

City Manager Update – 1/12/24

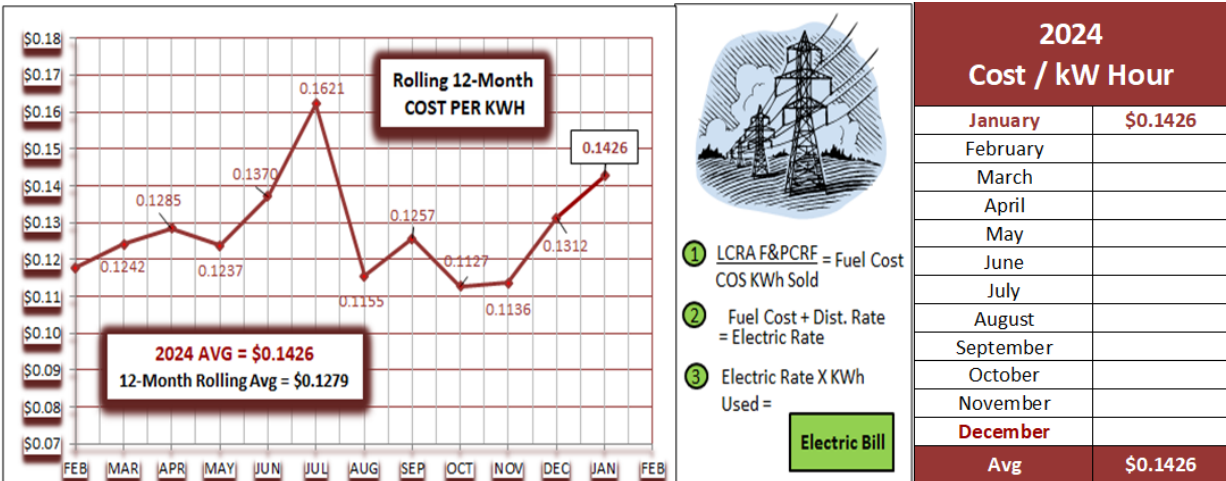
Happy New Year everyone! The Holidays gave us the chance to reflect upon all the important things in life that we sometimes take for granted.....family, friends, and fellowship. So, I hope everyone took the time to rest, recharge, and reconnect as 2024 will be another exciting and challenging year.

City crews continue to prepare for the upcoming 2024 Arctic Blast to ensure our facilities are ready. The crews are shutting off and draining water lines, re-wrapping pipes with insulation, re-fueling trucks, re-stocking, and re-supplying materials and equipment. The arctic cold front is now expected to arrive earlier than previously forecast—early Sunday morning. Thankfully, there is a low probability (20% chance) of freezing rain, sleet, or snow. However, the winds (and windchill) are expected to be brutal with lows in the teens and wind gusts between 25-30 mph. The City will publish a series of communications on social media to advise citizens what to expect, how to prepare, and what number to call in the event of a power outage after-hours and/or during the upcoming MLK holiday on Monday. As a reminder, power outages that occur after hours, on weekends, or on Holidays **should be reported to the Smithville PD (Dispatch) on (512) 237-3228**. There will be warming centers available in the County and we will publish these locations once verified. At this time, there are no plans in the County to open any emergency shelters (including the Smithville Rec Center) unless power is out for more than 24-hours. This is the “triggering” event that Bastrop County OEM has established and to which all entities within the County have agreed. All Public Works and Utility crews will be on stand-by this holiday weekend to respond to power outages and/or remove any fallen tree limbs from streets and roads.

