

Rockport Transcript

A PUBLICATION OF THE CITY OF ROCKPORT

How The City Works

There are over 130 individuals employed by the City, who are dedicated to serving the needs of residents. From public safety to street repair to utility management, their often invisible presence is essential to protecting and enhancing the welfare of our citizens and visitors. In this continuing series, we'll visit with different departments and citizen advisory committees to get a better understanding of their contributions to the City.

In this issue, we focus on the Public Safety Communication Division, informally known as Dispatch, which provides invaluable assistance 24-7 to citizens, tourists and numerous government entities, and employs up to 12 full-time individuals.

Although those working in the Dispatch Center are City employees, their services are also utilized by the County, three volunteer fire departments, the State's Public Safety and Park divisions, TABC, Animal Control, the School District and EMS, to receive emergency calls and send out help from the appropriate entity. On an average day, almost 400 calls are made to the Center. Less than half of these are true emergency or public safety issues.

On duty dispatchers work within a console, which is equipped with two phones, six to eight radio channels, dispatch handbooks, resource directories and phone numbers, and a five screen computer center, which provides locational mapping, dispatching



Veronica Flirt dispatches a police officer to a hit and run location.

services, databases, inquiry services and computer aided dispatch. Each console area is capable of mirroring one of the other working consoles in cases where more people are needed.

Training for this position takes three to five months and state certification is also required. Components include functions of

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City's Financial Transparency Earns High Honors

The City of Rockport is among the first 11 Texas cities to earn the Platinum award in the Leadership Circle program, sponsored by the Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts. The Platinum award is the highest level of achievement.

The Leadership Circle program was developed in 2009 to recognize local governments across Texas that strive to meet a high standard for financial transparency. Among the criteria evaluated are accessibility of books to the public; providing clear, consistent pictures of spending; and sharing information in a user-friendly format that lets citizens drill down for more detail. A "Financial Transparency" button on the City's new website provides a clearinghouse for City officials and the public to review the City's financial documents readily. Among the data included are a searchable check register and a new interactive tool, OpenGov, an intuitive graphical interface that provides fund level to line item level data on month-to-date, budget, and historical bases.



Texas Comptroller
Leadership Circle

2014 Whooping Crane Strut

Approximately 200 individuals ranging in age from 5 - 78 participated in the 26th Annual Whooping Crane Strut on March 8. A full list of winners in age categories is available at cityofrockport.com/216/Whooping-Crane-Strut. Top winners include:

Two Mile Walk

Top Male Overall – Alejandro Herrera III
Top Female Overall – Danielle Dennett
Top Male Masters – Richard Pifer
Top Female Masters – Donna Gordan
Top Male Grand Master – Fred Krebs
Top Female Grand Master – Elaine Albin

5K Run

Top Male Overall – David Rodriguez
Top Female Overall – Priscilla Aldente
Top Male Masters – Travis Prater
Top Female Masters – Nora Rodriguez
Top Male Grand Master – Michael Anderson
Top Female Grand Master – Donnalou Holland

10K Run

Top Male Overall – Leroy Briggs
Top Female Overall – Rachel Hudson
Top Male Masters – Clay Brieger
Top Female Masters – Martha Tahmoressi
Top Male Grand Master – Don Winkley
Top Female Grand Master – Becky Fox



Police Officers Sport New Look

For the last 25 years, Officers had been wearing light blue shirts and navy pants with a stripe down the leg. Since the blue color was not a consistent shade between manufacturers, the Department was effectively locked into a single supplier.

A three person committee researched costs, availability, comfort, and image and choose navy shirts and pants without stripes. Their recommendation, which was accepted by the Police Chief and City Manager, included long and short sleeve shirts that are more breathable than the previous version – a good thing in our heat and humidity. In addition, because the current body armor is also navy, it blends in with the navy shirt for a cleaner and less threatening look. The pants include a hidden pocket further down the leg, making it more accessible than the traditional front pants pockets that are of little use because they are blocked by the Officer's utility belt and tools. The change is being made without any additional cost.

Dispatch

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emergency operations, communication skills, geography, jurisdictional responsibilities, and medical priority procedures.

