

City Manager Update – 3/8/19

TGIF! The recent arctic blast produced some of the coldest temperatures on record for Smithville in March. The typical average low for March in Smithville is 48° F. Tuesday morning, the temperature dropped to 26° F which effectively killed any peach and/or plum tree blossoms that bloomed in late February. It has been a strange and abnormally wet winter. This is the first year that native Phlox and Indian Paint wildflowers bloomed before the bluebonnets.

City electric crews spent most of Saturday, March 2, 2019 responding to an electrical outage. A High Voltage (HV) bushing failed on a 20-year old 100 KVA transformer located on a utility pole behind City Hall. The outage impacted approximately 45 utility customers on Ramona and Main Street including City Hall, Coach Q's, and Clint's Liquor. The City replaced three (3) 100 KVA transformers with the assistance of Burlin Power Line, LLC and Techline. The transformers had to be purchased and picked up in Austin. Power was restored to all impacted utility customers by 7:00 pm after an approximate 8-hour outage. Thanks to all involved for their effort. (SEE PHOTOS)

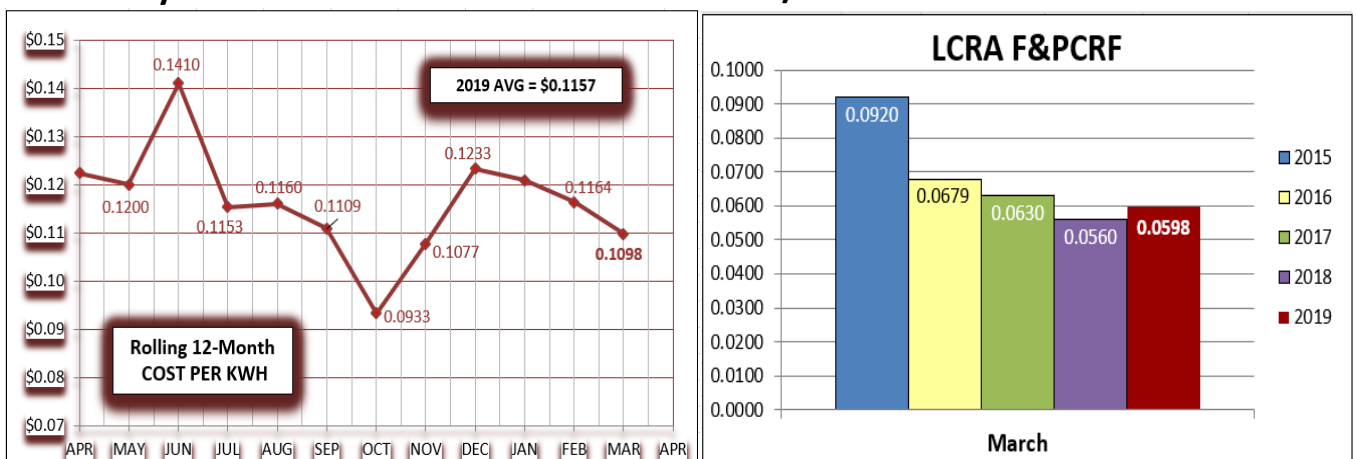
Mike McBryar retired on Friday, February 15, 2019 after 13-years with the Parks Department. He began his employment with the City of Smithville as one of the Parks crew and worked his way up to Parks Foreman. Mike is a man of few words who truly loved his job and the people he worked with. His time and dedication to the position was much appreciated and we wish him all the best in his new chapter of life. (SEE PHOTOS)

