

From the Mayor's desk – 3/14/25

Happy Friday!

First and foremost, before regular council meeting on Tuesday this week we had a swearing-in ceremony for our new Chief of Police, Philip Hester. He is officially added to the Village of Surfside Beach police force and has begun assimilating to the new position. If you see Chief Philip Hester out and about, please introduce yourself and get to know him. Welcome to Surfside!

Public Works:

This week, the Water Task Force, 2 members of council (Jon & Marsha), Erick, and myself had the opportunity to attend and present to the Texas Water Infrastructure Coordination Committee (TWICC). The TWICC is made up of several Federal & State Agencies (Dept of Ag, GLO, USDA etc.), other Associations (Rural Water Assoc, TX-AWWA, etc.) and various Non-profits. Our 30 minutes to highlight Surfside and request assistance was an overview provided by Dr. Dean Angell. He explained the challenges we face in both water and sewage, our history including the past violations and injunction, and the current grant still to come through GLO/HGAC to replace 1 of 3 sewer AIRVAC lines. Followed by some Q&A from TWICC. To be brutally honest, the majority of the TWICC really just made redundant comments that Surfside is facing serious and significant challenges, but really didn't suggest nor provide any solutions, nor path forward. That was disappointing. However, there were 2 Associations/Non-profits that did stand up and offer to help us. The TX American Water Works Association and Communities Unlimited both had some suggestions on path forward. The Water Task Force is meeting this Saturday morning to formulate a plan of attack to begin working with both of those Associations. Much more to come on this extremely important effort.

Human Resources:

There are many positions open for hiring at City Hall:

EMS Director. City Council voted to approve an ordinance to separate our PD & EMS. Once we hire the new EMS Director, that person will have stand alone responsibility for the EMS department through this new ordinance.

Finance Director. This posting is now active. If interested, please contact City Hall.

Seasonal Beach positions. If interested, please contact City Hall.

Last but certainly not least, we hired and onboarded a new Deputy Court Clerk this week, Cindi Warny. Please join me in welcoming her to the Village of Surfside Beach.

Building:

Crabbing pier is officially completed. This is phase one of the total project to remove the rotten pilings and replace with a new wider and shorter pier. Ideas on future phase two would be to improve the boardwalk portion of the area at a minimum. This would be a next year proposal and project.

At Council meeting this week, Josh provided updates on the 2 new businesses being constructed near the corner of Ft Velasco and 332 traffic light. The grocery & meat market is projecting opening in the next 4-6 weeks, and the proposed restaurant on the corner is completing demolition and is process of submitting design drawings. Both are moving forward with good velocity.

Beach & Parks:

Beach & Parks crew have been out this week starting on potholes repairs. This work will continue as well as bidding and executing on larger scale road repair projects. As I've said before, these repairs will take time, but if you have a priority area needing attention please reach out to City Hall.

A good start to the beach season. Next step will be to add new signs and sturdy sign posts on the beach. Materials are ordered and the new sign posts will be assembled and installed over the next few weeks.

Thanks for the feedback received on beach plans that were posted in last week's letter. We encourage input from the community as we make plans to manage and patrol the beach this summer. It takes a Village!

Other Items of Interest:

It's parade weekend! I'm looking forward to hosting lots of visitors for the day and weekend to enjoy this event and the beautiful weather during TX spring break week.

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

Thanks,
Zach