

## City Manager Update – 4/6/23

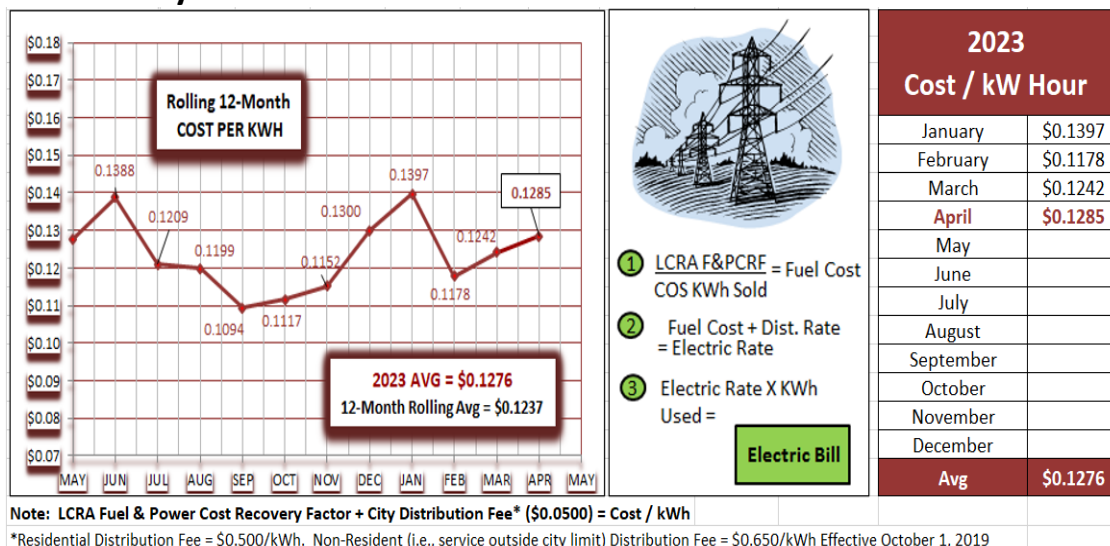
Jamboree preparations at Riverbend Park are in full swing. The annual celebration will be held April 13, 2023 - April 15, 2023 marking the 64th year for the Critter. Click on the following link for the schedule and list of events → <http://www.jamboreesmithville.com/>. On behalf of the City of Smithville, I would like to extend a THANK YOU to the members of the Jamboree Committee for their efforts. This event takes months to plan and most folks in the community never give a second thought about what it takes to pull off a community celebration of this magnitude and duration. Riverbend Park is looking great. Kudos to Edward Balusek and his team for paying attention to detail and going the extra mile mowing, weed-eating, and trimming trees at Riverbend Park. Edward's crew will also be removing dirt and debris from the curbs and "gutters" along Loop 230. Loop 230 will be closed from 1:30 – 4:30 pm on Saturday, April 15th for the Jamboree parade. We plan to put an alert on the city website and FB page communicating the Loop 230 closure and reminding folks about the parade.

After 40-years of employment with the City of Smithville, **Jack Page** has finally retired. I truly appreciated his knowledge, experience, and dedication as the City's Public Works / Utilities Director, Code Enforcement Officer, Building Inspector, Flood Plain Manager, Emergency Management Coordinator, and Fire Marshall. Jack is always willing to go the extra mile to help a citizen, co-worker, or friend. Since 2014, Jack has made my job as City Manager exponentially easier and I will definitely miss working with him on a daily basis. Having said this, Jack will be helping the City manage a few "special projects" in the future as needed. If you have not already done so, please wish → [Jack Page](#) GOOD LUCK as he begins this new chapter and tell him THANKS for four decades of keeping the City of Smithville water running, the lights on, and the toilets flushing!!!

Here is a list of accomplishments, issues, events, and planned activities since my last report:

- 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 April. 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 April is \$0.0785. This represents an **5.87% INCREASE** compared to March's fuel cost of \$0.0742. Adding the City's distribution fee of \$0.0500 and LCRA's \$0.0785 fuel cost, **the cost per kWh for residential service in Smithville during APRIL will be \$0.1285**. 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 12-13 cents.

### City of Smithville Residential Cost Per kWh – APRIL 2023



- 2) New Utilities / Public Works Director** - Over the past 2-years, Edward Balusek has assumed greater responsibility as part of a succession plan to replace Jack Page upon his retirement. As Jack Page officially retired on 3/24/23, I am pleased to announce that **Edward Balusek** has been promoted to the **Director of Utilities & Public Works**. Edward is a dedicated and reliable employee who consistently demonstrates an exceptional work ethic. He strives to improve skills and set the example for his employees to achieve a higher standard. Edward is a Journeyman Lineman who has been employed with the City of Smithville since 2016. He lives in Bastrop and is married to Jennifer and has three (3) adult children Tyler, Cade, and Xavier. Edward can be reached on 512-237-3282 (x. 2209). Congratulations!!!