These dedicated individuals must not only be able to multi-task under stressful situations, they must also be able to gather important information while on the phone, disseminate it to the proper responding agency, and provide support to the calling party. As an example, an individual called in to say a friend had possibly overdosed. The dispatcher was able to confirm the location, inquire about the friend's status, gather information on the type and amount of the overdose, send the necessary information to the police and ambulance, and talk the individual through the steps to take until help arrived.

Dispatch is always available to help—24/7. However, if it is a non-emergency, you should call 729-1111 or 729-2222. Either way, your need will be handled professionally and courteously.

Web Site Offers Special Services

Over the next several issues, we will be sharing some of the new services and programs available through the enhanced web site. First, however, we'd like to remind you of three special services that have always been available.

First Call Emergency Notification System – During an emergency, extended utility disruption, street closings, or other important information, the City and County will

implement the First Call Emergency Notification System. Once answered, the system will deliver a short voice message to you or your answering machine regarding a possible emergency including hurricane information. If the call is not answered or if the line is busy, the system will attempt to make the call again. Citizens with Caller ID on their phones should take note that the caller name appears as "FirstCall." The

system can also send this emergency message to cell phones and email addresses.

In order to receive messages from First Call, one must be registered with the system. You may enter up to a total of five different phone numbers or email addresses. To register, call 866-484-3264 or go online to www.alertregistration.com/AransasCoTx/.

City Elections

Election Day is Saturday, May 10 for Ward 4. The Mayor and Ward 2 positions are uncontested. Voting is at City Hall from 7 a.m. – 7 p.m. on May 10. Early voting is available at City Hall from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. on April 28 - May 2 and from 7 a.m. - 7 p.m. May 5 - 6.

House Watch Program

The Police Department provides "Close Patrol," a program that enables residents to notify patrol personnel of short-term absences from their home. Homeowners may contact the Police Department at 729-1111 and provide basic information regarding the duration of the stay, vehicles, pets, emergency contacts, etc. The information is passed on to officers, who will provide extra patrol during the designated time period.

Water Conservation Reminder

In accordance with the City's Drought Contingency and Emergency Water Plan, customers of the city's water system are asked to cut back on water usage from May 1 – September 30 by voluntarily watering once a week. The purpose of the plan is to conserve water and achieve reduction during peak demand. If there are higher demands on the system or a significant reduction in the lake capacity storage, mandatory restrictions will be announced. The revised water conservation plan also prohibits watering between the hours of 10 am and 6 pm anytime throughout the year. Residents with water wells are not required to comply with the prohibition of watering between 10 am and 6 pm but are encouraged to do so.

Notify Me – You may sign up to receive a variety of notifications, including City Council agendas, Committee meeting notices, and requests for bids and proposals. All information is held in confidence and will not be sold, disclosed to others, or used for unsolicited mass mailings. Please remember to set your spam blocker to allow mail from listserv@civicplus.com.

Fix-It Form – This online form generates automatic emails to the City Manager, who will assign them to the appropriate department to address your needs quickly. Simply mark the box that best describes the problem(s) and provide a brief description and location. The form also asks for your name and a phone number so you may be contacted for additional information or to confirm that the situation has been resolved.

**Shop Rockport—
Keep your retail sales taxes
working at home**

Rockport City Council

Mayor



C.J. Wax

Ward 1



Rusty Day

Ward 2



J.D. Villa

Ward 3



Pat Rios

Ward 4



Adelaide Marlatt

Lifeguard Training

Certified Lifeguard training is being offered at the Community Aquatic Center. To qualify, one must be at least 15 years of age and a competent swimmer.

Individuals seeking full or part-time lifeguard positions with the Community Aquatic Center may apply online by visiting the Jobs section on the city's web site. The City is offering an incentive program for new lifeguards, regardless of where certification is obtained. Call Aquatics Manager Sally Harper at 727-9989 for course information and costs.



Didja' Know?

Rockport finished in 7th place in the "Coolest Small Town" contest, which was sponsored by Budget-Travel.com.

A special feature on our community will be published on their web site and sent to their email subscribers.

The City was featured on the March 7, 2014, broadcast of "Wake Up With Al" on The Weather Channel. See the segment at www.weather.com/video/coolest-small-towns-45414?collid=/tv/shows/wuwa

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

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.



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