

City Manager Update (10-18-19)

TGIF! The cooler weather of late has been a welcome change. If you have not heard by now, Hollywood has once again come to Smithville. Amazon Studios will be filming a television series in Smithville from October 21, 2019 to March 31, 2020. Many of the building facades on Main Street have been transformed into faux businesses that include a pharmacy, diner, pawn shop, and movie theater. Reference Item 6 for additional information. (SEE PHOTOS)

The Smithville Police Department did a fantastic job sponsoring "Smithville Night Out" on Tuesday, October 1st. National Night Out (NNO) is a nationwide event coordinated by law enforcement and emergency personnel throughout the country and has thousands of participants. Holding the event at MLK Park was well-received by the community with several hundred people participating. The kids loved riding the City train, playing in bounce houses, face-painting, eating hot dogs, and listening to music. Kudos to Chief Maugere and his staff for coordinating this community event. (SEE PHOTOS)

Here is a list of significant accomplishments, events and activities since my last update:

- 1) **Smithville-Crawford Municipal Airport Hangar Purchase Complete** - After 9-1/2 months, the transaction to purchase ten (10) 30'x40' aircraft hangars at the Smithville Crawford Municipal Airport was completed on Wednesday, October 2, 2019. The hangars were purchased from a private owner (SEE PHOTOS) using \$500k in TXDOT Aviation Non-Primary Entitlement (NPE) funding. The City was responsible for paying 10% of the total cost. The \$50k match was covered (funded) by salary savings from personnel attrition, film permit fees, RAMP grant funding, and reserves from our general fund. Prior to the purchase, the City was charging \$0.10 ft² per hangar for each of the 10 ground leases. This only brought in \$1200 per year in revenue. Hangar rentals at general aviation airports in Central Texas average \$250-300 per month. The City can now rent the 10 hangars for \$250 / month which will bring in \$30k in revenue per year with a return on our initial \$50k investment (ROI) of 20-months. The current tenants have been notified of the transfer of ownership and new hangar rental / lease agreements are being drawn up and assigned by the City.
- 2) **Ameresco Measurement & Verification (M&V) Audit Scheduled** - Ameresco will be conducting our annual Measurement & Verification (M&V) audit to validate the annual savings for each of the Energy Conservation Measures (ECM) associated with our utility infrastructure upgrade during the week of October 21-25, 2019. The audit report will be available in December and will validate the year-to-date project cost savings. The anticipated cost savings over the next 15-years will more than cover the principal and interest associated with the lease/purchase agreement for our infrastructure upgrade. The M&V audit is performed each year and is a requirement of our Ameresco lease/purchase agreement.
- 3) **City of Smithville Sales Tax Update** - Below are the sales tax allocations for October 2019 vs. October 2018 (retail sales made primarily in August). This data reflects RETAIL sales of goods and services subject to LOCAL sales tax. Our sales tax payment (receipt) for October was \$40,562. This represents a **6.48% INCREASE** in our net payment compared to the same time last year. The City of Smithville is slightly behind Bastrop with the second highest year-to-date change (3.69%) among the three municipalities in the County. Total year-to-date payments are \$469,628. The state collects 8.25% on every dollar of which the City gets 1.5%. A very rough calculation would show that for every \$1M spent, the State gets \$67.5k and the City receives \$15k. So, for the City to receive \$40k in sales tax revenue, approximately \$2,670,000 of local goods and services would need to be sold. This sounds like a lot but one needs to consider all the goods and services the businesses operating in this town provide to consumers in any given month (e.g., restaurants, grocers, C-stores, furniture stores, auto parts, retail shops, and professional services, etc.). Remember...SHOP LOCAL - it makes a difference!!!

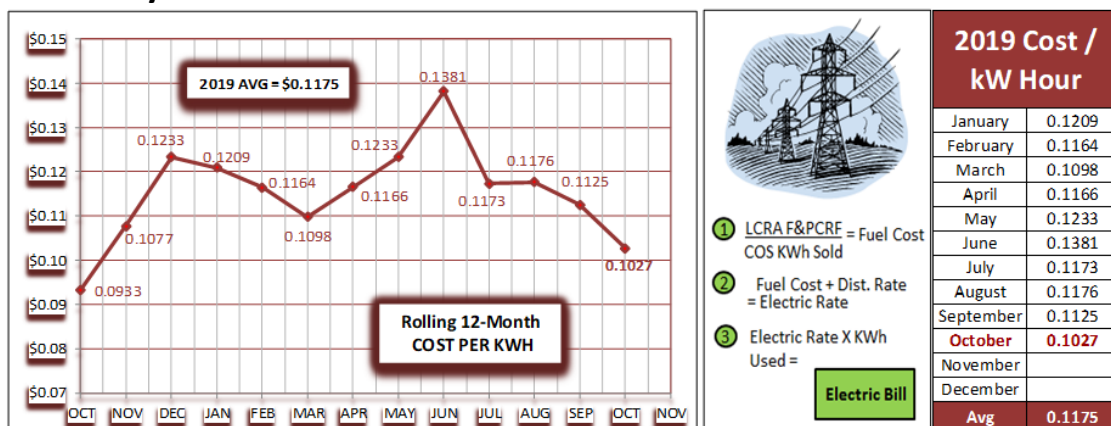
Bastrop County Sales Tax Allocation - October 2019

