

From the Mayor's desk - 8/15/25

Happy Friday!

Here is a brief recap of the week, the City Council Meeting on Tuesday and some of the happenings over the past few weeks and upcoming.

EMS:

We have been struggling mightily with our ambulance rear AC unit for awhile now. The AC unit can and will be replaced to fix the problem, but we have encountered a hurdle in finding a rental unit to replace ours while the repairs take place. There just doesn't seem to be any available around the area. I have used my contacts at local chemical companies with a request for a loaner, but their units are not registered with the state as they only serve inside their private fence lines. I have also contacted other local Mayors and had very quick responses (thanks Lake Jackson & Clute!). LJ doesn't have any availability for a loaner but put us in touch with a possible rental, and Clute may have the possibility of a loaner unit for us. Frank will be in contact with their EMS Chief to hopefully make it happen. Our goal here is to continue to offer service without interruptions.

At City Council meeting, we had formal recognition of both Tiffany and Donnie by Chief Hester for their recent efforts on an emergency call that had a very happy ending. Appreciate both of those fine EMTs for what they do for the citizens and visitors of our Village.

PD:

Chief Hester communicated at City Council this week about a ton of grant and donation money that he has been able to procure for the VOSB. The donations range from free training for the entire PD to a drone complete with a thermal camera capable of heat tracking. I suggested we should do an informal count of the number of coyotes inside Village limits as their training with it! In all seriousness, that capability could be used for search and rescue and recovery efforts. The drone will also be used to video capture the entire island before and after any storm event which is critical to work with FEMA disaster efforts. After the last hurricane we had to rely on others to help provide video and photo evidence for us.

In addition, at Council meeting, Hester invited anyone who wants to join him on 6pm walks starting at Stahlman Park on Monday, Wednesday and Friday. A casual stroll to get a little exercise and get to know people in the community.

Look for a town hall meeting to be held as soon as we wrap up the summer season to talk about the off season with PD in our Village. It should be a good discussion on the wants and needs of a seasonal beach community.

Public Works:

A bunch of major projects should get final budget approvals and funded next year which will get started as soon as October 1st. These are all open TCEQ violations that have needed to be corrected for a number of years now. A new hydro tank at Oyster Plant, resurfacing of our ground storage tanks and the water tower at Yucca, and hopefully working with our friends and neighbors in Port O'Connor to test the improved AIRVAC sewer pits and controllers. In addition, we should be breaking ground on the replacement of one of our three AIRVAC sewer lines next year with the grant moving forward now.

We hired a new Utilities Supervisor in Public Works. Please help me welcome Timothy Weber. He was most recently the Foreman of Powerscoop Utilities and has 10+ years of experience in the industry. Another great addition to the team here at City Hall.

Finance:

Over the past month a few new procedures and policies have been implemented to improve transparency in finances, and strengthen the check & balances required to protect the Village from fraud. These include a new credit card policy with clear accountability for card holders, users, and approvers. Also a new purchasing (PO) policy with much more rigid approval process and clear linkage to budget line items and current balances. Purchases must be approved through Council, attached to a specific GL accounting line item in a Fund, and maybe most importantly, have verification that funds are available for immediate use. The policy and procedure improvements made by Christie have been reviewed with all department leaders and training has officially been signed off.

Other Items of Interest:

What's this I hear about Mobile Vending on the beach and Chickens!. A couple of entertaining agenda items at this week's City Council meeting. We will be bringing the final

ordinance to be approved for mobile vending on the beach next Council meeting. It includes provisions like entrance points from Yucca to county line, size of vehicle, and only available to existing Surfside businesses. In addition, a draft ordinance to allow egg laying chickens will make an appearance at Council meeting next month. Other neighboring municipalities have adopted this and we plan to discuss the possibility of chickens in Surfside. See you at next City Council meeting!!

In my letter next week I intend to go into detail on a whole bunch of activity and future plans for Tourism. These will include our advertising campaign, the amphitheater, Fort Velasco construction, visions for future of Stahlman Park and also touching on the changes coming to registration and regulation of short term rentals using our new software system. Amanda, Barron and the entire Tourism and Historical committees have been working hard and making significant headway in this space. The future is bright for Surfside!!

As always, I hope that you have a great day and enjoy the weekend in wonderful Surfside Beach!

Thanks,

Zach