

City Manager Update – 5/12/23

The National Weather Service (NWS) has issued a [FLOOD WATCH](#) for Bastrop County until 8:00 pm Saturday, May 13, 2023 with 3-6 inches of rainfall expected between Friday and Saturday evening. City crews spent the majority of the day clearing/cleaning blocked drains in advance of the expected storms. Additionally, Utilities and Public Works department personnel are on-call to respond to any power outages and/or fallen trees. Contact the Smithville Police Department (SPD) at (512) 237-3228 to report power outages and/or other non-emergency issues after normal business hours.

Due to the threat of inclement weather this weekend, the **17th Annual Smithville-Crawford Municipal Airport Fly-In has been CANCELLED**. At this time, I am unable to provide a reschedule date. Thanks to Sandy Meyerson, the Friends of 84R, and City of Smithville Public Works and Parks Departments for planning and preparing for this event.

Congratulations to **Tyrone Washington, Jimmy Jenkins, and Tom Etheredge** on their election / re-election to office. Special THANKS to outgoing Councilmembers Bill Gordan and Joanna Morgan for their service. Voter turnout for the City election was 21.5% with 679 votes cast out of 3,151 registered voters. Click on the following link for additional information → [Bastrop County Election Results](#). Once the campaign dust settles, I would like to hold a workshop to discuss accomplishments, projects, and future plans. I would also like to provide an update on the Subdivision and Short-Term Rental ordinance. Given all that is going on the next several weeks (e.g., SVFD Annual Fundraiser, SISD graduation, etc.), I am targeting May 31, 2023 and June 14, 2023 for the workshop(s).

Since the City Council election on May 6, 2023, the City has received several emails from citizens who would like to be considered to serve out the unexpired term of former Councilmember Cassie Barrientos (Place 4) who resigned on April 10, 2023. The unexpired term for Place 4 expires in May 2024. Per Texas Local Government Code, Section 22.010 (a) for a General Law, Type A Municipality: “If for any reason a single vacancy exists on the governing body of the municipality, a majority of the remaining members who are present and voting, excluding the mayor (except to break a tie), may fill the vacancy by appointment”. As such, this will be an agenda item during the May 15, 2023 City Council meeting.

The following individuals have submitted their request(s) for consideration:

- Derek Kahanek
- Garrett Gutierrez
- Mitch Jameson
- Danial Hrna
- Monica Poss
- Joanna Morgan
- Mark Richter

The selection of a replacement for former Councilmember Barrientos’ position (Place 4) will be by Council appointment after administering the oaths of office to the newly-elected / re-elected councilmembers. Once the oaths of office are administered to the newly-elected / re-elected Councilmembers, the candidates above will be given 3-minutes to address the Council to state their qualifications, experience, and why they want to serve. Mayor Foerster will draw names (in real time) to establish the order in which the candidates will address the Council. After each candidate’s statement, Councilmembers will be given the opportunity to ask questions (3-5 minutes allotted per member per candidate). After all candidates have spoken and answered the Council’s questions, any citizen that has signed up to speak on this agenda item will have the opportunity to address the Council. Upon conclusion of citizen comments, the Council will retire into a closed Executive Session to deliberate. After the closed Executive Session, the Council will return to the Open Meeting where a motion will be made to appoint whichever individual the Council feels is the most qualified candidate to fill the vacancy. The Mayor will call for a vote and the individual selected will be sworn-in and then take a seat on the dais to participate in the remainder of the meeting. In summary, here are the process steps:

1. New / re-elected Councilmembers are sworn-in and report to dais
2. Mayor draws names to determine Place 4 Candidate speaking order
3. Candidates address Council (3-minutes each)
4. Council Asks Questions of Candidates – (3 to 5 minutes each)
5. Citizen Comments – (3-minutes each)
6. Closed Executive Session – (30 to 60 minutes)
7. Council Appoints Candidate to fill Place 4 Vacancy
8. Place 4 Appointed Councilmember is sworn-in and reports to dais