County/City	Current Rate	Net Payment This Period	Comparable Payment Prior Year	% Change	2019 Payments To Date	2018 Payments To Date	% Change
Bastrop	1.50%	\$623,238	\$602,731	3.40%	\$6,297,883	\$6,066,888	3.80%
Elgin	1.50%	\$197,961	\$191,065	3.60%	\$1,772,457	\$1,818,597	-2.53%
Smithville	1.50%	\$40,562	\$38,093	6.48%	\$469,628	\$452,885	3.69%
County Total		\$861,761	\$831,889	3.47%	\$8,539,968	\$8,338,370	2.36%

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- 4) **Texas Municipal League (TML) Annual Conference Attended** - Fourteen (14) participants from Smithville attended the 107th Annual Texas Municipal League (TML) Conference and Exhibition in San Antonio. TML provided the opportunity for city staff and the city council to network with other elected officials, municipal staff members, and city service providers while allowing participants to attend informational sessions and visit with multiple vendors in the Exhibit Hall. Muni-Services, Ameresco, Acadian, Waste Management, Langford Community Management and a host of other service providers currently doing business with the City of Smithville were also in attendance. Special thanks to Brenda Page and Jennifer Lynch for coordinating this event.
- 5) **FY18/19 Financial Audit Completed** - The 2018/19 financial audit (conducted by Singleton, Clark & Company) is complete. The annual audit focused on internal financial controls, payroll, employee records, and accounts payable/receivable, etc. The official audit report will be available in March 2020. Cynthia has finalized our 2018/19 budget amendments. Although lower utility revenues and contingency expenditures associated with the June 6, 2019 storm event made for a very challenging year, revenues exceeded expenditures by approximately \$504k. Approval of the FY18/19 budget amendments will be an item for discussion and action during the October 21st council meeting.
- 6) **Temporary Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) Issued for Downtown Buildings in Support of Amazon TV Series** - A production company has selected our community to film an Amazon Studios television series called "Panic" from October 1, 2019 to March 31, 2020. Several buildings in our Historic Commercial Overlay District (HCD) have been selected for use requiring the façades to be modified to fit the needs of the script. For example, the building façade at 204 Main will be transformed into a faux Movie Theater. The building façade at 316 Main will be transformed into a faux Pharmacy. These façade modifications are temporary and will not affect the structural integrity or historic character of the buildings long-term. As such, the City has issued a temporary Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) to those owners of downtown properties whose buildings will be used during the production. All building façades must be restored to their pre-production condition (e.g., same paint color, awning type, etc.). Any post production modification(s) planned to the existing building façades downtown that change the historic character of the building will require the owners to submit a COA application as required by City of Smithville Code of Ordinances, Chapter 14, "Zoning", Section 2.2.19 HCD-Historic Commercial Overlay District. During production, there will be street closures that may impact vehicular traffic and pedestrian access on Main Street. Businesses will still be open and accessible by pedestrians between film "takes". The City will publish a schedule of street closures on Facebook 24-hours in advance. For more information about the series click on the following link → <https://variety.com/2019/tv/news/amazon-greenlights-young-adult-series-panic-lauren-oliver-novel-1203217750/>.
- 7) **Residential Cost Per Kilowatt Hour (kWh) Calculated** - An analysis of LCRA billing data was conducted to determine residential cost per kilowatt hour (kWh) in OCTOBER. LCRA fuel costs vary month to month and are based upon electric utility generation, transmission, line loss, and service fees. The LCRA fuel cost per kWh for October is \$0.0527. This represents a **15.27% DECREASE** in fuel cost compared to September's fuel cost of \$0.0625. Adding the City's distribution fee of \$0.0500 and LCRA's \$0.0527 fuel cost, the cost per kWh for residential service in Smithville during OCTOBER will be \$0.1027 per kWh. Below you will find a "rolling" 12-month residential cost per kWh and a fuel cost comparison chart. On average, the cost per kWh for residential electric service in Smithville is between 11-12 cents.

