

City Manager Update – 4/8/22

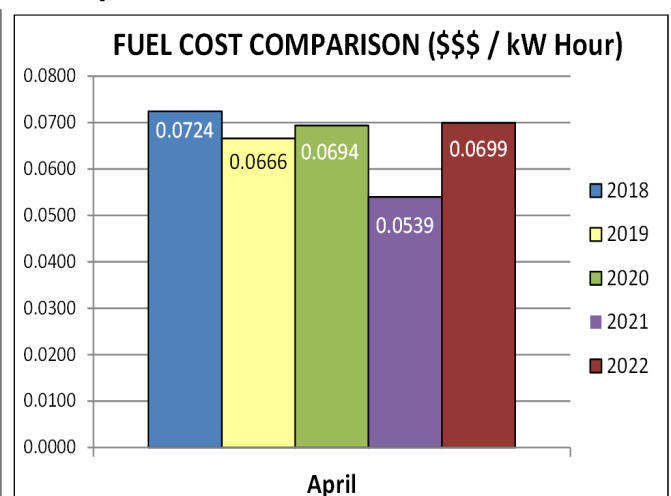
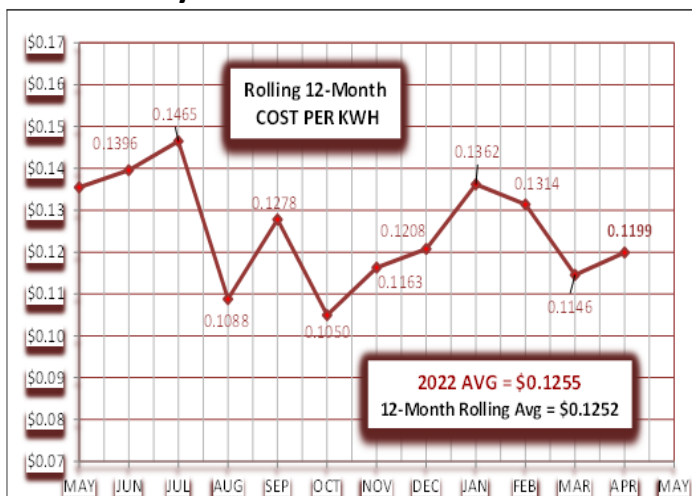
Happy Friday! As you probably know by now, our beloved ZIMMERHANZEL'S BBQ has shut their doors for good. After 42 years, Dee Dee and Bert Bunte have decided to retire to spend more time with family and enjoy their "golden years". I can't imagine how many pounds of brisket, sausage, chicken, ribs, chopped beef, pork butt, baked potatoes, beans, potato salad, coleslaw, sauce, and banana pudding they cooked and served over the past four decades. Zimmerhanzel's BBQ was featured in a Willie Nelson music video and has been recognized by Texas Monthly on the Top 50 List of Texas BBQ Joints on multiple occasions. A heartfelt THANK YOU goes out to Dee Dee, Bert, and the entire Zimmerhanzel's family and staff for all the memories and great BBQ. Now it is time to relax and ["Just Breathe"](#)! (Click for link to video).

Jamboree preparations at Riverbend Park are in full swing. The annual celebration will mark the 63rd 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 Jack Page and his team for paying attention to detail and going the extra mile mowing, weed-eating, and trimming trees at Riverbend Park. Jack'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 23rd 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.

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

- 1) 2022 LCRA "Steps Forward Day" Project** – Approximately 30 volunteers from LCRA participated in the 2022 Steps Forward Day on April 1, 2022. "Steps Forward" is an LCRA company-wide day of service where LCRA employees "pay it forward" by volunteering to support community projects throughout the region. Last year, LCRA volunteers painted the Smithville Community Gardens building (a city-owned facility) located on SE 2nd Street. This year, LCRA volunteers helped the Smithville Police Department trim bushes and install new landscape timbers. A second project was also approved to paint the restrooms (exterior) at Riverbend Park. LCRA volunteers and City workers began their day at 8:30 am for a safety briefing with trimming and painting taking place between 9:00 am and noon. Lunch was provided to all who volunteered. 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.
- 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 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 \$0.0699. This represents an **8.27% INCREASE** compared to March's fuel cost of \$0.0646. Adding the City's distribution fee of \$0.0500 and LCRA's \$0.0539 fuel cost, **the cost per kWh for residential service in Smithville during APRIL will be \$0.1199**. Hopefully, with the spring weather, citizens will see some relief in their electric bills. 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 / LCRA F&PCRF – APRIL 2022