Congratulations are in order for all those who participated in the **"IT'S TIME TEXAS Community Challenge"**. Smithville came in 1st PLACE in the "extra small" community category (population between 1-5000) dominating Dripping Springs who had 36 more registered participants than Smithville's 311 participants. H-E-B sponsored the free, state-wide competition in which Texas communities compete to see which communities can demonstrate the greatest commitment to healthy living! The winning community in each size category will receive an \$1,800 community grant to put toward future health-related efforts, along with a trophy, school district banner, and Governor's certificate. Special THANKS to Stu Liebowitz, Barbara Lockerman, and Mark Lockerman whose combined point total represented approximately 175,000 of our 1,256,850 points. Bastrop and Elgin earned 355,150 and 123,400 points respectively. Click on the following link for the results → <https://ittcommunitychallenge.com/en/home>

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

- 1) Residential Cost Per Kilowatt Hour (kWh) Calculated** – An analysis of LCRA billing data was conducted to determine residential cost per kilowatt hour (kWh) in March. LCRA fuel costs vary month to month and are based upon utility generation, transmission, line loss, and service fees. The LCRA fuel cost per kWh for March is \$0.0598. This represents a **10% DECREASE** compared to February's fuel cost of \$0.0664. Adding the City's distribution fee of \$0.0500 and LCRA's \$0.0598 fuel cost, **the cost per kWh for residential service in Smithville during MARCH will be \$0.1098**. Below you will find a "rolling" 12-month residential cost per kWh and a fuel cost comparison chart. As you can see by the chart, fuel costs have been declining over the past 3-months. On average, the cost per kWh for electric service in Smithville is between 11-12 cents with the average household using 1,200 kW per month at a cost of \$144. The lower fuel cost in March will help defray the expense citizens incurred keeping their homes warm during the recent cold snap. ERCOT provides energy conservation tips → <http://ercot.com/about/conservation/> to help reduce consumption which in turn will help citizens save money.

City of Smithville Residential Cost Per kWh / LCRA F&PCRF - MARCH 2019



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

City Manager Update – 3/8/19 (continued)

