiday commemorates news of the end of slavery and the Civil War reaching Texas on June 19, 1865.

Funding for nonprofits:

Representatives of the following non-profit social service agencies made presentations before City Council requesting funding for FYE 2025:

- Caldwell County Food Bank - \$5,000
- Ascension Seton Hays Foundation Care-A-Van - \$5,000
- CASA of Central Texas - \$12,000
- Combined Community Action - Meals on Wheels - \$8,000
- Hays-Caldwell Women's Center - \$10,000
- Lockhart Area Senior Citizen Center - \$4,000
- Take Me Home - Advocates for Transport - \$5,000

Council will consider funding allocations at the July 2 Council meeting.

City Manager's Report

Juneteenth: City offices are closed June 19 to celebrate the Juneteenth holiday. Trash collection services will run as scheduled.

Movies in the Park: Movies in the Park will begin Saturday night at 8:30 p.m. at Lockhart City Park. The free event is sponsored by the Lockhart Parks and Recreation Department. The event will continue with a showing at 8:30 p.m. July 13 and a final summer movie on Aug. 10.

ACC Proposed Service Plan Meeting: Austin Community College Leadership will hold a public hearing on the expansion of the Austin Community College District to include territory covered by the Lockhart Independent School District at 5:30 p.m. June 25 at the Gary Ohlendorf Performing Arts Center.

Scheduled Water Treatment: Starting Tuesday, June 25, the GBRA will convert the disinfectant used in the Luling Water Treatment Plant—which supplies Lockhart—from chloramine to free chlorine. The TCEQ-required annual temporary disinfectant conversion takes 30 days, which ends July 25. The water will be constantly tested throughout this process and will remain safe to drink.

Railroad Quiet Zone Feasibility Study Update: TRC Engineering is reviewing traffic count data. The next step is to compare updated traffic counts to existing traffic counts stated in the inventory form of each crossing to better understand changes in traffic volume. TRC will prepare conceptual level exhibits for each crossing showing existing improvements and will submit them to the Federal Railroad Administration and Union Pacific Railroad.

Rise Broadband Installation: The agreement and right-of-way permit for Rise Broadband's fiber installation have been approved. Installation is expected to begin this week and be fully complete in about six months. Residents will be notified 72 hours in advance by way of English/Spanish doorhangers.

ATTENTION: This is a recap of the highlights of action taken at the June 4, 2024, Council meeting. The complete agenda can be found by visiting: City of Lockhart, TX (lockhart-tx.org).