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- 3) **EIA-861 Annual Electric Power Industry Report Submitted** – The City submitted the 2021 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 2021. Here is a summary of electricity usage from 2015-2021:

City of Smithville EIA-861 Annual Energy Use Report							
City of Smithville Electric Power Use	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Revenue (\$USD)	\$4,983,000	\$4,847,000	\$4,695,000	\$5,053,000	\$4,959,000	\$4,967,000	\$5,286,000
Megawatt Hours (MWh) Billed	39,606	37,430	38,568	39,798	38,299	39,044	38,458
# of Customers*	2132	2155	2169	2194	2221	2248	2272
LCRA Megawatt (MWh) Purchased	43,483	42,456	42,437	43,619	43,306	43,367	42,108
% Line Loss (Includes unmetered use)	8.92%	11.84%	9.12%	8.76%	11.56%	9.97%	8.67%
*Includes residential, commercial, and customers with service outside the city limits				Average Line Loss		9.83%	

As you can see by the data above, we had a slight increase in the number of utility customers served in 2021. We added 24 new customers for a total of 2,772. The City's consumption in megawatt hours (MWh) was 2.9% less in 2021 compared to 2020. However, there was an increase in revenue of \$319k compared to the prior year. The City incurred an \$848k surcharge from ERCOT for the 2021 arctic winter event that we must repay over 3-years (approximately \$23k per month). Our line loss in 2021 was calculated at 8.67% (a 13% DECREASE from 2020). 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!

- 4) **CenterPoint Energy Annual Gas Reliability Infrastructure Program (GRIP) Interim Rate Adjustment (IRA)** - The City 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), we do not have the ability to oppose the rate increase. However, we can postpone the effective date of the proposed increase for 45-days. The rate will be increased by \$2.11/month for residential service and \$4.37/month for small commercial service. The adjusted monthly charge (base rate) will be \$27.03 and \$41.42 respectively. This represents an average increase between 6-9%. The rate increase will help recover incremental spending for capital infrastructure improvements in its South Texas Division during the 2022 calendar year. The proposed IRA will become effective on **May 2, 2022** unless the City chooses to suspend the IRA effective date until **June 16, 2022**. This will be an item for consideration during the April 11, 2022 Council meeting.
- 5) **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 \$11,935 is based on providing coverage to approximately 1705 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 \$45 per year 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 2020 and 2021, there were five (5) and fourteen (14) PHI Air Medical transports in Smithville respectively. This will be an item for discussion during the Monday, April 11, 2022 Council Meeting. If approved, the contract will be valid through April 30, 2023. Click on the following link for a [KVUE TV Feature Newscast](#) about similar PHI service in Bastrop.

City Manager Update – 4/8/22 (continued)

- 6) **FY20-21 Financial Audit Completed** – Singleton, Clark & Company, PC completed the annual audit of the City of Smithville's 2020-21 financial statements during the month of March. The results of the audit indicate that assets exceed liabilities by \$16,150,167 at the close of the past fiscal year. The total net position of the city increased by \$557,434 (General Fund increased \$95,817 and Utility Fund increased \$461,617). The City's governmental fund reported a combined fund balance of \$1,730,966, a decrease of \$525,966 in comparison with the prior year (this was due to costs associated with sidewalk repairs and rebuilding the Chamber of Commerce Office / Railroad Museum / Visitor Center). The City's total debt DECREASED by \$685,796 during the fiscal year. The debt at the end of the fiscal year was \$8,248,072. This includes bonded debt from the issuance of certificates of obligation, Qualified Energy Conservation Bonds (QEBC) and leased capital equipment. Overall, the City received a "clean" financial audit. Jack Clark will be presenting the results of the financial audit during the April 11, 2022 City Council meeting.
- 7) **City of Smithville Sales Tax Update** - Below are the sales tax allocations for April 2022 vs. April 2021 (retail sales made primarily in February). This data reflects RETAIL sales of goods and services subject to LOCAL sales tax. Our sales tax payment (receipt) for April was \$55,574. This represents a **25.05% INCREASE** in our net payment compared to the same time last year. Smithville's year-to-date sales tax payments total \$505,034. Sales tax dollars are used to make street / road repairs and help pay for community services like FIRE and POLICE. Please remember to SHOP LOCAL - it makes a difference!!!

