

Greetings Marlinites,

08/20/21

I would like to shed some light on some misinformation that is spreading rampant throughout our community. I was never so naïve that I thought that by taking this office in 2019, I would make major changes occur within a 2-year time frame. Being native to Marlin, I watched the deterioration of our community over the past 35-40 years. I never thought I was a magician nor was I superwoman and would restore Marlin to its heyday within 2 years. The vision God gave me was to put LONG-TERM systems in place within the 2-years that would help Marlin to revitalize and grow in the years to come. Working with the previous city council, we did just that. However, we couldn't go forward without knowing where we were financially to achieve our goal. Upon our arrival, this was very unclear. Earlier this year, we selected a new auditing firm who has looked at our entire accounting system and plans, by end of this month, to provide the City of Marlin, with a true picture of where we stand financially. Based on his visit to Monday night's council meeting, our future looks solid. Once we know what we have, we know how far we can go. Below are some of the actions taken by the previous council, and this current council, to ensure long term sustainability for Marlin for years to come.

1. The Nanostone pilot has begun. Within 6-9 months, our plant will be retrofit with a ceramic membrane system that will guarantee us good water filtration for the next 20 years.
2. I would like to applaud the current city council members on their leadership in allowing the citizens of Marlin to vote on a proposition to secure funding for dedicated street repairs. Also, I'm excited to announce that the city of Marlin will be receiving \$1.4 million from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA), for infrastructure repairs. TxDOT has donated road materials as well. Our Durapatch machine has been repaired and is up and running making some pothole repairs within the city. Last year, we secured some new pieces of equipment and we're looking forward to securing additional equipment.
3. Our fire department was approved for grant funds in the amount of \$503,000 (\$5,000 city match) on 4/16/2021 and this current administration recently approved the equipment purchase. This grant will provide the City of Marlin with "(1) tanker-pumper fire truck, one (1) brush truck, two (2) SCBAs, one (1) cutter, one (1) spreader and one (1) ram." We have approved the contracts for the supply vendors pending delivery dates which could take 6 months or more to build the trucks.
4. We've now added 5 new personnel to our Public Works Dept to assist with street and mowing in our city.
5. We were approved for a grant for \$500,000 through Texas Parks and Wildlife for boating ramps, picnic tables, and a restroom at the City Lake. We also approved a contract with Texas Parks and Wildlife for public hunting at our lake.
6. We are receiving additional grant funding for needed upgrades to our airport.
7. Here is a list of current grants that our administration is currently seeking:
 - A. HHS Rural Communities Opioid Crisis Grant (will attempt to partner with FCH)
 - B. Build Back Better Regional Challenge
 - C. Good Jobs Challenge
 - D. Economic Adjustment Assistance Challenge
 - E. Travel, Tourism, and Outdoor Recreation Grant
 - F. TxDOT Aviation Grant

8. I would also like to applaud this council for initiating the Marlin Economic Development Corporation during one of our recent meetings.
9. We have erected a structure that will be the future home of the Marlin Animal Control Center once completed.
10. Marlin now has a tourism office and successfully held its first annual July 4 Marlinfest.
11. We are looking forward to our second annual Young Eagle's Aviation Rally on November 6.
12. We secured a \$25,000 grant from USDA for repairs to our Brazos River Pump.
13. We have professionalized our police department by receiving grants for body cameras, updated communications technology, and reporting systems.
14. We now have on hand some additional emergency management supplies.
15. We are in the process of building upgrades at City Hall.
16. We have updated our court system.
17. We are making ongoing improvements to our website.
18. We are continuing to seek out economic developers and businesses for Marlin.
19. We have received \$311,000 in CARES ACT funding. Some of this money was used to give each household a \$50 credit on their water bill. We created a rainy-day fund with some of it and some was distributed among each of our city departments.
20. Our engineers are working on the design phase of our drainage project. They should be soliciting bids for contractors in the coming months. We are awaiting approval of the additional \$2.8 mil for this project.

Although it may not APPEAR that this council is working for the future of Marlin, WE ARE WORKING TOGETHER to move Marlin forward. While you may not see immediate change, the long-term sustainable goals are being put in place for Marlin's future. We are #marlinstrong.

Hon. Carolyn Lofton
Mayor, City of Marlin