

City Manager Update – 4/9/21

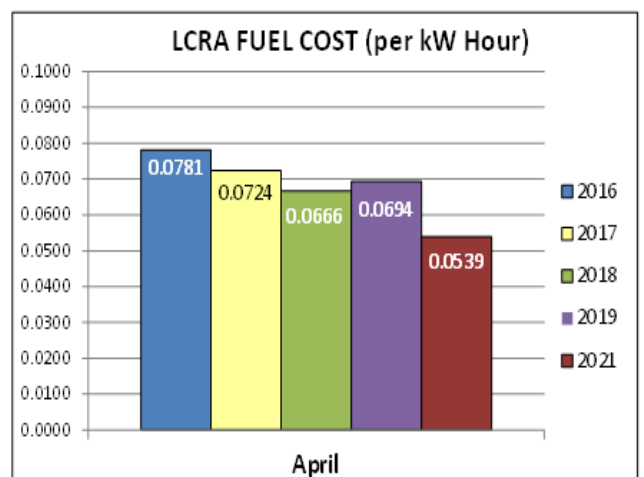
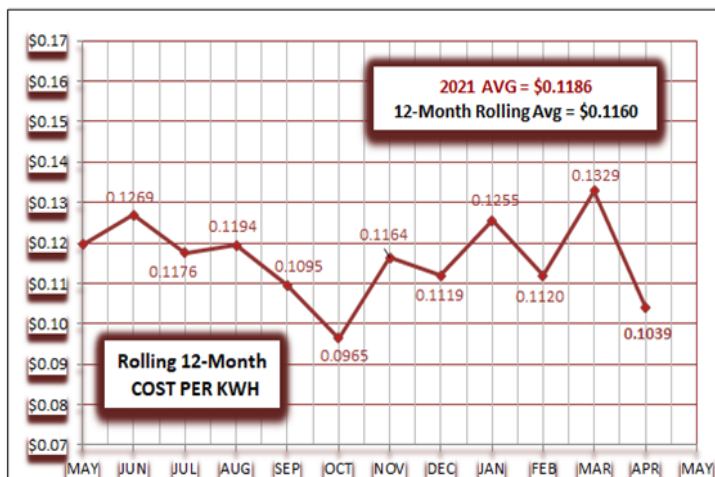
I hope everyone had a Happy Easter. It's been a very busy couple of weeks. COVID-19, drainage projects, street repairs, grant applications, easement negotiations, financial audits, building permits, parks maintenance, leaf & limb pick-up, Chamber of Commerce building reconstruction, water tower rehabilitation, and the upcoming election are keeping everyone on their toes. I am very proud of the job all employees do to keep the City running given the recent challenges our community has faced.

The leaf machine (vacuum truck) that has been out of service the past 4-weeks has been repaired. The Leaf and Limb crew will be working weekends to catch up. Please click on the following link for leaf and limb pick-up schedules → http://easyedit.ci.smithville.tx.us/filemanager/files/LEAF_AND_LIMB_DIAGRAM_UPDATED_OCTOBER_2020.pdf.

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

- 1) Waste Management, Inc. Distribution of 96-Gallon Poly Cart UPDATE** – The City Council voted unanimously to renew the Waste Management, Inc. (WMI) solid waste contract on February 8, 2021. The 5-year contract (executed on March 1, 2021) allows for 2X per week service with bulk pick-up once per month (limited to 4-cubic yards) per residential customer. Putting this into perspective, a residential customer can fill up the equivalent of one 40-yard roll-off of bulk per year. One major difference in this contract and the previous contracts is the distribution of a 96-gallon poly-cart (with lid) to every residential customer. There will be no charge to residential customers for the cart. However, each customer must use the new cart. This will result in greater operational efficiency and ensure household trash is contained. **DISTRIBUTION OF THE 96-GALLON RESIDENTIAL POLY CARTS HAS BEEN CONFIRMED FOR MONDAY, APRIL 12, 2021.** It will take 3-5 days to distribute all of the carts. Once a citizen receives their poly cart, all trash must be put in the poly cart and the lid closed. Poly carts will be delivered wherever residential trash is currently being serviced (e.g., in the alley or in front of any residence where there is no alley). WMI will take any old trash cans that residents no longer want if they put an "X" on the can with masking tape or spray paint. The old cans will be picked-up on the next "Bulk" day(s). Bulk pick-up is the LAST Monday/Tuesday of the month. Bulk pick-up is for any items that are too large to fit into the 96-gallon poly cart (e.g., rugs, mattresses, old appliances, refrigerators that have freon removed, tables, chairs, etc.). WMI will pick-up virtually anything on bulk day that is NOT construction debris or hazardous material. Click on the following link for additional information <http://ci.smithville.tx.us/city-departments/public-works/>. We are one of the few municipalities that still offers twice per week garbage service, bulk service, AND leaf / limb pick-up.
- 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 \$0.0539. This represents a **34.9% DECREASE** compared to March's fuel cost of \$0.0829. 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 \$0.1039.** 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 electric service in Smithville is between 11-12 cents.

