



Lucas City Newsletter

December, 2007

newsletter@lucastexas.us

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STRAIGHT TALK FROM THE MAYOR

With a goal of having a Home Rule Charter proposal on the May, 2008 General Election ballot, the Home Rule Charter Commission has been meeting twice a month since Sept. 10. The commission has been working very hard, and has made a lot of progress. They will continue to meet in December and

January, and citizens still have the opportunity to attend these meetings and offer their opinions during the citizens' comments sections of the agendas. In order to meet the goal of appearing on the May ballot, including having copies of the proposed charter in the hands of all citizens at least 30 days prior to the election, the final draft really needs to be completed by the end of January.

The following article produced by the commission gives the basics of the why we are taking this important step. I urge you to read the article, and familiarize yourself with this most important initiative. Becoming a Home Rule City is critical to our future, and it is very important that our residents make an informed decision about this vital step.

At the next Coffee With Council event to be held Sat., January 12, there will be Home Rule Commission members present to discuss the proposed charter and answer any questions you may have. (For info., see page 3.)

Meeting Schedule

All meetings begin at 7:00 in the City Annex unless otherwise specified.

City Council Regular Thurs., Dec. 6
Planning & Zoning Thurs., Dec. 13
City Council Workshop Thurs., Dec. 20
Parks & Open Space TBA
Municipal Court Wed., Dec. 19, 5:30 PM
Home Rule Commission Mon., Dec. 3, Dec. 10, Dec. 17

HOME RULE COMMISSION REPORT

Submitted by the City of Lucas Home Rule Commission

As a Lucas resident, you have likely heard at least something concerning a Home Rule Charter and perhaps the previous attempts to draft a Charter. Currently, another effort is underway to draft this basic framework needed to govern the affairs of our City for the foreseeable future.

What is Home Rule and why is this important to the future of our city? Carrying over from when the City of Lucas had a population under 5,000, our city is governed by the policies of Texas state "general law". Given that the City of Lucas now has a large enough population (over 5000 residents), we have the ability to pass a charter that sets forth our own rules for our city's government. A charter then establishes a government more in line with resident's desires as it is established by the local citizens themselves, rather than the state.

There are state laws that would supersede charter rules if in conflict, and the charter is not an all encompassing document. The duly elected City

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Council will continue to pass ordinances and laws for our city. The charter does, however, establish the basic organizational rules for the city government such as roles and duties of the Mayor, City Council, the City Manager, City officials, as well as privileges of the citizens of Lucas. It will also set out the powers of the city as well as other governing rules such as how many council members will we have; how long will they serve; if the citizens can recall a councilmember or initiate a vote; and if the city can annex additional land. The Home Rule charter is crucial in enabling our city to be governed as we, the citizens of the city, want it to be governed.

Once the Charter is drafted, the Home Rule Commission will present the draft to the Council for their approval. Upon approval of Council, a copy of the Charter will be mailed to all registered voters in the city 30 days before the election at which it is to be presented to the voters.

The Home Rule Commission will also be holding some informational/educational forums in the upcoming months. This month's meeting schedule for the Home Rule Commission can be found on the front page of this newsletter. For the full schedule of meetings, check the City web site at www.lucastexas.us. Click on "Home Rule Charter Commission" on the upper left hand corner of the home page.

All meetings are open to citizen input.

LUCAS VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT PROFILES



Craig Zale is one of LVFD's longest serving volunteer firefighters, having joined the department over ten years ago, in 1996. Craig holds the rank of Operations Chief, and is an EMT-B. He holds several certifications, including SFFMA Certified Advanced Firefighter, and SFFMA Driver/Operator.

Craig not only lives in Lucas, he works here also, as the owner of Craig's Car Care. He and his wife are the proud parents of two children.

Thank you, Craig, for your outstanding service to our community.



EVERYTHING YOU EVER WANTED TO KNOW ABOUT CITY FINANCE PART 2-WATER

By Wayne Millsap, Councilmember

The Water Fund represents the operation of the water system for the City. It buys water from the NTMWD (North Texas Municipal Water District), and sells and delivers it to the citizens of the City as well as residents in our ETJ (Extra Territorial Jurisdiction). The budget represents the cost of providing water service: the cost of the water, the infrastructure (tanks, pumps, pipelines etc.) to deliver the water, and the people and equipment to operate and maintain the system.

The Water Fund budget for fiscal year 2007 - 2008 is \$1,874,401. This includes \$676,000 (36%) for the water; \$318,399 (17%) for staff (operations, maintenance and repairs); \$185,814 (10%) for outside services for utilities, engineering, the utility billing system; \$507,401 (27%) for debt service; and \$187,000 (10%) for materials, maintenance supplies and minor capital expenses.

The Water Fund is a business-type activity and must support itself. The revenue budget is \$1,877,300; water sales of \$1,550,000 (83%), water meters of \$155,000 (8%) and interest income \$125,000 (7%). The result is an operating profit of \$2,899. Last fiscal year, water restrictions resulted in significantly less water usage and revenue; resulting in a deficit for the year which was covered by reserves in the water fund.