Bastrop County Tax Allocation - APRIL 2022

County/City	Current Rate	Net Payment This Period	Comparable Payment Prior Year	% Change	2022 Payments To Date	2021 Payments	% Change
Bastrop	1.50%	\$774,413	\$601,543	28.73%	\$3,560,793	\$2,911,632	22.29%
Elgin	1.50%	\$238,455	\$184,133	29.50%	\$1,097,301	\$883,914	24.14%
Smithville	1.50%	\$55,574	\$44,438	25.05%	\$280,028	\$223,866	25.08%
Bastrop County	0.50%	\$505,034	\$388,047	30.14%	\$2,324,770	\$1,844,862	26.01%

- 8) **City Council Approves Amended Sound Ordinance** – During the March 14, 2022 meeting, the City Council unanimously approved amending the City's Sound Ordinance (re. Chapter 8 Offenses and Nuisances, Article 8.04 Nuisances, Division 2. Noise). In the past, individuals, organizations, and business owners were required to obtain an outdoor amplified sound permit and were limited to two (2) events in 30-day period. The maximum permissible noise level with a sound permit was 85 dBA from 8:00 am to 10:00 pm. Business owners hosting live music events felt the ordinance created a financial hardship by limiting their ability to attract patrons with amplified live music. Citizen felt amplified live music created a nuisance noise in adjacent residential areas. In response, the City established a task force to address the issue(s). After receiving community input during multiple stakeholder meetings, council workshops, and public forums; benchmarking other municipalities; and conducting an outdoor sound demonstration at Gazebo Park, the following modifications have been incorporated into the ordinance:

- Eliminated requirement to obtain an Outdoor Amplified Sound Permit
- Removed restriction that limits the number of amplified events during 30-day period
- Redefined acceptable sound levels as measured at Generator's property line (see below)
- Redefined Day-Time / Night-time Hours (see below)
- Established Friday / Saturday Hours (see below)

PROPERTY DESCRIPTION	TIME	DEFINITION	DECIBELS ALLOWED
RESIDENTIAL	7:00 AM to 10:00 PM	DAY-TIME HOURS*	65 dbA
NON-RESIDENTIAL	10:00 PM to 7:00 AM	NIGHT-TIME HOURS*	65 dbA
RESIDENTIAL / NON-RESIDENTIAL	7:00 AM to 10:00 PM	FRIDAY / SATURDAY	75 dbA
*Except FRIDAY and SATURDAY			

Amending the City's sound ordinance provides greater flexibility, reduces administrative burden, simplifies regulatory enforcement, and reduces nuisance noise associated with amplified sound. Click on the following link for a copy of the amended ordinance → easyedit.ci.smithville.tx.us/filemanager/files/Signed_Ord_2022_617_Noise.pdf

City Manager Update – 4/8/22 (continued)

- 9) **2022 City Council, Mayor, and School Board Elections** – Candidate filing for the 2022 City of Smithville / SISD General Election is complete. A list of candidates and the position for which they are running is provided below. Election Day is Saturday, May 7, 2022. Early voting begins April 25, 2022 and ends May 3, 2022. 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 12, 2022 at the Smithville Rec Center (6:00 pm). Good luck to all the candidates.

May 2022 Early Voting Schedule

April 25, 2022 - May 3, 2022

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
	25	26	27	28	29	
	8am – 5pm	8am – 5pm	8am – 5pm	8am – 5pm	8am – 5pm	
	2	3				
	7am – 7pm	7am – 7pm				

Candidates For 2022 General Election

City of Smithville / Smithville Independent School District (SISD)