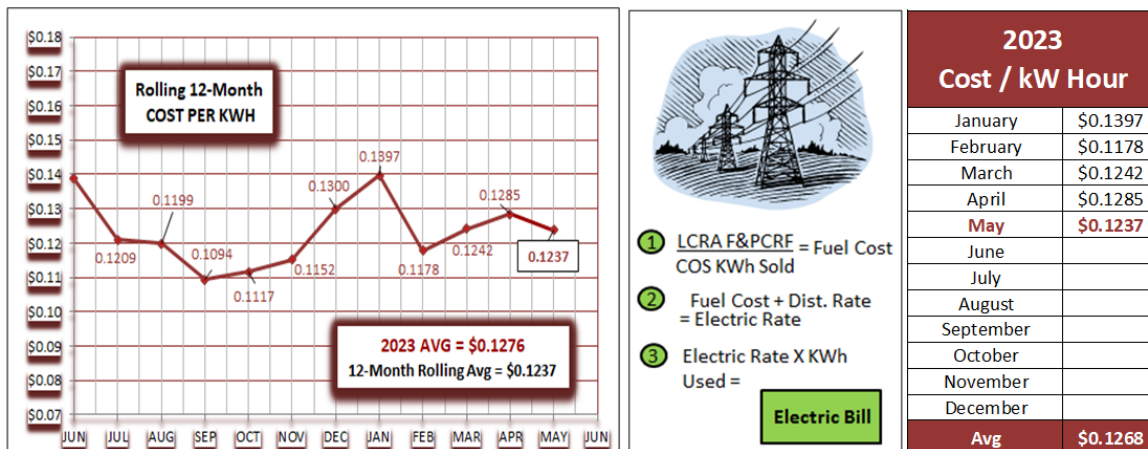
The City Council agenda, agenda notes, and council data package will be available on the City’s FB page by 5:00 pm Friday afternoon. Citizens attending the meeting in person who would like to address the City Council on this (or any other topic on the agenda) may do so by signing up prior to the start of the meeting. For those who are unable to attend, the meeting will be live-streamed on the City’s YouTube Channel.

City Manager Update – 5/12/23 (continued)

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

- 1) PHI Air Medical Transportation Contract Renewal Approved by City Council** – On April 10, 2023, the City Council unanimously approved 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 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. Smithville 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. Visit the PHI website www.PHicare.com and use coupon code SMITHVILLEUPGRADE. 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. For additional information, call (888) 435-9744 or email: Membership@PHIairmedical.com.
- 2) 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 (in aggregate) are competitively bid. Jack Clark will be presenting the results of [FY22 Financial Audit](#) during the May 15, 2023 City Council meeting.
- 3) Residential Cost Per Kilowatt Hour (kWh) Calculated** – An analysis of LCRA billing data was conducted to determine residential cost per kilowatt hour (kWh) in May. 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 May is \$0.0737. This represents a **6.15% DECREASE** compared to April's fuel cost of \$0.0785. Adding the City's distribution fee of \$0.0500 and LCRA's \$0.0737 fuel cost, **the cost per kWh for residential service in Smithville during MAY will be \$0.1237**. The Public Utilities Commission (PUC) of Texas provides [energy conservation tips](#) to help reduce consumption which in turn will help citizens save money. 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 – MAY 2023



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

*Residential Distribution Fee = \$0.500/kWh. Non-Resident (i.e., service outside city limit) Distribution Fee = \$0.650/kWh Effective October 1, 2019

City Manager Update – 5/12/23 (continued)

- 4) **2023 LCRA “Steps Forward Day” Project(s) Completed** – Approximately 40 volunteers from LCRA gathered in Smithville on Friday, April 28, 2023 to trim trees and clean around gravesites at Mt. Pleasant Cemetery on the Hill. In addition, the LCRA volunteers painted the interior of the restrooms at Riverbend Park. The City of Smithville is fortunate to have LCRA as a community partner. LCRA programs like Steps Forward and the Community Development Partnership Program (CDPP) have definitely made a positive impact. (SEE PHOTOS)
- 5) **City of Smithville Sales Tax Update** - Below are the sales tax allocations for May 2023 vs. May 2022 (retail sales made primarily in March). This data reflects RETAIL sales of goods and services subject to LOCAL sales tax. Our sales tax payment (receipt) for April was \$91,169. This represents an **0.91% DECREASE** in our net payment compared to the same time last year. Smithville’s year-to-date sales tax payments total \$375,865. 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 - MAY 2023

