

From the Mayor's desk – 5/9/25

Happy Friday!

What a great weekend last week with the Surfside Volunteer Fire Department BBQ fundraiser and also a celebration of the historic signing of the Treaty of Velasco in Surfside Beach. Wonderful weather for both of those great events held right here in Surfside Beach, TX. I hope you had the chance to visit both.

PD:

The department has hired 2 full time and 1 reserve officers. Christopher Redman full time patrol officer with 6 years of experience has come to us with a plethora of training. He is a TCOLE certified instructor, Alert instructor, Taser Instructor and is already scheduled to teach a class this month for our Department. Jeffery Conrad full time patrol officer with 3 years of experience. Shazell Taylor is a reserve patrol officer come to us with 5 years' experience. A hearty welcome to Surfside extended to our 3 new officers on duty.

We procured a used PD cruiser from Bay City for \$4,000 this week. It has all the features that we need, the mechanical condition that is well above average, and the price that won't break the bank. This additional vehicle will allow for more patrols during the busy summer season.

In addition, the Council approved the purchase of 2 beach patrol UTVs. These 2 Kawasaki Mules are new with Ryno liner undercoat + bedliner. They are both funded out of the Beach Fund from the revenue from beach pass sales. As we all know, due to the corrosive environment, we expect to replace a beach patrol UTV every 2-3 years and use the Beach Fund revenue as our source of funding.

Jeep Weekend is next weekend (May 15th). We are actively working with both Galveston and Brazoria county Sheriff offices, along with DPS, Constables in 3 regions, and the Texas Rangers on an Op Plan to properly prepare for the worst, but hope for the best. In the past we have had great Jeep visitors in Surfside and really hope that trend continues as it has been a safe and fun event as experienced on our section of beach. A command center for officers from all agencies will be in Surfside Beach during that weekend. Chief Hester has the lead in these efforts to prepare for the busy weekend.

EMS:

The department has hired 4 new employees, including EMS Director Frank Demarco with 36 years of experience. EMT B Sophia Black & EMT B Ashley Conrad who both have already finished their advanced classes and just need their clinicals to move forward to the next classification. Also, another addition in EMS is EMT B Owen Spencer. All 4 of these folks have already completed the FTO program and are on the schedule working. Welcome to Surfside Beach all of our new EMTs!

Human Resources:

We have hired a new Finance Director, Christie Briones. She will be starting on May 19th and jumping right into our annual fiscal audit and then the budget season. Please welcome and support Christie as she will be critical to improving Surfside's financial transparency and improvements going forward. I personally cannot wait to get her on board and start working on these improvements. Our goal is to have full transparency to all Funds, budgets, and spending on a monthly basis posted on our city website.

There are still a few other openings in Beach & Parks available. If interested, please contact City Hall.

Beach & Parks:

The plan to let the sargassum stay and dry out has been successful. We have also tested the relatively new beach cleaning machinery in front of Stahlman this week with the dried seaweed. It sifts the sand and removes larger debris (garbage) and then deposits the clean sand back where it came from. In that small test, it appears to work well and may be a possibility to use on a larger scale to sift and clean litter from the entire beach. More to come on this topic.

Other Items of Interest:

I've had a few questions and also wondered myself about the stalled progress on the Meat Market/Grocery store on Ft Velasco. After asking some questions, it appears that everything is moving along and the owners are held up now jumping through the hoops of multiple inspections for fire, health, etc. Progress is slow, but moving forward to opening the store soon.

A note on late and unpaid water bills. As I had said before, we would be allowing for some grace on unpaid water bills as we all climb out of hurricane Beryl. The guidance that I

believe was given before was to please attempt to become current on your water bills by the end of March. Well, that time has now past and we are returning back to the standard rules for past due water bills. If you are past due, please become current before you receive notice of shut offs per the standard rules. There have been months of grace provided and it is time to return back to normal policy and procedure on collections. Appreciate your attention to this in order to avoid any interruptions in your service.

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

Thanks,

Zach