City of Smithville Residential Cost Per kWh / LCRA F&PCRF – APRIL 2021



City Manager Update – 4/9/21 (continued)

- 3) **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 \$2.33/month for residential service and \$4.78/month for small commercial service. The adjusted monthly charge (base rate) will be \$24.92 and \$37.05 respectively. This represents an average increase between 10-15%. The rate increase will help recover \$4.6M of incremental spending for capital infrastructure improvements in its South Texas Division during the 2021 calendar year. The proposed IRA will become effective on **May 3, 2021** unless the City chooses to suspend the IRA effective date until **June 17, 2021**. This will be an agenda item for consideration during the April 12, 2021 Council meeting.
- 4) **EIA-861 Annual Electric Power Industry Report Submitted** – Rosie Johnson and Nadine Harris completed the 2020 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 2020. Here is a summary of electricity usage from 2015-2020:

EIA-861 Annual Report						
City of Smithville Electric Power Use	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Revenue (\$USD)	\$4,983,000	\$4,847,000	\$4,695,000	\$5,053,000	\$4,959,000	\$4,967,000
Megawatt Hours (MWh) Billed	39,606	37,430	38,568	39,798	38,299	39,044
# of Customers	2132	2155	2169	2194	2221	2248
LCRA Megawatt (MWh) Purchased	43,483	42,456	42,437	43,619	43,306	43,367
% Line Loss (Includes unmetered use)	8.92%	11.84%	9.12%	8.76%	11.56%	9.97%
Average Line Loss the Past 6-years =				10.03%		

As you can see by the data, we had a slight increase in the number of utility customers served in 2020. We added 27 new customers for a total of 2,248. The City's consumption in megawatt hours (MWh) was 1.9% greater in 2020 compared to 2019. There was only a slight increase in revenue of \$8k compared to the prior year. Line loss was calculated at 9.97%. This includes losses due to inefficient transformer, 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, 2021 deadline. Nice work Rosie and Nadine!

- 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 \$13,552 is based on providing coverage to approximately 1,694 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 \$8.00 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 2019 and 2020, there were thirty-four (34) and five (5) PHI Air Medical transports in Smithville respectively. The City of Bastrop currently has an agreement with PHI Air Medical and they are pleased with the service. The \$13,552 annual fee will be offset by revenue from building and film permits. This will be an item for discussion and action during the Monday, April 12, 2021 Council Meeting. If approved, the one-year contract will be valid through April 30, 2022. Click on the following link for a [KVUE TV Feature Newscast](#) regarding PHI service in Bastrop.

City Manager Update – 4/9/21 (continued)

- 6) **City of Smithville Sales Tax Update** - Below are the sales tax allocations for April 2021 vs. April 2020 (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 \$44,438. This represents a **3.39% INCREASE** in our net payment compared to the same time last year. Smithville's sales tax payments totaled \$652,540 last year which is pretty remarkable given the global pandemic. 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 2021

County/City	Current Rate	Net Payment This Period	Comparable Payment Prior Year	% Change	2021 Payments To Date	2020 Payments	% Change
Bastrop	1.50%	\$601,543	\$562,681	6.90%	\$2,911,632	\$2,588,786	12.47%
Elgin	1.50%	\$184,133	\$185,670	-0.82%	\$883,914	\$924,894	-4.43%
Smithville	1.50%	\$44,438	\$42,977	3.39%	\$223,866	\$207,556	7.85%
Bastrop County	0.50%	\$388,047	\$376,333	3.11%	\$1,844,862	\$1,713,635	7.65%

- 7) **City-wide Street Repairs and Paving Project Update** - City-wide road paving and street repair will begin in the next few weeks and continue through the spring and early summer. 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 - SPRING 2021

Street	From / To	Paving Material	Prep Completed	Road Closure Required	Paving Date
Byrne	Loop 230 to 500 Block	Chip Seal	NO	YES	APRIL
Mills	500-900 Block	Chip Seal	NO	YES	APRIL
Mills	200 Block	Hot Mix	YES	YES	APRIL
8th Street	Short to Burleson	Chip Seal	NO	YES	APRIL
9th Street	Short to Burleson	Chip Seal	NO	YES	APRIL
Whitehead	700 Block Whitehead to Charleston	Chip Seal	NO	YES	MAY
Tiger Lane	Tiger Lane	Chip Seal	NO	YES	MAY
Gentry Street	Woodress Lane to 300 Block	Chip Seal	NO	YES	MAY
Bunte Street	Woodress Lane to 300 Block	Chip Seal	NO	YES	MAY
Anderson Street	SE 4th to End of Anderson	Chip Seal	NO	YES	MAY
Pendergrass Street	SE 4th to End of Pendergrass	Chip Seal	NO	YES	MAY
SE 2nd Street	Taylor to Eagleston	Chip Seal	NO	YES	MAY
Reed Street	FM2571 to Front Street	Chip Seal	NO	YES	JUNE
East Street	East Street to FM 2571	Chip Seal	NO	YES	JUNE