## City Manager Update – 4/6/23 (continued)

- 3) **2023 LCRA “Steps Forward Day” Project(s) Approved / Scheduled** – The City received notification that our 2023 “Steps Forward Day” project application(s) were approved. Volunteers from LCRA will gather on **Friday, April 28, 2023** 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 helped the Smithville Police Department install new landscape timbers, trim bushes, and repaint the curbs around the building. LCRA also painted the restrooms (exterior) at Riverbend Park. This year, LCRA volunteers will trim trees and clean around gravesites at Mt. Pleasant Cemetery. A second project will be to paint the interior of the restrooms at Riverbend Park. The city will provide the supplies and equipment necessary to support the project with LCRA providing the manpower (typically 20-25 volunteers). The City of Smithville 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.
- 4) **City Council Passes Resolution to Postpone CenterPoint Energy Annual Gas Reliability Infrastructure Program (GRIP) Interim Rate Adjustment (IRA)** - The City Council unanimously passed a resolution on March 13, 2023 to postpone the effective date for CenterPoint Energy Interim Rate Adjustment (IRA) by 45-days until **June 15, 2023**. The City of Smithville is a member of the Alliance of CenterPoint Municipalities (“ACM”). The ACM group was organized by a number of municipalities served by CenterPoint Energy Resources Corp., South Texas Division (“CenterPoint”) and has been represented by the law firm of Herrera Law & Associates, PLLC (through Mr. Alfred R. Herrera) to assist in reviewing applications to change rates submitted by CenterPoint. CenterPoint Energy is asking the Texas Railroad Commission for a Gas Reliability Infrastructure Program (GRIP) Interim Rate Adjustment (IRA) to their base rate(s). Under Texas law (re: Gas Utilities Regulatory Act), the City of Smithville does not have the ability to oppose the rate increase. However, we can postpone the effective date of the proposed increase for 45-days. The base rate will be increased by \$3.72/month for residential service and \$7.51/month for small commercial service. The adjusted monthly charge (base rate) will be \$30.75 and \$48.93 respectively. This represents an average increase between 13-18%. The rate increase will help recover incremental spending for capital infrastructure improvements during the 2022 calendar year. Without the Council’s intervention, the new rates would have been effective May 1, 2023.
- 5) **EIA-861 Annual Electric Power Industry Report Submitted** – The City submitted the 2022 Energy Information Administration's (EIA) Form EIA-861, "Annual Electric Power Industry Report." The annual report identifies the revenue generated, Megawatt Hours (MWh) used, line loss, and the number of customers for whom the City of Smithville provided power during 2022. Here is a summary of electricity usage from 2016-2022:

City of Smithville EIA-861 Annual Energy Use Report							
City of Smithville Electric Power Use	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Revenue (\$USD)	\$4,847,000	\$4,695,000	\$5,053,000	\$4,959,000	\$4,967,000	\$5,286,000	\$5,540,854
Megawatt Hours (MWh) Billed	37,430	38,568	39,798	38,299	39,044	38,458	40,400
# of Customers*	2155	2169	2194	2221	2248	2272	2289
LCRA Megawatt (MWh) Purchased	42,456	42,437	43,619	43,306	43,367	42,108	45,237
% Line Loss (Includes unmetered use)	11.84%	9.12%	8.76%	11.56%	9.97%	8.67%	9.69%
*Includes residential, commercial, and customers with service outside the city limits				Average Line Loss			9.81%

As you can see by the data above, we had a slight increase in the number of utility customers served in 2022. We added 17 new customers for a total of 2,289. The City’s consumption in megawatt hours (MWh) was 5.04% more in 2022 compared to 2021. Similarly, there was an increase in revenue of \$255k compared to the prior year. Our line loss in 2022 was calculated at 9.69% (a 10% INCREASE from 2021). This includes losses due to inefficient transformers, uninsulated lines, and unmetered sales / use (e.g., street lights). EIA Electric Surveys are mandatory under the authority of the Federal Energy Administration Act of 1974 (P.L. 93-275), as amended. The annual EIA-861 report was compiled and submitted well before the April 30, 2022 deadline. Nice work Nadine Harris and Rosie Johnson!