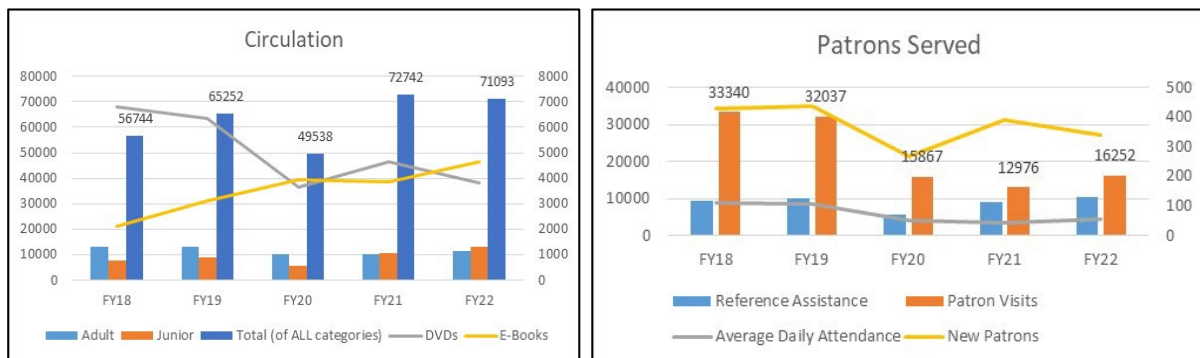
County/City	Current Rate	Net Payment This Period	Comparable Payment Prior Year	% Change	2023 Payments To Date	2022 Payments	% Change
Bastrop	1.50%	\$1,083,119	\$995,806	8.76%	\$5,059,626	\$4,556,599	11.03%
Elgin	1.50%	\$350,198	\$348,327	0.53%	\$1,607,000	\$1,445,628	11.16%
Smithville	1.50%	\$91,169	\$92,007	-0.91%	\$375,865	\$372,035	1.02%
Bastrop County	0.50%	\$761,145	\$721,781	5.45%	\$3,416,123	\$3,046,551	12.13%

- 6) **City-wide Mosquito Spraying Initiated** – The recent rains combined with warmer temperatures have created the perfect breeding ground for mosquitos. Besides being a nuisance, many citizens are concerned about the threat of West Nile--><https://www.cdc.gov/westnile/index.html> and Zika--><https://www.cdc.gov/zika/index.html> viruses. In response, the City has begun spraying all roads and alley-ways twice a week in the evening hours between 9:00 pm and 3:00 am (every Tuesday and Friday). The City is using “Evoluer 30-30” mosquito repellent which is mixed with an oil surfactant and delivered by a truck-mounted, ultra-low volume mister / sprayer. The manner and method in which the City dispenses the mosquito repellent solution complies with all regulatory requirements governing its use and does not present a significant health hazard to humans when delivered in DILUTE concentrations. However, the mixture can be toxic to fish and bees if sprayed directly in fish ponds or on blooming plants where bees are active. Note: Roads and alleys will be sprayed during the late evening and early morning hours when bees are not active. Click on the following link to review the [Evoluer 30-30 Safety Data Sheet \(SDS\)](#). Citizens can help do their part by keeping tall grass mowed and removing commonly overlooked breeding spots that can hold water that include old tires, clogged gutters, abandoned tubs or buckets. A good mosquito repellent (e.g., OFF, CUTTER, REPEL, etc.) is also advised if going outdoors in the late afternoon / evening. Cloves inserted into lime halves also does a decent job for localized mosquito control. Some people swear by rubbing dryer sheets on their arms. When all else fails....the palm of your hand is a tried and true, guaranteed method of mosquito abatement! Spraying will continue during May and June or until the current wet weather pattern subsides. Click on the following link for some interesting facts about mosquitos-><https://www.raid.com/.../bug.../fascinating-mosquito-facts>. Please contact City Hall at (512) 237-3282 if you have any questions or need additional information.
- 7) **City Council to Consider Resolution in Support of 2023 TXDOT Transportation Alternatives (TA) Program** - The City of Smithville is applying for the second phase of TXDOT TA 2023 Call for Proposals for sidewalks to finish out the connection between the 2019 SRTS Sidewalks that end at MLK Park and the 2009 SRTS Sidewalks that end at SW 4th Street and Eagleston. These eight (8) blocks of sidewalks will run from along MLK Drive from its terminus at Hardeman to Eagleston, with spurs that run to the MLK Park connection along Miller and along the Eagleston connection to SW 4th Street. Click on the following [MAP](#) for details. The project is anticipated to cost a total of \$714,394, including \$472,075 construction, \$152,625 engineering, and various other TXDOT-imposed costs. Because the City of Smithville is eligible for Transportation Development Credits, this will be at no cost (no match) to the City, if we would be awarded the project. The Resolution is one of the requirements of the grant application. As such, this will be an item for discussion and action on the May 15, 2023 City Council agenda.

