

Rockport Transcript

A PUBLICATION OF THE CITY OF ROCKPORT

How The City Works – The Value of Sales Tax

Since the origination of this newsletter seven years ago, we have offered an ongoing series – How the City Works – to provide residents with a better understanding of city government. In previous issues we've highlighted specific departments, as well as citizen advisory committees. In a bit of a departure, we're going to look at the impact of sales tax in our community.

The current sales tax rate is 8.25%. Of this amount, the City receives 1%, the County receives one percent and 6.25% goes to the State. While sales tax is a given with almost every retail purchase, the impact on the community in which it's collected can be

very significant.

Thanks to a healthy economy and tourism, the City of Rockport and its residents benefit from an influx of monies through the sales tax. In 2015, the City received almost \$2.4 million.

As the second largest revenue source in the General Fund, sales tax makes up 31.56% of the City's General Fund budget. The General Fund is the general operating fund of the City. All financial resources, except those required to be accounted for in another fund, are accounted for in the General Fund. Revenues are derived primarily from property taxes, sales taxes, and licenses and permit fees.

In other words, sales tax, whether generated by residents or visitors, has a significant impact not only on the City's operation, but the property tax base, too. Our healthy sales tax income enables the City to charge a lower property tax (\$0.36) than our neighbors (Corpus Christi - \$0.60 or Portland - \$0.53) and other Texas cities.



City Working to Reduce Flood Insurance Premiums

On February 17, 2016, the new FEMA Flood Insurance Rate Maps will go into effect. In preparation for these changes, the City has revised its Floodplain Management Ordinance and has been working with Lockwood Andrews and Newnam, Inc. (LAN) in developing higher floodplain development standards and is applying for participation in a new program - the Community Rating System (CRS).

The Community Rating System is available to National Flood Insurance Program communities in good standing. By adopting higher regulatory standards and implementing programs that mitigate flood risks, Rockport residents will have a more flood resilient community and lower premiums for flood insurance.

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A number of researchers and organizations are taking a closer look at how money flows in communities, and what they're finding shows the profound economic impact of keeping money in town. So, the next time you're thinking about making a purchase or going out to dinner, "Think Local." You're not only helping out local businesses, but contributing to the City's General Fund and ensuring a vibrant economy and community.

Election Notification

The City of Rockport General Election will be held on May 7, 2016.

The positions of Council Member Ward #2, Council Member #4 and Mayor will be voted on at the General Election for two year terms.

Individuals currently holding these positions are:

Mayor—C.J. Wax

Ward 2—J.D. Villa

Ward 4—Barbara Gurtner

Qualifications for office include, among other things, that the candidate be at least 18 years old, be a qualified voter of the City, live within the city and ward for at least 12 months prior to Election Day.

The first day to file for a place on the ballot for City Council is January 20, 2016, and the last day to file is February 19, 2016 by 5 p.m. The first day of early voting by personal appearance is April 25, 2016. The last day of early voting by personal appearance is May 3, 2016, and Election Day is May 7, 2015. Potential candidates are encouraged to contact City Secretary Teresa Valdez at (361) 729-2213, ext. 225, for additional information.

Coastal Resiliency Committee Formed

The City of Rockport, Aransas County and other entities have formed a Coastal Resiliency Committee for the purpose of prioritizing projects for funding consideration as part of the Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council (GCERC). Using funds from the settlement with Transocean Deepwater Inc., GERC is seeking to provide near-term, on-the-ground ecosystem benefits for five Gulf States, while also conducting planning activities designed to build a foundation for future success as additional funds become available from other parties.

The Funded Priorities List would endow approximately \$139.6 million in restoration activities such as hydrologic restoration, land conservation and planning for large-scale restoration projects. In addition, GERC is reserving approximately \$43.6 million for implementation of additional activities in the future.



Among the priorities for consideration in Aransas County are South Fulton Beach Road from Traylor to Kon Tiki, the shore along Bay Shore Drive to protect the single entry/exit for Key Allegro, shoreline along Water Street to protect the low lying houses and nearby businesses, Shell Ridge Road, and Cove Harbor bulkheads to ensure continued access to the InterCoastal and protection of the wetlands both north and south of the harbor. If funded, these projects will go a long way in providing increased resiliency in our area and complement our efforts with the Community Rating System, which appears on the front page.