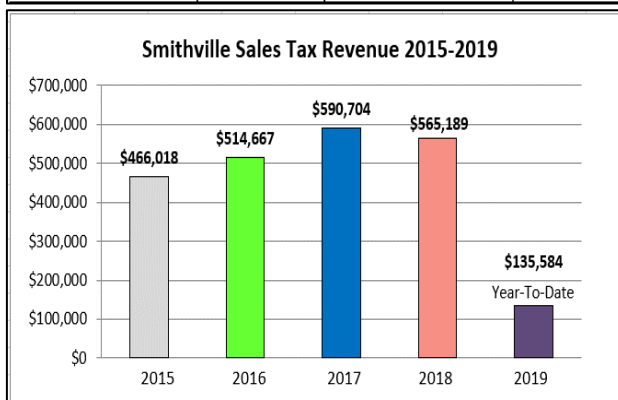
- 2) **Bastrop County Juvenile Boot Camp Advisory Board of Director's Meeting** – The semi-annual Bastrop County Boot Camp Advisory Board Meeting was held in Elgin on February 26, 2019. As part of an inter-local cooperative agreement signed in 2001, the City and School Districts of Elgin, Bastrop, and Smithville formed an eleven (11) member advisory board to govern the activities of the Bastrop County Juvenile Boot Camp (BCJBC). As the Smithville City Manager, I am serving as one of the eleven members. The BCJBC is a nonprofit organization which provides behavioral and educational services for court-ordered adolescents between the ages of 10 and 16. Last year, fifteen (15) students from the County participated in the 90-day program. The length of stay depends upon the duration and severity of school expulsion. Smithville ISD currently has 2 students enrolled for aggravated assault and possession of a controlled substance. The program is funded on a pro-rata basis with the City of Smithville contributing approximately \$5k per year.
- 3) **US Representative Michael Cloud (TX-District 27) Mobile Office Visit**: The City of Smithville hosted a “Mobile Office” visit from US Representative Michael Cloud’s office on Monday, February 25, 2019 from 1:00-2:00 pm. If you recall, Congressman Cloud won a special election last June to fill the position abruptly vacated by Blake Farenthold. Congressman Cloud considers these visits as instrumental in assisting constituents who may have issues with federal agencies like the VA, IRS, FEMA, SBA, the Social Security Administration, the US Post office, United States Citizenship and Immigration Service Center, and many others. Representatives from Congressman Cloud’s office also held similar meetings in Luling, Bastrop, and El Campo. Although communicated on the City FB page in advance, no constituents showed up to express accolades or concerns. The next Mobile Office visit is tentatively scheduled May 20, 2019.
- 4) **Bastrop County BEST Breakfast Meeting** - City and School District representatives from Bastrop, Elgin, Smithville, the Bastrop County Appraisal District (BACD) and several Bastrop County officials met for the monthly Bastrop, Elgin, Smithville, Texas (BEST) Breakfast Meeting at Southside Market in Elgin. The meeting provided a forum for informal discussion of accomplishments, events, and issues from each municipality and school district within the County. Elgin City Manager Tom Mattis and Mayor Chris Cannon gave an overview of Elgin’s development projects. Elgin is poised for explosive growth with approximately 3500 new residential homes planned to be built in the next 3-5 years.
- 5) **Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) Collection Event** - On Saturday, March 2nd, the City of Smithville partnered with the City of Bastrop, Keep Smithville Beautiful, Bastrop County, and Lee County to hold our third Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) collection event. The HHW facility is located at SE 2nd and Taylor Street. If you recall, the City of Smithville partnered with Bastrop and Lee Counties last year on a grant application to CAPCOG for building a HHW collection facility and re-use center. The initial \$42k grant paid for a hazardous waste storage building, equipment, supplies, and training for staff. Approximately 61 vehicles brought used paint, pesticides, and household chemicals for FREE disposal. A special THANK YOU to the seventeen (17) volunteers that helped make the event a success. The next HHW collection event is scheduled for June 1, 2019. This will be a PAINT COLLECTION ONLY. (SEE PHOTOS)
- 6) **2017-18 Fiscal Year Financial Audit** – The City completed our 2017-18 fiscal audit on February 27, 2019. The 4-day on-site audit was conducted by Singleton, Clark & Company. The focus of the audit was on internal financial controls, payroll, HR, accounts payable, accounts receivable, procurement, etc. Reconciliation of multiple federal, state, and local grants for infrastructure improvement presented quite the accounting challenge for the Finance Department throughout the year and triggered what is known as a “single-audit”. The state Comptroller requires a single-audit when a when a Grant Recipient expends \$750,000 or more during the fiscal year in federal or state awards. Last year, the City processed thirty-two (32) federal awards and six (6) state awards representing approximately \$1.5M in grant funding. The majority of these grants dealt with FEMA hazard mitigation and public assistance associated with past flooding events. The annual financial audit will be presented by Jack Clark during the Council meeting on April 9, 2019. Outstanding job Cynthia, Tiffany, and Brenda!
- 7) **2019 LCRA “Steps Forward Day” Project Approved** – The City received notification that our 2019 “Steps Forward Day” application was approved. Volunteers from LCRA will gather on **Friday, April 5, 2019** to work on community projects throughout LCRA’s service territory. Examples of potential projects include cleaning parks, painting pavilions, planting trees or doing carpentry work. Last year, LCRA volunteers painted the concession stand at MLK Park and the Little League Baseball field bleachers. This year, approximately 20-25 LCRA volunteers will help paint fifty (50) ornamental light poles on Main Street and NW 1st around the Gazebo area. The City is fortunate to have LCRA as a community partner. Programs like Steps Forward and the Community Development Partnership Program (CDPP) have definitely made a positive impact in our community.