- 8) **2021 LCRA "Steps Forward Day" Project** – Approximately 25 volunteers from LCRA participated in the 2021 Steps Forward Day on April 9, 2021. "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, the LCRA Steps Forward Day had to be cancelled due to COVID-19. In 2019, LCRA volunteers painted fifty (50) ornamental light poles on Main Street and NW 1st around the Gazebo area. They also painted the Gazebo steps and ADA accessible ramp. This year, LCRA will be painting the exterior of the Smithville Community Gardens building at 107 SW 2nd and Lee Street. LCRA volunteers and City workers met at the facility at 8:30 am for a safety briefing with painting taking place between 9:00 am and noon. 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. (SEE PHOTOS)

City Manager Update – 4/9/21 (continued)

- 9) **FY19-20 Financial Audit Completed** - Singleton, Clark & Company, PC completed the annual audit of the City of Smithville's 2019-20 financial statements during the month of March. The results of the audit indicate that assets exceeded liabilities and by \$15,592,733 at the close of the past fiscal year. The total net position of the city increased by \$2,725,809. The City's governmental fund reported a combined fund balance of \$2,256,932, an increase of \$441,394 in comparison with the prior year. In 2018, the City issued certificates of obligation for \$2.975 million for water, wastewater, street, and drainage improvements. The City's total debt decreased by \$617,130 during the fiscal year. The reason for the overall decrease was the City making its scheduled principal payments on time. The debt at the end of the fiscal year was \$8,944,693. 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 (of Singleton, Clark & Company) will be presenting the results of the audit during the April 12, 2021 City Council meeting.
- 10) **Ameresco Measurement & Verification (M&V) Annual Audit** – The City received the 2020 Ameresco 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 fourth (4th) annual M&V audit since installation of water and electric smart meters, street lights, and City facilities lighting back in 2016. The net annual benefit in 2020 (revenue minus expenses) of the utility system up-grade is \$28,974 with a cumulative cash flow of \$170,442. The anticipated cost savings over the next 11-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 2021 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](#)
- 11) **Two-Dimensional (2D) Ground-Penetrating Radar (GPR) of Mt. Pleasant Cemetery** – The City hired Wood Inspection Services, Inc. to locate unmarked graves at Mt. Pleasant Cemetery using 2-dimensional (2D) Ground-Penetrating Radar (GPR). Gathering the 2D-GPR data is conducted in real time. The unmarked graves have been identified with a round, metal marker and ground stake which will stay in place during mowing. These markers can be located with a metal detector in the future if needed. The markers have been placed where a headstone should be for the grave. After identifying where all the unmarked graves were located, GPS coordinates were assigned. The GPS coordinates were collected in such a fashion that the information can be viewed in a PDF Report, Excel, and/or Google Earth. In addition to locating all the unmarked graves, Wood Inspection Services, Inc. collected GPS coordinates for all the current graves and took photos of each headstone. The final report is still pending. However, approximately seventy-five (75) unmarked graves were identified. (SEE PHOTOS)
- 12) **2021 TDA-CDBG Grant Management Services Request for Proposal (RFP) Received** –Request for Proposals (RFP) for grant application and administration services for the 2021/2022 Texas Department of Agriculture (TDA) Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program were received on 3/12/21. The City is considering applying for \$350k in grant funding in support of city-wide water / wastewater improvement projects. If awarded, the required match is 15% of the total award or \$52,500. The 15% match would not hit the City's budget until the next fiscal year. Proposals for grant management were reviewed on 4/2/21. Experience, work performance, capacity to perform, and cost were the criteria used by the City staff to evaluate / differentiate each consultant's qualifications. **Langford Community Management Services** from Austin, TX was the only grant management service provider to submit a proposal and as such will be presented as the preferred TDA-CDBG administration services consultant to the City Council on Monday, April 12, 2021 for consideration / selection
- 13) **2021 TDA-CDBG Engineering Services Request for Qualification (RFQ) Received** – Engineering services Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for the 2021/2022 Texas Department of Agriculture (TDA) Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program were received on 4/5/21 and reviewed by the City of Smithville on 4/7/21. Experience, work performance, and capacity to perform were criteria used by the City staff to evaluate / differentiate each engineering consultant's qualifications. Four (4) Engineering services consultants submitted their qualifications. BEFCO Engineering, Inc. from of La Grange, TX received the highest score with a total of 99 points. As such, it was the decision of the evaluation team to recommend **BEFCO Engineering, Inc.** to the City Council on Monday, April 12, 2021 for consideration / selection as the Engineering services firm to design and manage the TDA-CDBG water / wastewater project.