- 6) **City Awarded \$78k from the Criminal Justice Division (CJD) for Bullet-Resistant Shields** – The Office of the Governor’s Criminal Justice Division awarded the Smithville Police Department \$77,947.35 (no match required) for 13 bullet-resistant shields. These shields will protect our officers in the case of an active shooter emergency, providing them with more of the tools they need to do their job effectively and safely. Every officer will also receive training in how to best use these shields. Nice work Jill Strube!

## City Manager Update – 4/6/23 (continued)

- 7) **2023 Bastrop Central Appraisal District (BCAD) Preliminary Estimate of Assessed Property Values** – The City of Smithville received official notice from BCAD communicating the preliminary estimate of property value(s) within the city limits. The total assessed property value (net taxable minus exemptions) for Smithville in 2023 is \$471,430,180. This represents an 19.50% increase (\$76,918,736) over last year's net taxable value of \$394,511,444. Based on the city's current tax rate of \$ 0.54893 per \$100 valuation, this could bring in an additional \$422,230 of revenue to the FY23/24 General Fund - barring any adjustments given to citizens who protest and win their appeals, added exemptions, etc., which typically equates to a 2-3% reduction of the total assessed value. The average home value increased 11.36% from \$208,432 to \$232,117. Final property values (i.e., the certified tax roll) won't be out until the July/August timeframe. These values are what drive the effective tax rate which is used to calculate the total tax rate.

BCAD Property Valuation & City Tax Rate Comparison - PRELIMINARY								
Year	Assessed Valuation	% Change in Value	Avg Home Value	Avg City Tax Paid	M&O Rate	I&S Rate	Total Tax Rate	% Change
2023	\$471,430,180	19.50%	\$232,117	TBD				
2022	\$394,511,444	20.20%	\$208,432	\$1,144	\$0.3831	\$0.1659	\$0.5489	-0.01%
2021	\$328,207,972	12.44%	\$186,277	\$1,023	\$0.4194	\$0.1296	\$0.5490	0.00%
2020	\$291,892,810	6.06%	\$170,086	\$933	\$0.4466	\$0.1024	\$0.5490	-3.52%
2019	\$275,208,274	10.97%	\$162,541	\$925	\$0.4525	\$0.1165	\$0.5690	0.00%
2018	\$247,999,239	4.63%	\$151,444	\$862	\$0.4455	\$0.1235	\$0.5690	5.57%

- 8) **PHI Air Medical Transportation Contract / Renewal Agreement Under Consideration** – The City of Smithville is considering renewing its contract agreement with PHI Air Medical to provide “no cost” emergency medical air transport of citizens with life-threatening injuries / illnesses that reside within the Smithville City Limits. The proposed annual fee of \$12,411 is based on providing coverage to approximately 1773 households (as identified by the most current list of residential utility customers). The plan will cover all Smithville citizens while they are in PHI Service Area (i.e., Bastrop County) at a cost of \$7.00 per household. For those citizens with insurance (including Medicare patients), the agreement will cover all co-pays, deductibles, and remaining balances for PHI transports. For those without insurance, the agreement will cover payment in full. For those citizens on Medicaid, PHI will receive a payment from the state. Citizens can upgrade to a full national household membership for \$30 per year (\$15 reduction from last year's \$45 rate) that will provide coverage outside of the Bastrop County service area. On average, the cost for medical air transport in large metropolitan areas is \$10-15k per flight. However, the average cost for citizens in Bastrop County for medical air transport is \$45-50k. In 2022, there were eleven (11) PHI Air Medical transports in Smithville. This will be an item for discussion during the Monday, April 10, 2023 Council Meeting. If approved, the contract will be valid through April 30, 2024.
- 9) **FY21-22 Financial Audit Completed** – Singleton, Clark & Company, PC completed the annual audit of the City of Smithville's 2021-22 financial statements during the month of March. The results of the audit indicate that assets exceed liabilities by \$16,323,625 at the close of the past fiscal year. The total net position of the city increased by \$173,458 from the prior fiscal year (General Fund increased \$380,744 and Utility Fund decreased \$207,286). The City's fund balance in the General fund increased by \$65,016 to end at \$1,337,125 and was largely due to insurance proceeds and transfers from the Utility Fund. The City's total debt DECREASED by \$325,230 during the fiscal year to \$7,903,771 which included issuance of a \$785,000 tax note for capital equipment. Overall, the City received a “clean” financial audit with positive balances in all reported categories of net position. However, one finding (and subsequent area for improvement) was noted involving the solicitation of competitive bids for equipment / services (in aggregate) that exceeded \$50,000. Tech-Line, Burlin, and RES Construction were vendors the city used to purchase transformers and/or complete miscellaneous sidewalk, curb, and drainage projects throughout town. Going forward, the city will ensure purchases made over \$50,000 (whether individual or in aggregate) are competitively bid. Jack Clark will be presenting the results of the financial audit during the April 10, 2023 City Council meeting.
- 10) **Smithville Police Association (SPA) Blue Bunny Easter Egg Hunt Held** - The Smithville Police Association's (SPA) annual Blue Bunny Easter Egg Hunt was held on Saturday, April 1, 2023 at Martin Luther King, Jr (MLK) Park. Four thousand (4,000) candy-filled eggs were “harvested” in less than 15 minutes! The kids took photos with the Easter Bunny and a good time was had by all. Kudos to the Smithville Police Association (SPA) and all the volunteers who helped assemble Easter baskets and “hide” the eggs. (SEE PHOTOS)