Below you will find a list of accomplishments, issues, and planned activities since my last report:

- 1) **35<sup>TH</sup> Annual MLK Celebration for Peace, Justice, and Equality** - The 35th annual Bastrop County Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday Commission Celebration will be held **January 15, 2024** at the Smithville Recreation Center (106 Royston). Due to the anticipated sub-freezing temperatures on Monday, the scheduled walk from MLK Park to the Smithville Recreation Center has been cancelled. However, the celebration to recognize Dr. King’s legacy will begin at 11:15 am. The Martin Luther King Jr. walk and celebration in Bastrop County rotates yearly between the cities of Bastrop, Elgin and Smithville. For more information, click the following link → [2024 MLK Day Celebration](#).
- 2) **Residential Cost Per Kilowatt Hour (kWh) Calculated** – An analysis of LCRA billing data was conducted to determine residential cost per kilowatt hour (kWh) in JANUARY. Fuel cost per kWh vary month to month and are based upon electric utility generation, transmission, line loss, unmetered sales, and service fees. The fuel cost per kWh for January is \$0.0876. This represents a **15.02% INCREASE** compared to December’s fuel cost of \$0.0762. Adding the city's distribution fee of \$0.0550, the cost per kWh for residential service in Smithville during JANUARY will be \$0.1426 per kWh. Generally speaking, it costs more to heat a residence than it does to cool it as there is a greater outdoor temperature difference to make up to achieve what most folks consider “comfortable” inside....68°F in winter and 78°F in summer. The Public Utilities Commission (PUC) of Texas has published energy-savings tips on their website→<https://www.puc.texas.gov/consumer/facts/Save.aspx>. On average, the cost per kWh for residential electric service in Smithville is between 12-13 cents.

City of Smithville Residential Cost Per kWh – JANUARY 2024



Note: Fuel & Power Cost Recovery Factor + City Distribution Fee\* (\$0.0550) = Cost / kWh  
\*Residential Distribution Fee = \$0.0550/kWh (Effective October 1, 2023). Non-Resident (i.e., service outside city limit) Distribution Fee = \$0.0650/kWh

## City Manager Update – 1/12/24 (continued)

- 3) **Community Leader Needed to Serve on the Bastrop County Public Health Task Force** - The City of Smithville is seeking a Community Leader to serve as a member on the [Bastrop County Public Health Task Force](#). The multi-jurisdictional task force members will provide recommendations on the strategic, structural, and operational aspects of the newly formed Bastrop County Health Department. Task Force members will meet monthly to provide input and share in decision-making about health service priorities based on community and workforce assessments, infrastructure funding, governance, and other planning efforts that focus on health equity. Prior health services and/or medical experience is not required. However, the following → ["Characteristics and Qualifications for the Ideal Task Force Member"](#) will be considered. If you are interested in serving on this task force, please complete the following → [City of Smithville Advisory Board / Committee Application](#). Email your completed application to Robert Tamble, City Manager at [citymanager@ci.smithville.tx.us](mailto:citymanager@ci.smithville.tx.us) on or before **Wednesday, January 31, 2024**. For additional information, contact Robert Tamble at (512) 237-3282 x. 2169.
- 4) **City of Smithville Sales Tax Update** - Below are the sales tax allocations for January 2024 vs. January 2023 (retail sales made primarily in November). This data reflects RETAIL sales of goods and services subject to LOCAL sales tax that were purchased in Smithville during the Holiday shopping season. Our sales tax payment (receipt) for January was \$70,729. This represents a **12.51% INCREASE** in our net payment compared to the same time last year with Smithville leading the "municipal pack" for the greatest percentage increase within Bastrop County. As a reminder, sales tax dollars are used to make street / road repairs and help pay for community services like FIRE and POLICE. Remember...SHOP LOCAL - it makes a difference!!!