City Manager Update – 4/9/21 (continued)

14) 2021 City Council, Mayor, and School Board Elections – Candidate filing for the 2021 City of Smithville / SISD General Election and Special Election is complete. A list of candidates and the position for which they are running is provided below. Election Day is Saturday, May 1, 2021. Early voting begins April 19, 2021 and ends April 27, 2021. Voting will be at City Hall (317 Main Street). 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/>. Good luck to all the candidates. As a reminder, all political signs on private property must be removed within 7-days after the election per Chapter 14 - Zoning, section 3.7.2.

City of Smithville / SISD Candidates For 2021 General Election & Special Election

	Position	Candidate	Term Expires	Election Type	Candidate Status
City of Smithville	Alderman - Place 1	Sharon Foerster	May 2021	General	Unopposed
	Alderman - Place 2	Tom Etheredge	May 2021	General	Challenger
		Betty Mcbryar			Challenger
	Alderman - Place 3	William Gordon	May 2021	General	Incumbent
		Charles Diltz			Challenger
	Alderman Place 4 (Unexpired Term)	Stan Gerdes	May 2022	Special	Challenger
		Danielle Washington Tenorio			Challenger
	Mayor (Unexpired Term)	Joanna Morgan	May 2022	Special	Incumbent
		Jerry Callaghan			Challenger
SISD	Trustee - Place 3	Nancy Towry	May 2021	General	Incumbent
		Michele Rutherford			Challenger
	Trustee - Place 4	Alan Hemphill	May 2021	General	Incumbent
		Trenton Helmcamp			Challenger

– EARLY VOTING LOCATIONS, DATES AND TIMES –

Smithville City Hall, 317 N. Main St., Smithville, TX

APRIL 19, 2021 - APRIL 27, 2021

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
	19	20	21	22	23	
	8am – 5pm	8am – 5pm	8am – 5pm	8am – 5pm	8am – 5pm	
	26	27				
	7am – 7pm	7am – 7pm				

– ELECTION DAY POLLING LOCATIONS –

SATURDAY, MAY 1, 2021 7AM-7PM

PLEASE NOTE THAT ON ELECTION DAY A VOTER MUST VOTE AT THE POLLING LOCATION ASSIGNED TO THEIR VOTING PRECINCT.

Smithville City Hall, 317 N. Main St., Smithville, TX

City Manager Update – 4/9/21 (continued)

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

SPRING STREET SWEEP - Thursday, Friday, and Saturday, April 8-10, 2021, 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 **SPRING MAKERS & MERCHANTS FAIR** will be held on **Saturday, April 10, 2021** from 9:00 am to 4:00 pm at 1509 Dorothy Nichols Ln. (in front of Subway and EH Mercantile).

CITY COUNCIL meeting **Monday, April 12, 2021** at 6:00 pm (City Hall). This will be the first in-person meeting held at City Hall since the beginning of the global pandemic last year. Social distancing protocols will be followed. Masks are recommended but not mandatory.

96-GALLON POLY CART DISTRIBUTION will begin on **April 12, 2021**.

The Chamber will be hosting two Virtual Candidate Forums: **April 12, 2021 @ 6:00 pm** for **SCHOOL BOARD CANDIDATES** and **April 13, 2021 @ 6:00 pm**, **CITY COUNCIL & MAYORAL CANDIDATES**. Watch the forums LIVE on the Chamber Facebook Page @ <https://www.facebook.com/SmithvilleAreaChamberOfCommerce>. The Forums will be recorded and can be viewed any time after the events as well. Questions for candidates can be submitted via e-mail at chamber@smithvilletx.org or in the boxes provided at the Smithville Public Library, Smithville City Hall and Smithville Chamber of Commerce.

NATIONAL PUBLIC SAFETY TELECOMMUNICATOR’S WEEK starts **April 12, 2021**. 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!

EARLY VOTING begins **April 19, 2021** and continues through April 27, 2021 at City Hall (317 Main).

ADMINISTRATIVE PROFESSIONAL’S DAY is **Wednesday, April 21, 2021**. Many thanks to Jennifer Lynch (City Secretary) and all the City’s “administrators” for everything they do. This is also Aggie Muster! Whoop!!!

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

-- Robert --

PHOTOS – 4/9/21

2021 LCRA Steps Forward Day – Community Gardens Building Painting Project



Smithville VFD Responds to Structure Fire @ 800 Short Street



2D-Ground Penetrating Radar to Identify Unmarked Graves at Mt. Pleasant Cemetery



Chamber of Commerce Office / Railroad Museum / Visitor Center Construction Progress

