

## **From the Mayor's desk – 2/28/25**

Happy Friday! March is right around the corner, the weather is getting better by the day, and our annual St. Patrick's Day parade is coming up in a few weeks on the 15<sup>th</sup>. Life is Good!!

With the weather warming up I hope you're able to get outside and enjoy our beach.

First off, some great news that came in last Friday from FEMA, and I quote, "We are informing you the Village of Surfside Beach FEMA DR-4798 Subgrant # 81 has been awarded by FEMA". TDEM will now provide us with the entire Category A disaster relief funds, per the Governor's grant program. We will be receiving \$523,072.35 from TDEM which will be immediately applied to repairs and outstanding debt from Hurricane Beryl.

### Public Works:

The AIRVAC sewer system lost one of the two main pumps this week. Lead-time for new pump is 8 weeks, which is on order. The plan during that time will be to manual empty pits on the Fort line with our tank and PW employees. The solution to avoid downtime will be to purchase the new replacement pump and also send out the old pump for rebuild. Once rebuilt, we will operate on a spare system with three pumps. Two in operation and one spare on the shelf.

### Human Resources:

Seasonal employment for Beach is now in the process of hiring. If interested please contact City Hall.

EMS Director position recruiting has closed and we will be scheduling interviews soon.

Our very own Misty will be moving on to the Surfside Marina as their new Operations Manager and we wish her well over there! That means an opening for Deputy Court Clerk will be posted to replace her. If interested please contact City Hall.

The new HR policies go into effect March 1<sup>st</sup>. Training and sign off by all City Employees will be taking place in March.

### Beach & Parks:

Gearing up for the Beach season with hiring in full swing now for seasonal trash pickup, booth attendants, and walking trash pickers. Remember that we are offering a \$500 bonus for any seasonal employees who stay for the entire season with us!

Thanks to collaboration of Council member Steve Kedlarchuk and Toby, we have identified a patching solution for the roads that will be tested very soon. We have ordered 2 pallets of EZ Street Asphalt that is designed to work in wet applications and proven in climates similar to ours. Once the material is delivered, Toby's crew will be out there filling holes. The priority will be our main streets that get lots of traffic. If you have other priority streets in mind, please let us know.

The summer season Beach Planning meetings started this week. Good conversations and agreement made to improve some aspects of our beach. This week we agreed on plans for standard signs & locations, and had a great discussion on how to improve trash/litter on the beach. Changes will be made in both PD patrol & enforcement and Beach booth hours & trash pickup schedules. Once those are finalized, we will share the details. Again, great collaboration by multiple departments taking place to find workable solutions that should improve our beach experience for everyone this year.

#### Other Items of Interest:

Update on the Sewer replacement project: This is the grant from GLO to replace one of the three AIRVAC sewer lines with a gravity system. Total grant is \$7.593 million. Amanda and I attended a meeting with Houston-Galveston Area Council (HGAC) on Tuesday. The HGAC are the agency who will be taking allocation of funds from GLO on our behalf and is responsible for all reporting to GLO. We are one of four projects on the HGAC application with GLO. Two of those four projects have been formally approved by GLO. Our project is still waiting on formal approval. The GLO has committed to complete and provide formal approval to the Surfside Beach project in March. In the meantime, we are working with HGAC to secure a grant administration resource to manage the project for us. This resource would be paid for with grant money. If the GLO meets their commitment, the next steps will be procurement and environmental, which are under our control.

The Short Term Rental (STR) registration fee was approved by Council to increase to \$200 and paid annually. As a result, changes to ordinance, city website, and STR software systems are all underway to reflect this. A letter has been drafted to send to all previously registered STR properties in Surfside Beach. It details the changes and timing of this new annual registration. A previously registered STR will be credited \$50 towards the 2025 registration fee, so total due would be \$150. The due date for the registration will be April 20, 2025. A new registration license plate will be issued to all registered properties, which will be required to be displayed visible from the street. Our STR software system is also being upgraded and may require input of new data specific to STR properties.

Hey, what's going on with all the demolition at the corner? That property has been recently purchased and is in the process of being cleared for a building site. The new owner has plans to build and operate a new restaurant at that location. I'm looking forward to having a new restaurant on the Island, and right next to the new grocery & meat market that is also under construction currently. It's good to see new businesses coming to Surfside Beach and I hope we all can support them with our patronage, once they open.

Have a great day and I hope to see you around the island this weekend!

Thanks,

Zach