City Manager Update – 5/12/23 (continued)

- 8) **Texas State Library and Archives Commission (TSLAC) Annual Report Submitted** – The Smithville Public Library submitted its annual report to TSLAC by April 24, 2023 as required for accreditation. It is expected that TSLAC will complete their final review in July and with the continued financial support from local government funding (especially City of Smithville), the library has met the minimum standards of library accreditation (per 13 TAC §1.71 - §1.85). This means the library will maintain access to important library resources such as “TexShare” databases, Inter-library Loan access, and access to Texas State Library services, funding opportunities, and resources. The number of people that the Smithville Public Library served (through-the door count: 16,252) in FY2022 shows a 25% increase over FY2021, and it continues to increase so far this year. The library, however, is still only at about 50% of pre-COVID numbers. (The above count only includes folks who come through the library doors – offsite programs, “bookmobiles” at the SISD summer lunches, etc. have served an additional ~2000 people). The library’s overall circulation (71093 items) was relatively static from FY21 to FY22, showing less than a 2.5% drop. This number averages out to almost 200 items per day, including Sundays and holidays. Several categories of materials (e-books, adult books, kids’ books) increased circulation, while others went down or stayed about the same (DVDs, audiobooks). Anecdotal evidence of the effects of COVID on library habits explains some of these declining trends, e.g., more people using streaming services rather than checking out movies, or fewer hours on the road commuting to work accounts for fewer audiobooks being checked out. It will be interesting to watch these trends in the current year. Library staff continue to consider these circulation rates to determine the best use of materials budget for purchasing and collection development. Computer use also reflects a COVID effect, as numbers for in-house computer use remains fairly steady, but WiFi access has greatly increased. The library’s programming numbers (both number of programs offered and attendance) continue to climb, especially as the library is offering more in-person programs and classes post-COVID. For more information, contact Judy Bergeron at 512-237-3282 (ext. 2424).

Smithville Public Library Statistics (By the Numbers)



- 9) **City of Smithville Receives \$1M Texas Department of Agriculture (TDA) Implementation Grant** - On April 20, 2023, Sid Miller (Texas Commissioner of Agriculture) left a voice mail message confirming that the TDA Implementation Grant for \$1M (plus \$100K Match) is ready to start. Based on conversations with the TDA staff, the City was advised to advertise for competitive bids for an engineering/architectural firm and a consultant/consulting firm. The engineering/architectural firm will manage all work related to the new construction of the “Skilled Trades Innovation Center” to be built at 400 Fawcett across the parking lot from the SWTC offices, and renovations to the Show Barn at Riverbend Park to prepare it to be a premiere Skilled Trades Classroom space. The consultant/consulting firm will provide the guidance required to be able to ensure the success of the “incubator” concept at the new “Skilled Trades Innovation Center” once it opens for business. The engineering/architectural Request for Qualification (RFQ) and the Incubator Consultant Request for Proposal (RFP) will be on the May 15, 2023 council meeting agenda.
- 10) **Smithville Heritage Society Receives \$15,920 Grant from LCRA** - Representatives from LCRA presented a \$15,920 grant to the [Smithville Heritage Society](#) for repairs to the Heritage House. The grant is part of LCRA’s Community Development Partnership Program (CDPP) that will help the Smithville Heritage Society paint and make needed exterior repairs to the 115-year-old house that is home to the organization’s historical museum. The CDPP grant, along with \$3,979 in matching funds from the Heritage Society, will pay for replacing sections of wooden siding and other repairs to the exterior of the Heritage House, also known as the Cox-Hyson house. The house was built in 1908 and was donated to the society in the late 1970s by Floyd R. “Skip” and Lucille Hyson. It holds exhibits, artifacts, collectibles and furnishings with historical ties to Smithville and Bastrop County.