City Manager Update – 3/8/19 (continued)

- 8) **TDA-CDBG Water Line Upgrade Project Update** – Mercer Construction Co., Inc. began construction on a water line upgrade on MLK last month. If you recall, the City received a Texas Department of Agriculture (TDA) Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) last year for city-wide water system improvements. The \$300k grant (with 15% match) will be used to construct a 10-inch water line (and associated improvements) that runs from just south of the railroad tracks at Miller Street to the intersection of 4th and Lynch. The larger, looped distribution system will help increase water pressure, water flow, and fire protection on the south side of town. Currently, the largest diameter water line serving the south side is 6-inches. Installation of the 10" water line required closure of the railroad crossing between Marburger and Miller to bore beneath the tracks. The crossing was closed to vehicle and pedestrian traffic from March 6-8th between the hours of 8:00 am and 5:00 pm. Notification regarding the railroad crossing closure was posted to the City website and FB page. Construction will take an estimated 175 days to complete. The contract completion date is July 8, 2019. (SEE PHOTOS)
- 9) **Tiny Homes and Recreational Vehicle Parking in Right-of-Way Issue** - We are seeing more and more tiny homes being brought into our community. Sometime in the next 2-3 weeks, I would like to hold a workshop to discuss "tiny homes" as we do not have anything in our ordinances that addresses where such homes may be placed or the requirements for placement. I would also like to have a discussion regarding commercial vehicles and trailers stored/parked within the city Right-of-Way (ROW). Our [Code of Ordinances](#) prohibits parking of trailers and commercial vehicles within the city ROW and limits the time a recreational vehicle (i.e., RV's, travel trailers, utility trailers, boats, etc.) can be parked in the ROW to 7-days. Currently, the ordinance is not being uniformly enforced as past Council action dictated enforcement of this ordinance on a complaint basis. As such, I would like to gain consensus from the Council as to how the City should address this issue going forward. Either we enforce the ordinance as written, delete the ordinance, or modify the ordinance to allow parking of commercial trailers and recreational vehicles in city ROW as long as the parking of such vehicles does not cause a line-of-sight issue. Brenda will be contacting Councilmembers to set-up a time and date for this workshop. Once a date is confirmed, we will publish notification on the City website and FB page so citizens will have the opportunity to attend the workshop to listen to the discussion.
- 10) **City of Smithville Sales Tax Update** - Below are the sales tax allocations for March 2019 vs. March 2018 (retail sales made primarily in January). This data reflects RETAIL sales of goods and services subject to LOCAL sales tax. Our sales tax payment (receipt) for March was \$36,333. This represents a **1.45% DECREASE** (\$536) in our net payment compared to the same time last year. Historically, January is a tough month for local sales as everyone cuts their spending back after the Holidays. 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 - March 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%	\$543,568	\$499,867	8.74%	\$1,806,273	\$1,792,274	0.78%
Elgin	1.50%	\$163,308	\$141,424	15.47%	\$526,272	\$523,898	0.45%
Smithville	1.50%	\$36,333	\$36,869	-1.45%	\$135,584	\$150,076	-9.65%
County Total		\$743,208	\$678,160	8.75%	\$2,468,129	\$2,466,248	0.08%



	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
JAN	\$30,001	\$35,747	\$39,255	\$48,401	\$39,325
FEB	\$56,657	\$60,281	\$62,519	\$64,805	\$59,926
MAR	\$30,535	\$28,644	\$37,897	\$36,869	\$36,333
APR	\$28,243	\$31,632	\$39,410	\$35,610	
MAY	\$51,774	\$60,668	\$63,296	\$55,277	
JUN	\$33,405	\$35,497	\$40,886	\$38,393	
JUL	\$30,426	\$34,105	\$43,363	\$40,403	
AUG	\$50,911	\$59,668	\$54,582	\$55,210	
SEP	\$32,731	\$38,057	\$62,939	\$39,823	
OCT	\$33,983	\$38,080	\$42,846	\$38,093	
NOV	\$48,415	\$53,749	\$58,192	\$66,784	
DEC	\$38,937	\$38,539	\$45,521	\$45,521	
Sales Tax Revenue	\$466,018	\$514,667	\$590,704	\$565,189	\$135,584

