

## **From the Mayor's desk – 9/19/25**

Happy Friday!

To kick things off, I want to repeat an important message to everyone in Surfside. At the end of the September Utilities billing cycle, on Sept 26<sup>th</sup>, we will be making contact using red “Disconnect Notice” hang tags on doorknobs to all properties that are 60+ days overdue. Currently the number of residences that are projected to receive disconnect notifications is about 200. If you or someone you know is overdue more than 60 days, please make your payment or visit us at City Hall to discuss payment plans in order to avoid water shut off. If a disconnect notice is received, then 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. Then, 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, so please-please-please work with City Hall to avoid this.

### Police Department:

Repeat from last week, Chief Hester will be hosting a town hall meeting on September 25<sup>th</sup> in the City Hall Council room at 6pm. Please attend to hear from the Chief and share your thoughts and opinions on the police efforts in Surfside Beach.

### EMS Department:

The new ambulance is in house and getting prepped and stocked for duty.

### Beach & Parks:

The County Roads Dept started work on Swordfish this week. They will oil coat what has been ground down and then add asphalt overlay in the coming weeks. The other large road projects on Beach Drive and Francis Cove are still scheduled to be completed in October. The County is coordinating this effort with their asphalt contractors.

### Finance:

This week was the culmination of a mountain of work to complete the 2025-2026 VOSB financial budgets. City Council voted on Tuesday to ratify the proposed tax rate and also to accept the General Fund Budget for 2025-2026. Christie has produced and published a 139 page document that details the entire VOSB 2025-2026 budget and it is now available on our website. If you have any question about that document, please don't hesitate to contact Christie at City Hall. The General Fund has been approved through Council, however the remaining 3 other funds (Systems, Beach & Hotel) still need to be officially approved in session. The General Fund, with primary expenses for Police & EMS, City Administration, Courts, Roads, Parks, VFD, and some bond repayments is funded primarily by property taxes and Court & EMS revenue. This upcoming year we have been able to fund some one time projects like, \$150k in City Hall/Museum building major repairs, paving city barn parking lot on Ft Velasco, and improving the audio/visual for Zoom meetings. In addition, we were able to fund \$250k in village roads & beach access repairs along with adding a City Administrator who is desperately needed to take over daily operations of the VOSB. The General Fund was balanced and approved by Council with available reserves near \$300k that can be invested in our interest bearing TexPool account and saved as future hurricane reserve funds. I want to thank Christie, the VOSB Department Leaders, and Council for working very hard over the last few months to get this right. We are in a great position to have a productive year, with quality people in place who are needed to make it all happen. Hats off for all the effort and results on this important task.

### Public Works:

Again, we will be offering a \$5 utility bill credit to every account that signs up for e-billing by January 1<sup>st</sup>. This \$5 credit will hit your account by March 1<sup>st</sup>. If you need help to get registered and sign up for e-billing, Breana at City Hall would be happy to assist you.

This past Tuesday and Wednesday, the Village hosted a site visit from three representatives from Moonshot Missions, a non-profit collective of water industry professionals that serves as a trusted peer advisor for communities to secure safe, accessible, and affordable drinking water. They were accompanied by a Civil Project Engineer from California-based EEC Environmental, which provides consulting services to help small communities enhance their drinking water quality and infrastructure. They spent time with City Secretary Amanda Davenport, Public Works Director Erick Ingram, and myself to tour our systems and gather the necessary information for a Preliminary Engineering Report. The visit was

coordinated by Bart Forbes, Ruth Forkel, and Wanda Petree, who serve as the Board of Directors of the Surfside Beach Community Foundation. The Foundation secured this no-cost technical assistance valued at roughly \$50,000, if hired as consultants, through a funding program supported by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. Our visitors were able to offer a few immediate improvement suggestions, and took the action to go away and work on potential long term solutions, including funding opportunities, which they will present to us in the coming weeks. Once their report is received we will post it on the VOSB website for all to see. This is our second non-profit visitor, and It is important to bring in multiple eyes, ears and brains with varying experiences and professional networks in order to address our complex and costly improvements needed in water & sewer. Thanks to Bart, Ruth, and Wanda for connecting us with Moonshot and encouraging them to visit Surfside to see how they can assist us on this journey.

#### Other Items of Interest:

Coming up on October 4<sup>th</sup> the Old Guys Surf Reunion will be held at Stahlman Park. Always a great event, so mark your calendars and make it out for that!

Also on October 7<sup>th</sup>, the National Night Out will be celebrated at the Surfside Volunteer Fire Department. The fire department will host visitors from 5-7pm and will have a smoke detector give-away, including an offer of installation scheduled for a few days later on October 11<sup>th</sup> from 9am – 5pm. The event is intended for owner/occupants, not for rental properties, or anyone that has a monitored system. Take advantage of this opportunity and offer from our VFD.

Remember to pencil in our Surfside Beach 50 Year Anniversary celebration for October 25<sup>th</sup> as well.

An update on the Surfside Groin and Beach Nourishment Project. At our regular recurring monthly meeting this Wednesday, Amanda and I were informed that the project is moving along to the point where they should be sending it out for bid in October. One new detail that has surfaced is the planned process to deliver and distribute the sand needed for the renourishment portion of the project. There will be a delivery point from the Intracoastal Waterway near Canal Drive where a barge will offload sand. Material delivery from that location is planned to be completed by creating a liquid slurry of sand and water and sending it through a long flexible tube that will run all the way to the beach, near the jetty, where it will be deposited. The preliminary route is south down Thunder, crossing overland near the boat ramp, and snaking through the bird & butterfly trail all the way to the beach. This delivery method will reduce heavy truck traffic that would cause road damage,

as we experienced with the County's work near Quilty Cove this year. The sand distribution tube is projected to be in place and operational for roughly 6 months. The road crossing at Thunder will be managed with a mechanical "speed bump" that will contain the sand tube and also allow vehicle traffic to continue uninterrupted.

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

Thanks,

Zach