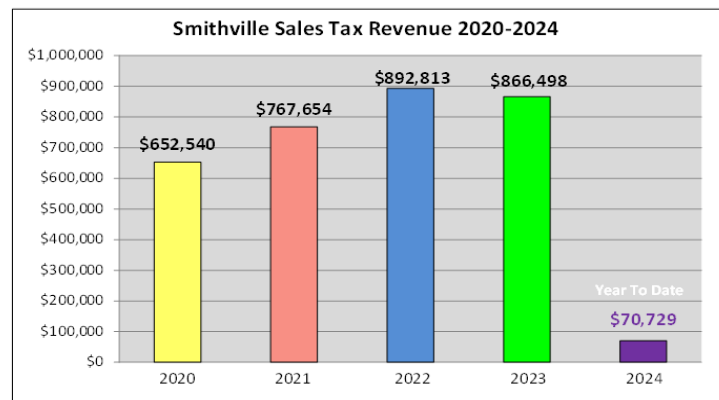
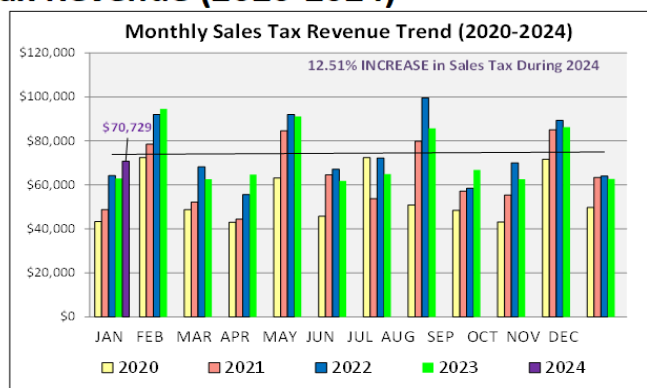
### Bastrop County Sales Tax Allocation – JANUARY 2024

County/City	Current Rate	Net Payment This Period	Comparable Payment Prior Year	% Change	2024 Payments To Date	2023 Payments	% Change
Bastrop	1.50%	\$1,030,693	\$978,537	5.33%	\$1,030,693	\$978,537	5.33%
Elgin	1.50%	\$321,866	\$315,648	1.96%	\$321,866	\$315,648	1.96%
Smithville	1.50%	\$70,729	\$62,860	12.51%	\$70,729	\$62,860	12.51%
Bastrop County	0.50%	\$714,209	\$658,621	8.44%	\$714,209	\$658,621	8.44%

### Smithville Sales Tax Revenue (2020-2024)

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
JAN	\$39,325	\$43,347	\$48,759	\$64,226	\$62,860	\$70,729
FEB	\$59,926	\$72,422	\$78,459	\$92,024	\$94,558	
MAR	\$36,333	\$48,809	\$52,210	\$68,204	\$62,561	
APR	\$39,391	\$42,977	\$44,438	\$55,574	\$64,717	
MAY	\$60,837	\$63,095	\$84,622	\$92,007	\$91,169	
JUN	\$43,545	\$45,779	\$64,516	\$67,197	\$61,809	
JUL	\$43,536	\$72,352	\$53,723	\$72,234	\$64,911	
AUG	\$58,843	\$50,878	\$79,858	\$99,610	\$85,733	
SEP	\$47,330	\$48,442	\$57,169	\$58,446	\$66,831	
OCT	\$40,562	\$43,150	\$55,398	\$69,994	\$62,501	
NOV	\$57,870	\$71,574	\$85,087	\$89,312	\$86,235	
DEC	\$48,244	\$49,714	\$63,415	\$63,985	\$62,613	

Sales Tax Revenue	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
	\$575,742	\$652,540	\$767,654	\$892,813	\$866,498	\$70,729



Data Source: <https://comptroller.texas.gov/transparency/local/allocations/sales-tax/cities.php>