City Manager Update – 3/8/19 (continued)

- 11) **FEMA Hazard Mitigation Grant (HMG) DR-4245 - Marburger Drainage Improvement Project Update** - Union Pacific has still not approved the plans for the Marburger drainage improvement project that were submitted in September 2018....six months ago. If you recall, the City applied for (and was awarded) a \$140k FEMA Hazard Mitigation Grant (HMG) for drainage improvements on and around Marburger Street shortly after the October 2015 flood event. The existing terrain on Marburger and NE 1st Street is extremely flat and numerous homes have flooded over the past several years. The primary means of storm water collection is through a combination of open ditches (there is no curb and gutter in this area) and a shallow underground storm sewer system that feeds into an existing ditch that is located parallel to the railroad tracks. This ditch begins at Marburger Street and extends southeast approximately 5,900 feet where it outfalls into Willow Creek. The concrete valley gutter we plan to install to provide drainage relief on Marburger is in the Union Pacific Right-Of-Way (ROW) and requires their sign-off. Numerous requests have been made to Union Pacific to expedite the review to no avail. As a result, the City must request a 6-month project extension with FEMA. Bottom line, we are ready to publish a Request for Proposal (RFP) to identify a construction contractor and start the project. However, we cannot do so until Union Pacific approves the plans. In the meantime, let's hope that we do not have another springtime flooding event.
- 12) **City Receives "SolSmart Bronze" Designation** - The City of Smithville received a "SolSmart Bronze Designation" for our efforts at making it easier for developers and homeowners to choose solar as a renewable energy option. "SolSmart is a national designation program recognizing cities, counties, and towns that foster the development of mature local solar markets." This group is also a tremendous resource, providing no-cost, technical assistance to answer questions about how to bring more solar opportunities to the community and what those opportunities would mean to the City. With the Bronze Designation, Smithville can apply for a technical advisor specifically assigned to the City us to help navigate these opportunities. Currently, there are ten (10) Smithville utility customers who have installed residential solar systems. Click on the following link for more information about SolSmart → <https://www.solsmart.org/how-we-help/what-is-solsmart/> .
- 13) **Ameresco Measurement & Verification (M&V) Annual Audit** - A representative from Ameresco met with the City this week to review the 2018 Measurement & Verification (M&V) audit report summarizing the annual savings for each of the Energy Conservation Measures (ECM) associated with our utility infrastructure upgrade. This is the second annual M&V audit since installation of new water and electric smart meters, street lights, and City facilities lighting back in 2016. The net annual benefit in 2018 (revenue minus expenses) of the utility system upgrade is \$35,648 with a cumulative cash flow of \$106,497. The anticipated cost savings over the next 12-years will more than cover the principal and interest associated with the lease/purchase agreement for our infrastructure upgrade. The next annual M&V is scheduled for August 2019 with the summary report delivered 60-days thereafter. An electronic copy of the annual M&V report has been saved to the City's webpage → [Ameresco M&V Report](#)
- 14) **2019 CAPCOG Justice Assistance Grant (JAG) Application Submitted** - The Smithville Police Department submitted an application to the Capital Area Council of Governments' (CAPCOG) for a \$31,896 Justice Assistance Grant (JAG) for in-vehicle cameras, night vision rear cage suspect cameras, and in-vehicle microphones. This equipment will replace the existing obsolete technology to provide a more efficient and convenient way to upload data and greatly enhance our police officers' ability to provide adequate evidence to prosecute cases. Currently, eight of nine vehicles in the SPD fleet are outfitted with cameras and microphones that were installed in 2011 or earlier. One vehicle has neither a camera or microphone. The equipment is not Wi-Fi compatible and is no longer under warrantee. At this point, the cameras and microphones are breaking down and it is increasingly difficult to repair them. A resolution from Council is required for this grant program. Chief Mike Maugere and Jill Strube will present the proposal to CAPCOG in April (date TBA), and the award is expected to be announced in October, 2019. There is no match required for this grant.
- 15) **Possession & Use Agreement for 15' Utility Easement Prepared** - A Possession & Use (P&U) Agreement for a 15' utility easement between the City of Smithville and Southwest Housing Partners, LTD was prepared by our City attorney to allow work to continue on the TDA-CDBG water line described in Item 8 above. Southwest Housing Partners, LTD owns the newly renovated Independence Meadows Apartments (formerly known as the Smithville Gardens). Due to utility conflicts, the City must relocate the new water line which will now encroach onto the west property line boundary - parallel to Eagleston Street. Southwest Housing Partners, LTD agreed to sign the P&U agreement while we negotiate final terms for the 15' utility easement. Since the City is requesting the utility easement, we will pay for all surveys and recording fees associated with preparing the legal document. This will be an item for discussion and action at the next City Council meeting scheduled for Monday, March 11, 2019.