City Working to Reduce Flood

Insurance Premiums (continued from front page)

In addition to lower flood insurance premiums for local policy holders, CRS floodplain management activities provide enhanced public safety, reduced damage to property and public infrastructure, and avoidance of economic disruption and loss. For more information go to the “About Rockport” tab on the web site and click on Floodplain Information and Management.

Special Thanks to our Holiday Party Gift Donors

The City and its staff would like to thank the following individuals and businesses for donating gifts to be used as door prizes for the annual Christmas Party: AC Motorsports, Ace Hardware, AEP, Air Serv of the Coastal Bend, Aransas Autoplex, Terry Baiamonte, Black Dog, Camper Clinic, Kevin Caruth, C-Side Decorating, Ferguson Enterprises, Friends of the Pool, Frost National Bank, and Full Circle Printing.

And, Golden Needles, Grant-Works, Hidden Treasures, Ice Rays, K-Bob's, La Quinta, Legends Saloon, Lulu's Flowers, Los Comales, Magnolia's, Mayor and City Council, MCCi, Minit Man, Navy Army Credit Union, Oyster House, Patterson & Associates, Vicki Pitluk, Poor Man's County Club, and Pro Build.

Also, RBC Capital, Republic Services, Rockport Country Club, Rockport Donuts, Rockport Pool Supply, Romance Nails, Scotty's Lock & Key, Southern Roots Salon, Sugar Shack, Swimmin' Stuff, Texas Maritime Museum, Tropical Smoothie Cafe, Urban Engineering, Waffle Cone, Walmart, Whataburger and Woodchem.

Scenes from Tropical Christmas



Photos courtesy of Brian Jacobs

City Secretary Awarded International Designation

City Secretary Teresa Valdez has been awarded the MMC designation by The International Institute of Municipal Clerks (IIMC). Founded in 1947, the professional association serves the needs of municipal clerks, secretaries, treasurers, recorders and other allied associations from cities and towns worldwide.

The organization's primary goal is to actively promote the continuing education and professional development of municipal clerks through extensive education pro-

grams, certification, publications, networking, annual conferences and research. IIMC's 9,500-plus members represent municipalities with populations ranging from 250 people to more than 10 million people in North America and 15 other countries.

She is one of approximately 25 in the state of Texas to receive this designation and the only City Secretary in Rockport's history.

**Shop Rockport—
Keep your retail sales taxes**

Rockport City Council

Mayor



C.J. Wax

Ward 1



Rusty Day

Ward 2



J.D. Villa

Ward 3



Pat Rios

Ward 4



Barbara Gurtner

Save the Date—



The 28th Annual Whooping Crane Strut will kick off at 8 am on Saturday, March 12 at Memorial Park. The event includes a 2-Mile walk, 5K run and 10K run. Awards will be presented to the first three finishers in each age category, overall male/female top finishers, and Master/Grand Master age brackets. Live music, refreshments and door prizes add to the excitement. Registration forms can be downloaded from the city's website or <http://www.athleteguild.com/running/rockport-tx/2016-28th-annual-whooping-crane-strut>. For additional information, contact Tom Staley at 790-1136 or by email at parks@cityofrockport.com.

Who Do I Call If ...

Emergency	911
Non-Emergency Public Safety	729-1111
Utility Bill Questions/Concerns	729-2213 x 234
Street Issues and Repairs	790-1160
Sewer, Water and Gas Issues	790-1160
Trash Pick-Up	729-2213 x 234
City Administrative Offices	729-2213 x 221
Building and Development Dept.	790-1125
County Mosquito Hotline	727- 0606 x 29

For additional questions or concerns, visit the "FAQs" or "Fix It" sections on the City's web site (www.cityofrockport.com) or call City Hall at 729-2213.

Didja' Know?

The Bay Education Center and Memorial Park were listed among the Top Ten of "Things to Do in Rockport" on Trip Advisor. Rankings are based on user comments and ratings of the various attractions. Both are operated by the City's Parks and Leisure Services Department.

Among the comments: Bay Education Center— "This place is what I would expect to see in a large city, not a tiny bay side town." "Small, but free, top notch exhibit " Memorial Park— "This park has something for everyone, great walking path, softball field, basket ball court, things for kids, shade, clean restrooms & a great dog park for big and small. "



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