## City Manager Update – 4/6/23 (continued)

- 11) City-wide Street Repairs and Paving Project Update** - City-wide road paving and street repair has begun and will continue throughout the spring and early summer timeframe. The streets and roads listed below will be prepped, resurfaced, and repaved. The Bastrop County Maintenance Department (who owns the paving equipment) will be doing the majority of the work with support from the City of Smithville. This project will require partial and temporary street closures with notification of area residents and business owners 24-48 hours in advance. Pot-hole repairs will continue throughout town as pot-holes are reported and/or identified. Citizens can report a pot-hole using the Smithville [SEE/CLICK/FIX](#) link on the City Website or by downloading the SEE/CLICK/FIX app to their smart phones.

### City-wide Street Repairs and Paving Schedule – 2023

Street	From / To	Paving Material	Prep Completed	Road Closure Required	Est. Paving Date
City Warehouse	Back Parking / Staging Area	Hot Mix	YES	YES	COMPLETE
Main Street	1st to 7th Street	SEALCOAT	YES	YES	COMPLETE
NW/NE 2nd	Olive to Ramona	SEALCOAT	YES	YES	COMPLETE
NW 1st Street	Main Street to Hwy 95	SEALCOAT	NO	YES	APRIL
84R (Airport)	Runway / Ramp	SEALCOAT	NO	YES	
Bishop	1st and 2nd Street	Chip Seal	YES	YES	
Garwood	NE 5th to Loop 230	Chip Seal	YES	YES	
Burleson	NE 5th to Colorado	Chip Seal	YES	YES	
Hudgins	NE 1st to Loop 230	Chip Seal	YES	YES	
5th Avenue	Live Oak to Hickory	Chip Seal	NO	YES	MAY
Ash	4th Avenue to 6th Avenue	Chip Seal	NO	YES	
Walker	700 Block	Chip Seal	NO	YES	
Harper	Webster to Hwy 95	Chip Seal	NO	YES	
King's Way (RVICS)	Last Road on the Backside of RVICS	Chip Seal	NO	YES	
Mt. Pleasant Cemetery	Entry Road & Circle around Gazebo	Chip Seal	NO	YES	
Oak Hill Cemetery	Entire Cemetery	Chip Seal	NO	YES	JUNE
Uptown Drive	Old Upton Road to Pecan Shores	Chip Seal	NO	YES	

- 12) 2023 City of Smithville Councilmember Elections** – Candidate filing for the 2023 City of Smithville General Election is complete. A list of candidates and the position for which they are running is provided below. Election Day is Saturday, May 6, 2023. Early voting begins April 24, 2023 and ends May 2, 2023. Voting will be at the Smithville Recreation Center (106 Royston). See schedule below and/or click on the following link for additional information (e.g., sample ballot, polling locations, etc.) → <https://www.bastropvotes.org/election-information-2/upcoming-elections/>. The Smithville Area Chamber of Commerce will be sponsoring a candidate forum on Tuesday, April 11, 2023 at the Smithville Rec Center (6:00 pm). Good luck to all the candidates.

### Smithville City Council Candidates For 2023 General Election

	Position	Candidate	Term Lenth	Term Expires	Election Type	Candidate Status
City of Smithville	Alderman - Place 1	Mitch Jameson	2-Years	May 2023	General	Challenger
		Tyrone Washington				Challenger
	Alderman - Place 2	Tom Etheredge	2-Years	May 2023	General	Incumbent
		Unopposed				
	Alderman - Place 3	Jimmy Jenkins	2-Years	May 2023	General	Challenger
		Monica Poss				Challenger
Note: Joanna Morgan (Place 1) and William Gordon (Place 2) are not seeking another term in office.						