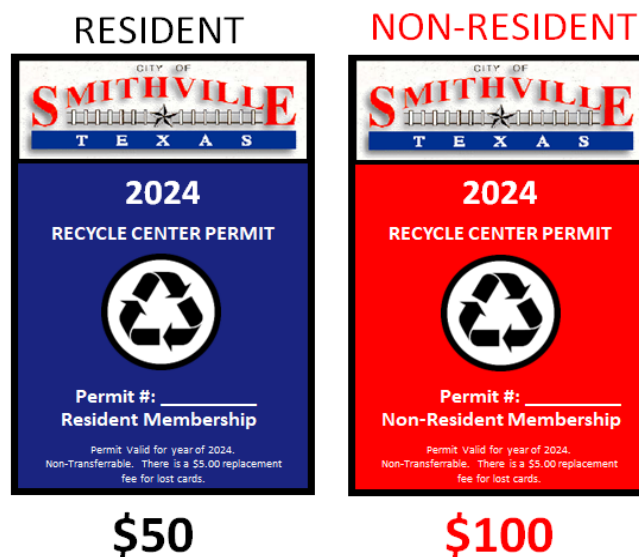
## SHOP LOCAL

*It makes a difference!!!*

*Sales Tax Revenue helps pay for  
Fire, Police, Street Repairs,  
Library, Airport, Rec Center and  
Animal Control*

## City Manager Update – 1/12/24 (continued)

- 5) **2024 It's Time Texas (ITT) Community Challenge** - Each year, H-E-B sponsors the free, state-wide competition in which Texas communities compete to see which communities can demonstrate the greatest commitment to healthy living. The City has won the competition the past six (6) years in a row in the “extra small” community category (population between 1-5000). If you have not yet registered, there is still plenty of time to participate as the challenge runs from January 8, 2024 through March 3, 2024. Go to <https://register.ittcommunitychallenge.com/> to register or watch the [It's Time Texas promotional video on YouTube](#) for more information.
- 6) **Recycling Permit Now Required for Use of the Smithville Recycling Center** – In September 2023, the City Council instructed the City Manager to institute a permit-based recycling membership program in an effort to help reduce the operational losses associated with running the Recycling Center. For decades, Smithville area residents have been able to utilize the recycling center FREE of charge. Unfortunately, the city will no longer be able to provide free recycling. As such, the city instituted an annual (per household) recycling permit fee on **January 1, 2024** to use the Recycling Center. There are two (2) different membership cards available – one for residents and one for non-residents. Recycling Center membership cards are available at City Hall (317 Main). The Smithville Recycling Center will be open Tuesday – Saturday (8:00 am to 5:00 pm). For more information, contact City Hall at 512-237-3282.



- 7) **New Entry Gate at Mt. Pleasant Cemetery Installed** – An ornamental entry gate at Mt. Pleasant Cemetery was recently installed to improve both aesthetics and security. The cost for installation of the wrought-iron entry gate was funded by monies received from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA). Thus far, the city has spent approximately \$30k of the \$50k budgeted in FY23 for general cemetery improvements that include a new perimeter cyclone fence, entry gate, and markers for the 140 unmarked graves identified during a site survey using ground-penetrating radar.
- 8) **Used Tires and Electronic Recycling Collection Event Scheduled** - On **Saturday, January 20, 2024**, the City of Smithville will partner with the City of Bastrop, Keep Smithville Beautiful, Bastrop County, and Lee County to hold a used tire and electronics recycling event at the Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) facility located at 109 Taylor and SE 2<sup>nd</sup> Street in Smithville from 9:00 am to noon. Vouchers are required for this event and are available on a first-come / first serve basis at the following locations:
- Bastrop County Development Services Office - 211 Jackson Street / Bastrop Tx
  - Smithville City Hall – 317 Main Street / Smithville, TX
  - Lee County Annex - 898 E Richmond (Room 107) / Giddings, TX

Only 100 vouchers will be distributed. People with vouchers can recycle up to ten (10) used tires for FREE. There will be a \$5 fee for each additional tire over 10 tires. Only pick-up truck tires (or smaller) will be accepted --- with or without the rim. No 18-wheeler or tractor tires will be accepted. Electronics recycling includes anything with a plug or battery (e.g., televisions, computers, monitors, cell phones, small appliances, rechargeable batteries, etc.). No items with Freon (e.g., A/C units, refrigerators, and/or freezers) will be accepted. Click on the following link for additional information → [Used Tires and Electronic Recycling Collection Event](#).

