

**From the Mayor's desk - 8/22/25**

Happy Friday!

Summer is winding down with Labor Day weekend coming up quickly in a week's time. It has been a busy summer beach season with many new faces on our staff here at City Hall. I'd like to personally thank everyone for what they have done to make Surfside Beach a fun and family friendly destination for tourists and locals alike. A ton of work occurs behind the scenes to keep things "uneventful" for those who are just out to enjoy the beach. Thankyou!

EMS:

An update on the ambulance situation. Frank did find a rental unit this week after an extensive search. Our unit will be sent out for repairs to the rear AC next week and we will continue normal emergency medical operations with the rental. Long term plans for a replacement ambulance will be the task of our EMS Director. Frank will be bringing several options to City Council in the near future to address the concerns of our current ambulance's future viability.

PD:

As I mentioned, Labor Day weekend is upcoming. We will be establishing another command center for the weekend to host various outside agencies. We are asking for donations of food and beverages for the command center to be set up at Stahlman Park. Please contact Christie at City Hall for any drop offs for next weekend. Thanks in advance for your donations!

Fireworks confiscations: We have collected a large amount of evidence in the form of fireworks over the summer that must be disposed of within regulation guidelines. Next week, City Council will be discussing ideas for proper disposal that may coincide with a planned fireworks display to celebrate the end of our summer season. I personally think that it would be fun to come together and celebrate a successful summer with a fireworks display each and every year.

Reminder that Chief Hester is hosting a beach walk on M-W-F at 6pm starting at Stahlman Park every week, weather permitting. Feel free to stop over and join in with the group for some exercise and casual conversation.

### Emergency Management / FEMA:

We are still actively working with FEMA to finalize all of our submissions for Beryl. As I've mentioned before, to call this process cumbersome is a polite way to put it. Nearly a year into this process with FEMA and we hope to close out soon. Upon obligation with FEMA we will then receive the outstanding disaster relief funds from federal and state agencies (FEMA/TDEM). We will use the funds on receipt to repair Beach Drive and restore the health of our General and System Funds which have required lots of careful accounting gymnastics since Beryl's impact back in July of last year.

### Public Works:

The new utilities billing system Muni-Link is up and running. If you were a Next Bill Pay customer in the past, then your payment ability did not transfer with the new system. You will need to create and set up an account including e-billing. We will be reviewing all past due accounts and making courtesy calls to our database of active phone numbers & email addresses. We understand that there could be issues with transfers to the new billing system. That said, after September billing cycle we will be making contact using red "Disconnect Notice" hang tags on doorknobs to all properties that are 60+ days overdue. The utility bill must be paid in full within 10 days of notification with our hang tag. If your bill is not paid in 10 days, your water will be shut off. In order to reconnect water service, 1) your bill must be paid in full, 2) a reconnection fee of \$200 must be paid, and 3) a deposit of \$75 additional must also be paid. Please make sure that you pay any outstanding utility bills in order to maintain water service at your home/property. We DO NOT want to disconnect water to anyone's home.

Waste Connections has communicated a 6% increase in their trash collection service prices, effective October 1<sup>st</sup>. We are in negotiations on that increase, but they are legally within their rights to increase price based on the consumer price index. More to come on this topic, most likely at a future City Council meeting.

### Finance:

Next week on Tuesday we will have another budget workshop to attempt to complete and balance our last remaining fund, the Hotel Fund. After City Council completes this final budget workshop we will be approving the tax rate along with each of the 4 balanced funds at a future City Council meeting. As promised, these funds will be available online immediately after their approval and will be updated monthly with actual expenses for

everyone to have visibility to our expenses and financial health in the VOSB. Full financial transparency is the goal and expectation.

#### Beach & Parks:

Surf and Thunder intersection has been repaired with concrete. Some cure time into next week and we will remove barricades. Also, the crew has been active with asphalt patching with another 4 pallets of patching on order to continue those efforts.

We had a great discussion with the County this week about partnering to repair and repave streets in the VOSB. There is a plan in place this year to resurface Beach Drive where it was destroyed, Swordfish, and some intersections on Bluewater. Our interlocal agreement is one where the VOSB will fund the material costs and Brazoria County will fund the rest of the labor and equipment required for the road repairs. This is an annual interlocal agreement with the County to perform, at most, 4 road projects in the VOSB, where we fund the material costs. We will be evaluating next year's projects to be submitted in the fall to the County.

The local gulf water quality advisor has been lifted and the warning signs have been taken out of service. Just in time for the holiday weekend upcoming. Swim at your leisure!

#### Other Items of Interest:

Short Term Rental registration licenses are being delivered to us next week. We will be distributing the registration plates to all registered STRs for display on the rental property and visible from the street. I have to say that they look pretty nice! In the future we will issue registration stickers annually to display on the STR license plates, demonstrating compliance with our annual STR registration.

As promised last week, here is an update on some Tourism items being worked by Amanda, Baron and the Tourism Committee that are all funded by Hotel Occupancy Taxes:

We have invested in some advertising assets this year in a partnership with a company called Lampstand. They visited Surfside a few months ago and spent a week filming and interviewing a bunch of locals, business owners, and public officials. They took the footage and created multiple short films to be used in an advertising campaign through social media, billboards, or conventional digital media. We have been holding them under wraps a bit in order to keep the element of surprise, but I can tell you that what they captured and produced are very impressive and represent Surfside as we all know and love it. Maybe we

can leak it out for a viewing!?! The future plans are to partner with a different marketing company to assist us in the outward advertisement and tracking of hit rates with the content. This is coming later this year and into 2026 for rollout.

The amphitheater plans are starting to get firmer. We are looking at the property near the boat launch site to create a very basic grass hill venue and simple stage. Very low cost to start. Once this is erected, then we will work to fill the venue with events to draw in visitors and overnight guests. If this takes flight then we will be looking to improve and expand in the future. Start small, get some wins, and then talk about expansion plans.

Stahlman Park rental property is being evaluated to expand it's use and bring in more overnight guests from the rental of this venue. Specifically, Stahlman as a wedding destination center. Ideas are in infancy stages, but what if we could provide full wedding planning services, offer suggestions for bride and groom rental houses, and basically create a venue that attracts overnight visitors to a beach destination wedding? It's possible.

Lastly, I want to thank the City Hall staff for surprising me yesterday with a birthday lunch filled with great food, plenty of laughter, and a bunch of look-a-like Mayor's dressed up in beards, beachwear and flip-flops. We have a great team of wonderful people at City Hall and I really appreciate them all!!

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

Thanks,

Zach