City Manager Update – 5/13/22 (continued)

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

The **17th ANNUAL SMITHVILLE FLY-IN** will be held this **Saturday, May 13, 2023** at the Smithville-Crawford Municipal Airport. The event will start at 10 a.m. and the day will be filled with airplanes, pilots, games, and prizes. Food will be available from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. For more information and or updates visit <https://www.facebook.com/Fly84R?fref=ts>. **THIS EVENT HAS BEEN CANCELLED DUE TO THE THREAT OF INCLEMENT WEATHER.**

NATIONAL POLICE WEEK is **May 14-20, 2023**. In 1962, President Kennedy proclaimed May 15 as National Peace Officers Memorial Day and the calendar week in which May 15 falls, as National Police Week. Established by a joint resolution of Congress in 1962, National Police Week pays special recognition to those law enforcement officers who have lost their lives in the line of duty for the safety and protection of others. Peace Officers Memorial Day and Police Week is an observance in the United States that pays tribute to the local, state, and Federal Peace Officers who have died in the line of duty. If you get the opportunity, please THANK our Police Officers and Dispatchers for all they do to keep everyone safe.

The next **CITY COUNCIL** meeting will be held on **Monday, May 15, 2023** at 6:00 pm (City Hall). Click for link to access the [COUNCIL AGENDA AND DATA PACKET](#).

The **BEST COUNTY-WIDE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE MIXER** will be held on **Thursday, May 18, 2023** from 5:00 pm-7:00 pm at the Smithville Brewing Company located at 661 NW Loop 230 in Smithville. The event is being hosted by the Smithville, Elgin, and Bastrop Chambers of Commerce.

The **STX GOLF CART CLUB** and **SMITHVILLE VFW POST 1309** will be putting out 1,200 flags at Oak Hill Cemetery to honor our fallen Veterans on **Saturday, May 20, 2023**. Golf Cart access to Oak Hill Cemetery will be from Jones Rd. Plan to meet at the Smithville Rec Center at 8:30AM and head out. Volunteers are needed. Click on the following link for more information → <https://www.facebook.com/hashtag/stxgolfcartclubhonorsveterans>.

The **SMITHVILLE VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT ANNUAL FUNDRAISER** will be held on **Sunday, May 21, 2023** at Riverbend Park. Lunch will be served at 11 a.m. with the auction at 1 p.m. Lunch includes fried chicken, sausage and all the sides for \$10. Raffle tickets are \$2 each or 6 for \$10. The grand prize is an \$2000 Visa Gift Card. For more information, click on the following link → [2023 Annual Fundraiser](#). Also, the SVFD has set up a [Venmo Account](#) to purchase tickets, donate, or to pay for auction items. Hope to see you there!

The next **SMITHVILLE AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE MIXER** will be held on **Thursday, May 25, 2023** at the Kid's Outdoor Zone located at 404 Main Street from 5:00 – 7:00 pm.

Just a reminder that **CITY HALL** will be **CLOSED Monday, May 29, 2023** in observance of **MEMORIAL DAY**. Office hours will be 8-5 Tuesday through Friday (May 30th to June 2nd).

Please join the **SMITHVILLE VFW POST 1309** on **Monday, May 29, 2023** at @11:00 am to honor those servicemen who have sacrificed and paid the ultimate price for our FREEDOM. The guest speaker will be former Bastrop County Judge Ronnie McDonald. Hamburgers and hot dogs will be served and the public is welcome to attend. For more information, click → [George M Jones VFW Post 1309](#)

Please let me know if you have any questions or need additional information. Otherwise have a great weekend and have a **Happy Mother's Day**.



PHOTOS (5/12/23):

Sealcoat Specialists Restoring the Runway, Ramp, and Taxiway @ 84R



HOME Grant Home Demolition / Rebuild @ 611 Gazley



LCRA "STEPS FORWARD" Day Project(s) @ Mt. Pleasant Cemetery and Riverbend Park