	Position	Candidate	Term Expires	Election Type	Candidate Status
City of Smithville	Mayor	Sharon Foerster - Councilmember - Place 1	May 2023	General	Challenger
		Tom Etheredge - Councilmember - Place 2	May 2023		Challenger
	Councilmember - Place 4	Cassie Barrientos	May 2022	General	Challenger
		Dane Garrison			Challenger
	Councilmember - Place 5	Janice Bruno	May 2022	General	Unopposed
Smithville ISD	Trustee - Place 5	Candice Parsons	May 2022	General	Unopposed
	Trustee - Place 6	Maria Margarita Igoe	May 2022	General	Challenger
		Joshua Magden			Challenger
	Trustee - Place 7	Michael Hancock	May 2022	General	Challenger
		Casey Hanchey			Challenger

NOTE: Mayor Joanna Morgan, Place 4 Councilmember Stan Gerdes, Place 6 Trustee Mike Davis, Jr., and Place 7 Trustee Howard Burns, Jr. are not seeking re-election.

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

The **2022 SPRING STREET SWEEP** will be held Thursday, Friday, and Saturday, April 7-9, 2022, from 10:00 am to 2:00 pm. Rain dates will be April 22-24. If you would like to sign up to help clean up Smithville, call the Chamber at 512-237-2313. This event is sponsored by the Smithville Area Chamber of Commerce Keep Smithville Beautiful Committee and the City of Smithville. We will provide trash bags, gloves, trash “picker-uppers” and more. Register your group to help us “sweep the streets” of Smithville!

The **SMITHVILLE POLICE ASSOCIATION** will be hosting their annual **BLUE BUNNY EASTER EGG HUNT** on **Saturday, April 9, 2022** at 9:00 a.m. The hunt will be at Riverbend Park. Volunteers will be placing approximately 2,500 candy filled eggs throughout the park. Hope to see you there!!!!

City Manager Update – 4/8/22 (continued)

NATIONAL PUBLIC SAFETY TELECOMMUNICATOR'S WEEK starts **April 10, 2022**. 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 an emergency environment. Let's acknowledge their hard work and dedication!

The next **CITY COUNCIL** meeting will be held on **Monday, April 11, 2022** at 6:00 pm (City Hall).

The **LOCAL CANDIDATE FORUM** will be hosted by the Smithville Chamber of Commerce on **Tuesday, April 12, 2022**. The forum will be held at the Smithville Recreation Center from 6:00–7:00 pm. The candidates running for Mayor, City Council, and School Board in the May 2022 election have all been invited to participate. The public may submit written questions via boxes located at City Hall, the Smithville Public Library and/or the Chamber office. Questions will be accepted through 5pm on Friday, April 8th. You may also submit questions via e-mail to april.daniels@smithvilletx.org.

Just a reminder that **CITY HALL** will be CLOSED **Friday, April 15, 2022** in observance of **GOOD FRIDAY**. Office hours will be 8-5 Monday through Thursday (April 11-15th).

The **63rd Annual SMITHVILLE JAMBOREE** will be held on **April 20-23, 2023** at Riverbend Park.

EARLY VOTING begins **April 25, 2022** and continues through May 3, 2022 at the Smithville Recreation Center (106 Royston).

The next **CHAMBER QUARTERLY LUNCHEON** will be held on **Wednesday, April 27, 2022** (from 11:00 am to 1:00 pm) at The First United Methodist Church. County Judge Paul Pape will provide an update on County activities in his "State of the County" presentation. Register for the luncheon online at www.smithvilletx.org

ADMINISTRATIVE PROFESSIONAL'S DAY is **Wednesday, April 27, 2022**. Many thanks to Jennifer Lynch (City Secretary) and all the City's "administrators" for everything they do.

The next monthly **CHAMBER OF COMMERCE MIXER** will be held on **Thursday, April 28, 2022** (from 5-7:00 pm) at the Edward Jones Investments in Smithville (301 Royston Street).

The **BEST MONTHLY BREAKFAST** will be held at Comfort Café (111 NW 1st) from 8:00-9:00 am on **Friday, April 29, 2022**.

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 – 4/8/22

ZIMMERHANZEL'S BBQ – CLOSED 😞



Roving Volunteers in Christ Service (RVICS) Annual City Appreciation Breakfast



Drainage Improvement Project @ 6th and Byrne



XFRM Replacement (201 Main)



2022 LCRA Steps Forward Project(s) at Riverbend Park and the Smithville Police Department



Paving @ City Warehouse and Smithville Airport