City Manager Update – 3/8/19 (continued)

There are several events / activities planned this weekend and the next few weeks in Smithville:

Daylight Savings time will begin on **Sunday, March 10, 2019**. Be sure to move your clocks ahead one (1) hour. “Spring Forward – Fall Back”. It’s also a good time to check/change out the batteries in your smoke detectors.

City Council meeting **Monday, March 11, 2019** at 6:00 pm (City Hall).

A production company will be filming a television commercial for a Credit Union out of San Antonio on **Wednesday, March 13, 2019** from 8:00 am to 8:00 pm at the old “Miss Vickie’s Emporium” on Loop 230. There will be intermittent traffic delays on Olive Street.

The next Chamber of Commerce COFFEE CHAT will be held on **Wednesday, March 13, 2019** from 7:30-8:30 am at Olde World Bakery (112 Main). The guest speaker(s) will be the City Council candidates.

The Chamber of Commerce Economic Development Committee, in partnership with the Smithville Public Library and the Texas Workforce Commission, will be hosting a CAREER FAIR on **Thursday, March 14, 2019** from 12pm-3pm at the Smithville Recreation Center.

The Brown Booster Club is hosting “Rafflemania 2019” on **Thursday, March 14, 2019** from 5:00-7:00 p.m. at the Brown Primary Cafeteria. This is their largest fundraiser for the year. The organization pays for all field trips for Brown Primary students Pre-K through 2nd grade, playground equipment, early literacy material for teachers and students, and other supplies for the school.

St. Patrick’s Day is **Sunday, March 17, 2019**.

The monthly BEST BREAKFAST will be held in Bastrop on **Friday, March 22, 2019** at 8:00 am. Location TBD.

The Chamber of Commerce will be sponsoring a LUNCH & LEARN on **Monday, March 25, 2019** at the Chamber office beginning at Noon. The topic will be “Business & Personal Tax Issues”, presented by Dennis Koch, CPA.

The next Chamber of Commerce RIBBON CUTTING will be held on Thursday, **March 28, 2019** at the Smithville Food Pantry (301 Lee Street) at 5:30 pm.

The next Airport Advisory Board (AAB) meeting will be held on **Monday, April 1, 2019** at the Smithville Crawford Municipal Airport Pilot’s Lounge from 6:00-7:00 pm.

As you can see by the length of this report.....there is a lot going on. These activities are above and beyond what it takes to keep the streets safe, the water running, the toilets flushing, and the lights on. Thanks to all City personnel who keep the machine oiled and running.

Please let me know if you have any questions or need additional information. Have a great weekend!

--Robert--



PHOTOS - 3/8/19

HHW Collection Event - 3/2/19



CDBG Water Line Upgrade Project as of 3/7/19



Micklethwait Market & Grocery Ribbon Cutting - 2/9/19



100 kVa Transformer Failure / Power Outage - 3/2/19



Mike McBryer Retirement - 2/15/19