In future articles we will discuss the General Fund (the operating fund for the City), and the Capital Improvements Fund (the fund used to make major improvements such as roads and the water system).

TRAFFIC REMINDER



Please remember that the speed limit on Snider Lane is now 30 mph at all points within the city limits.

NOVEMBER CITY COUNCIL ACTIONS

City Council Meeting, Nov. 1, 2007

- Approved minutes from Oct. 4 Regular, and Oct. 18 Workshop Council meetings.
- Awarded an Engineering and Surveying Services contract to BW2 Engineers for engineering design for capital improvement projects to upgrade delivery lines to the North Water Pump Station, and installation of a pressure reducing valve.
- Approved a "Letter of Agreement" with Pingleton, Howard, & Co. PC to conduct the annual state mandated City audit for the fiscal year ending Sept. 30, 2007.
- Approved a tentative interlocal agreement between the City of Lucas and the City of Wylie for animal control services, dependent upon agreement to certain contract wording changes.
- Approved an interlocal cooperative contract between City of Lucas and Omni Base Services of Texas (Texas Department of Public Safety.) **See article on this page for more info.**
- Approved **Ordinance No. 2007-11-00606** changing the job description of the City Secretary to specify that "annual review to be given by the City Administrator with the approval of Council."

City Council Workshop Meeting, Nov. 15, 2007

- Approved an ordinance authorizing the issuance of City of Lucas General Obligation Refunding Bonds, 2007" in order to effect a net savings of at least \$180,000 to the City.
- Approved **Ordinance #2007-11-00607** which provides for the appointment of a Municipal Court Clerk, and outlines their general duties.
- Approved **Resolution #R-2007-11-00306** changing the signature card for the LOGIC account to include the signature of Finance Manager Brenda Bowman.



CITY STAFF WISHES EVERYONE A SAFE AND HAPPY HOLIDAY SEASON

City Hall will be closed on Christmas Eve, Monday, Dec. 24, and Christmas Day, Tuesday, Dec.25. We will also be closed on Tuesday, Jan. 1, New Years Day.



COFFEE WITH COUNCIL SCHEDULED FOR SATURDAY, JANUARY 12

The next Coffee with Council will be held from 8:00AM until 11:00 AM on Saturday, January 12. As usual, there will be two City Councilmembers hosting this event. Additionally, there will be members of the Home Rule Commission present to answer any questions about the Home Rule Charter being currently drafted by the Commission.

This is your opportunity to meet with city officials in an informal setting, and ask questions, offer suggestions, and just get to know your city leaders. We look forward to seeing you there for conversation, coffee, and donuts! Mark your calendars. A reminder will also be included in the January newsletter.

MUNICIPAL COURT AGREEMENT REACHED



City Council has tentatively approved a contract with Omni Base Services (Texas Department of Public Safety) that helps ensure court appearances by traffic violators and others charged with offenses in Lucas.

When a person fails to appear in Court or fails to finish their fines or sentences, they are reported to Omni Base Services. Once they are reported, they are unable to renew their drivers license until all outstanding fines or warrants are cleared with the municipal court. Approval of the final contract is subject to review of our City Attorney.

WINNER OF HOT WHEELS SILENT AUCTION

We want to thank all who submitted bids to the Hot Wheels Silent Auction that benefited the Lucas Volunteer Fire Department. The auction ended on November 15, with a winning bid of \$250.00. We were asked not to publish the winner's name as some lucky person in the winner's family will be a very happy and surprised person on Christmas morning!

**VOLUNTEER
APPRECIATION DAY
THURSDAY, JAN. 17**



The quality of life in our City is greatly impacted by the efforts of our wonderful volunteers who give so generously of their talents and time. Our boards and commissions, including the extremely important Planning and Zoning Commission, are made up of residents who are willing to make a difference in our community.

During the City Council Workshop meeting on Thursday, January 17, these many volunteers will be honored for their contributions. We would like to invite all volunteers, their families, and our citizens to join us on this date at 7:00 PM.

A short reception, with refreshments, will be held following the official recognition presentation.

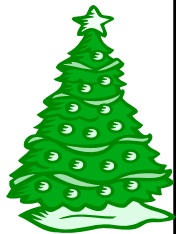
As we recognize these volunteers, we hope each of you will seriously considering offering your services in the future. Do as these great citizens have done.....help make Lucas an even better place to live in for all of us.

HOLIDAY SAFETY TIPS

Each year the National Safety Council offers suggestions to help make your holiday season merry and safe. Some of the tips are especially good as they involve things that we may not have considered.

For example, they remind us that certain plants may look good enough to eat to small children, but can actually cause severe stomach problems. Plants to watch out for include mistletoe, holly berries, Jerusalem cherry, and amaryllis. These same plants may also be harmful to pets.

They also recommend that you not burn evergreens or wreaths in the fireplace or in a wood stove to dispose of them. They are likely to flare out of control and send flames and smoke into the room. Also, do not burn wrapping paper in the fireplace because it often contains metallic materials which can be toxic if burned.



CITY OF LUCAS
151 COUNTRY CLUB
LUCAS, TEXAS 75002

PRESORTED STANDARD
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
ALLEN TX 75002
PERMIT 157

POSTAL PATRON