City of Smithville Residential Cost Per kWh – OCTOBER 2019



Note: LCRA Fuel & Power Cost Recovery Factor (See Table Above) + City Distribution Fee* (\$0.0500) = Cost / kWh

*Residential Distribution Fee = \$0.500/kWh. Non-Resident (i.e., service outside city limit) Distribution Fee = \$0.650/kWh Effective October 1, 2019

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- 8) **Tiny Home Survey Update / Public Forum Scheduled** - The Tiny Home [survey results](#) have been compiled and a public forum has been scheduled for **Monday, October 28, 2019** from 5:30-8:00 pm at the Smithville Recreation Center located at 106 Royston. The purpose of the Public Forum is to share the survey information and obtain additional feedback from citizens regarding Tiny Homes within our community. Should Tiny Homes be allowed? If so, where? What requirements should the City adopt to regulate the design and placement of Tiny Homes? A panel of Tiny Home Industry experts will be available to provide information and answer questions regarding Tiny Homes. The public forum will be led by a local facilitator with the City Council, Mayor, and City Staff in attendance. The public is welcome and encouraged to attend. Here is a link to a flyer with details of the event → [Tiny Home Public Forum](#). Also, if you would like to submit panel questions in advance, click on the following link → <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/TinyHomeQs>.
- 9) **Smithville Volunteer Fire Department (VFD) New Officers Sworn-In** – Brenda Page and Mayor Scott Saunders, Jr. participated in a ceremony to administer the pre-oath and oath of office for the Fire Chief, Assistant Chief(s), President, Secretary, and Treasurer of the Smithville Volunteer Fire Department (SVFD). The officers serve one-year terms and are elected by the SVFD membership. We are lucky to have such a dedicated and professional group of individuals who volunteer to help keep our community safe. (SEE PHOTO)
- 10) **SH95 Utilities Relocation - Request for Funding Assistance Under SB-1512 APPROVED** - On September 26, 2019, the TXDOT Commission **APPROVED** the City's request for \$2.7M in funding to relocate utilities in the Right-of-Way (ROW) as part of the SH95 expansion project. During the 86th Legislative session, SB-1512 amended Section 203.092 of the Texas Transportation Code to establish provisions for utilities relocation at the expense of the state. These provisions pertain to specific conditions for which the City of Smithville would qualify. Specifically:
- population of less than 5,000
 - financial condition that prevents the municipality from being able to pay the cost of relocation
 - at least five (5) disaster declarations made by the President of US in the six-year period preceding the proposed date of the relocation

Per SB-1512, TXDOT will cover the expense to relocate any existing utilities within the ROW but will not pay for any utility upgrades (also known as “elective betterments”) unless the upgrades are driven by safety and/or regulatory requirements (e.g., fire flow). It is the City's intent to upgrade all water and sewer lines along the SH95 expansion in a manner that will support future growth. As such, the City will still be responsible for a portion of the cost for these upgrades. Earlier this year, our request to the US Economic Development Administration (USEDA) for funding assistance was denied. The City also applied to the US Department of Agriculture (USDA) for funding under their loan/grant program. Prior to approval of funding under SB-1512, we were pre-approved for a \$2.7M USDA loan/grant. The maximum potential grant award through this program would be 50% of the loan value for the entire project. However, since TXDOT is now paying for the majority of the utility relocation cost, the full \$2.7M loan/grant will not be needed. We are now conducting a gap analysis to determine the cost difference between forced and elective betterments. This is where we may need additional financial assistance but it will be nowhere near the initial \$2.7M request to USDA. The SH95 expansion project will cost an estimated \$7.8M with a 20% match that TXDOT has agreed to cover. CAMPO/TXDOT funding will pay for the roadwork including shoulders, sidewalks, lighting, and a middle turn lane that will run from Loop 230 to the High School. TXDOT has also agreed to manage the project under a Standard Utility and Advance Funding Agreement (AFA). Going forward, the City will be working closely with TXDOT to identify the project timeline and coordinate activities among the multiple utility entities involved (e.g., Time Warner, AT&T, Centerpoint Energy, etc.). Construction is tentatively scheduled for May 2021. Clearly, SB-1512 was written with Smithville's best interests in mind. The funding provided by TXDOT under SB-1512 will eliminate the need for the City to take on additional debt via a 40-year USDA loan. This is huge. Special thanks to Bastrop County Judge Paul Pape, Precinct 2 Commissioner Clara Beckett, and District 17 State Representative John Cyrier for their effort and support.

There are several events and/or meetings scheduled the next few weeks:

Early Voting at City Hall will begin **October 21, 2019** and end November 1, 2019. There are 47,407 registered voters in Bastrop County. Smithville has approximately 7,432 registered voters. Election Day is on Tuesday, November 5, 2019. There are ten (10) constitutional amendments (Propositions) on the ballot → <http://onyourballot.vote411.org/index.do>. Here is a link to the Bastrop County votes website → <https://www.bastropvotes.org/> for more information about the election schedule and polling locations. Click on icon below for a sample ballot.