## City Manager Update – 1/12/24 (continued)

9) **Wastewater Rates - Three Month Winter Water Average** - Wastewater rates in Smithville are set by using a three (3) month “winter” water use average between DECEMBER and FEBRUARY. You can reduce your monthly wastewater (sewer) bill by conserving water during these months. In the event that the monthly water usage for any month is less than the computed “winter water average,” the lesser of the two shall be used as the basis for calculating the wastewater bill. Residential customers pay a \$15.00 sewer base rate per month and \$4.00 sewer fee per 1000 gallons of water used. Cut back on water use between December and February and let the savings begin! For a list of all utility rates in Smithville, click on the following link → <https://www.ci.smithville.tx.us/city-departments/utilities/rates/>.

10) **City Council Renews Cemetery Sexton Contract** – The cemetery Sexton Contract expired on December 31, 2023. Roy Wood has served as the City of Smithville Cemetery Sexton for over 35-years. The cemetery Sexton is responsible for platting new cemetery plots, lots, and blocks; coordinating installation of monuments; meeting with grieving families in person to preview gravesites; working with funeral homes to coordinate gravesite services including the opening and closing of graves. The City Council unanimously voted to approve the 2-year contract during the January 8, 2024 City Council meeting. The Sexton's compensation will be \$500 per month for a twenty-four (24) month period ending December 31, 2025. The City may, in its sole discretion, extend this contract for an additional twenty-four (24) month period by giving written notice prior to contract expiration.

There are several events / activities planned the next few weeks:

As a reminder, CITY HALL WILL BE CLOSED on **Monday, January 15, 2024** in observance of Martin Luther King Day. City Hall hours will be 8:00 am to 5:00 pm Tuesday-Friday.

CITY COUNCIL CANDIDATE FILING for the upcoming election in May begins **Wednesday, January 17, 2024**. New and incumbent candidates interested in filing to run for City Council (Place 4, Place 5) or the Mayor can pick up a candidate packet at City Hall. The deadline to file is February 16, 2024 at 5:00 pm.

The next CHAMBER MONTHLY MIXER will be held **Thursday, January 18, 2024** at 5pm at the Smithville Heritage Museum, 602 Main Street.

The USED TIRES and ELECTRONIC RECYCLING COLLECTION EVENT is scheduled for **Saturday, January 20, 2024** from 9:00 am to NOON at the Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) facility located at 109 Taylor and SE 2nd Street

The BEST COUNTY-WIDE BREAKFAST will be held in Elgin on **Friday, January 26, 2024** from 8:00-9:30 am at Meyer’s Elgin Steakhouse - 188 U.S. 290 Elgin, TX

The CHAMBER OF COMMERCE QUARTERLY LUNCHEON will be held on **January 31, 2024** at the First United Methodist Church (400 Olive) from 11:30 to 1:00 pm. The guest speaker will be District 17 Representative Stan Gerdes.

The 34th ANNUAL FISH FRY AND FUN NIGHT will be held on **Saturday, February 3, 2024** at the Smithville Recreation Center. Doors open for registration at 6 p.m. and the meal service starts at 6:30 p.m. The line to purchase tickets on-site will be closed at 7 p.m. and the drawing will start at 7:30 p.m. Tickets are \$100 each and entitles the purchaser to one entry into the cash drawing and a fried fish meal and drinks for two (2). Only 350 tickets will be sold prior to the drawing and 5 tickets will be auctioned off during the drawing. You DO NOT need to be present to win. Proceeds from this event go to the Smithville Noon Lions Club and the Volunteer Fire Department.



**CITY OFFICES CLOSED**  
**MONDAY, JANUARY 15<sup>TH</sup>**  
**IN OBSERVANCE OF MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.**





## PHOTOS – 1/12/24:

### New Entry Gate and Refurbished Gazebo at Mt. Pleasant Cemetery



### 2023 Dickens on Main Celebration



### Smithville Recycling Center – 404 Royston



### Construction @ M5 Subdivision – Webb & Calli Street (31 Homes – 10 homes under construction)



### Construction @ The Prairie (aka The Grove) Subdivision – Loop 230 East (27 Homes to be Built)