- 13) Airport Hay Contract Request For Proposals (RFP) Received** – The City of Smithville published Request for Proposals (RFP) in the Austin American Statesman on March 15, 2023 and March 22, 2023 seeking a contractor for the exclusive right to cut and bale hay at the Smithville-Crawford Municipal Airport (located at 765 NW Loop 230). Two (2) contractors submitted sealed proposals that were opened and read aloud in the City Council Chambers at 10:15 am on April 3, 2023. John Badders Farm and Ranching Services submitted a bid to pay the City of Smithville \$2,100 per year for the 2-year contract. Hurta Cattle Company's submitted a bid for \$6,053 per year for the 2-year contract. As such, it is recommended that the **Hurta Cattle Company** be awarded the hay contract as the highest bidder. This will be an item for discussion and action during the April 10, 2023 City Council meeting.



## City Manager Update – 4/6/23 (continued)

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

Just a reminder that **CITY OFFICES** will be CLOSED **Friday, April 7, 2023** in observance of **GOOD FRIDAY**.

**NATIONAL PUBLIC SAFETY TELECOMMUNICATIONS WEEK** is **April 9-15, 2023**. National Public Safety Telecommunications Week (NPSTW), has been set aside to recognize and celebrate the work of telecommunicators helping to save millions of lives every day. This week-long event is a time to celebrate and thank those who dedicate their lives to serving the public by ensuring prompt and safe response of our local law enforcement, firefighters, and paramedics. The Smithville PD has a great team of dedicated Telecommunicators (Dispatchers) who effectively communicate and multi-task in emergency situations. Let's acknowledge their hard work and dedication!

The next **CITY COUNCIL** meeting will be held on **Monday, April 10, 2023** at 6:00 pm (City Hall). Click for link to access the [COUNCIL AGENDA AND DATA PACKET](#).

The **LOCAL CANDIDATE FORUM** will be hosted by the Smithville Chamber of Commerce on **Tuesday, April 11, 2023**. The forum will be held at the Smithville Recreation Center from 6:00–7:00 pm. The candidates running for City Council, in the May 2023 election have all been invited to participate. Since there were no unopposed Smithville Independent School District Board of Trustee positions, their election was canceled.

The **64<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL SMITHVILLE JAMBOREE** will be held on **April 13-15, 2023** at Riverbend Park.

The next monthly **CHAMBER OF COMMERCE MIXER** will be held on **Thursday, April 20, 2023** (from 5-7:00 pm) sponsored by Kimmie Jean Boutique located at 320 NW Loop 230.

**EARLY VOTING** begins **April 24, 2023** and continues through May 2, 2023 at the Smithville Recreation Center (106 Royston). Election Day is Saturday, May 6, 2023.

The next **CHAMBER QUARTERLY LUNCHEON** will be held on **Wednesday, April 26, 2023** (from 11:00 am to 1:00 pm) at The First United Methodist Church (400 Olive Street). Precinct 2 County Commissioner Clara Beckett will provide an update on Precinct 2 activities. Register for the luncheon online at [www.smithvilletx.org](http://www.smithvilletx.org).

**ADMINISTRATIVE PROFESSIONAL'S DAY** is **Wednesday, April 26, 2023**. Many thanks to Jennifer Lynch (City Secretary) and all the City's "administrators" for everything they do.

Please let me know if you have any questions or need additional information. Have a good weekend, a great Jamboree, and a Happy Easter!!!

-- Robert --





## PHOTOS – 4/6/23

### Jack Page Retires After 40-Years with the City of Smithville



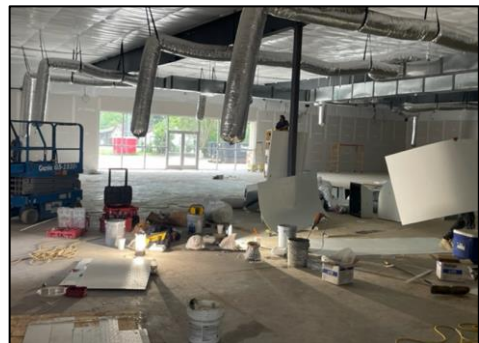
### City Hall Renovation / Expansion (New ADA-compliant Restrooms, Offices, and Storage)



### Drainage Improvement Project @ 5<sup>th</sup> and Marburger



### Family Dollar / Dollar Tree Construction (Opening – August 2023)



### Smithville PD Blue Bunny Easter Egg Hunt @ MLK Park – 4/1/23



### New Flashing Light in School Zone (Short St)