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The **Tower's Nursing Home** (located at 372 Hill Road) will hold their grand opening and ribbon cutting on **October 23, 2019** from 5:00-7:00 pm. The ribbon cutting will take place in front of the building before they open the doors and let folks in for the grand opening. Light refreshments will be served.

The Smithville Area Chamber of Commerce, Smithville Public Library, and Texas Workforce Commission will be sponsoring a **Smithville Job Fair** on **Thursday, October 24, 2019** (from 10:00 am to 1:00 pm) at the Smithville Recreation Center (106 Royston). Contact the Chamber of Commerce at 512-237-2313 if you'd like to participate as a vendor.

The monthly **BEST BREAKFAST** will be held in Bastrop on **Friday, October 25, 2019** at the Mike Fisher Building (located at 1501 Business Park Drive) beginning at 8:00 am.

The **Smithville Recreation Center's Annual Halloween Bash** will be **Saturday, October 26, 2019** from 11:00 am to 3:00 pm. Wristbands will be \$5 for kids 4-years old and under, and \$10 for kids 5-years and older. There will be plenty of games, candy, and prizes so no one will leave empty handed. Bring the whole family as there is something for all ages. For more information contact the Recreation Center at 512-237-3282 extension #7 or visit their Facebook Page→ <https://www.facebook.com/smithvillepard>. Special thanks to Ashley Garrison and the Rec Center staff for coordinating this annual event for the community.

A **Tiny Home Public Forum** has been scheduled for **Monday, October 28, 2019** from 5:30-8:00 pm at the Smithville Recreation Center located at 106 Royston. The public is welcome and encouraged to attend.

The **Chamber of Commerce Quarterly Luncheon** will be held on **Wednesday, October 30, 2019** from 11:00 am to 1:00 pm at the First United Methodist Church Fellowship Hall (400 Olive Street). The speaker will be Superintendent Cheryl Burns who will provide a State of the District update. Tickets are \$15 and can be reserved at 512-237-2313 or www.smithvilletx.org

The Smithville Chamber of Commerce is sponsoring **Halloween "SPOOKTACULAR"** event downtown Main Street on **Thursday, October 31, 2019**. There will be ghost tours, a haunted house (at 2nd & Main in the old bank building – hosted by the Band Boosters), candy at all the participating merchant shops and more! Come down from 5pm to 8pm (haunted house goes to 9:30pm) where we'll have lots of candy and fun for everyone! Playhouse Smithville will be showing HOTEL TRANSYLVANIA at 6:30pm, free of charge. If you have a business or organization not located downtown and you want to participate, call the Chamber and they can get you set up along Main Street so you can join in the fun as well! Call 512-237-2313 with questions or if you'd like to sponsor this event.

The next **Household Hazardous Waste Collection Event** is scheduled for **Saturday, November 2, 2019** from 9:00 am to 12:00 pm. Used paint, pesticides, and household chemicals for FREE disposal. The HHW facility is located at SE 2nd and Taylor Street. Contact Jill Strube (512) 237-3282 to obtain a voucher.

Daylight Savings time will end at 2:00 am on **Sunday, November 3, 2019**. Be sure to change your clocks. Remember....."Spring Forward – Fall Back". It's also a good time to change out the batteries in your smoke detectors. Looking forward to the extra hour of sleep!

The next "Walk-To-School Wednesday" is scheduled for **Wednesday, November 6, 2019** at 7:30 am. If you are available and have the inclination, there are two route locations:

- **Brown Primary** - SE 4th Street and Jones
- **Elementary** - Gresham and NE 4th in front of Central School

"Walk-to-School Wednesdays" will continue throughout the school year. The monthly walk dates are: Dec 4, Feb 5, Mar 4, Apr 1, and May 6.

Please let me know if you have any questions or need additional information. Wishing you and yours a HAPPY and SAFE HALLOWEEN. As always, I am available by cell phone. Have a great weekend!

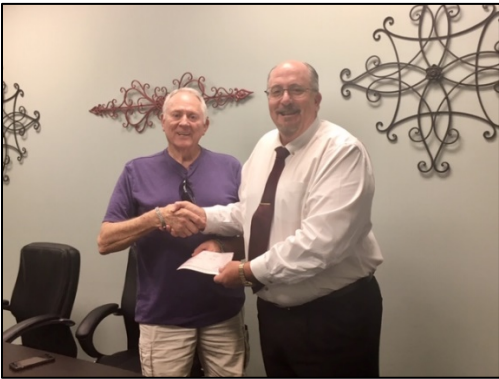
-- Robert --

PHOTOS – 10/18/19

SPD National Night Out



84R Hangar Closing



SVFD Election of Officers



Utility Crew Fixing Clock/Lights



Downtown Building Facades Being Used in Amazon Studios TV Series - "PANIC"



HAPPY HALLOWEEN!



DAYLIGHT SAVINGS TIME ENDS
SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 3, 2019

