

Rockport Transcript

A PUBLICATION OF THE CITY OF ROCKPORT

Rockport is Topping the Charts

Rockport-Fulton was named the 6th favorite place to visit by *Texas Highways* magazine. The selection was based on readers nominating their favorite destinations. You can read the article by visiting the City's web site and clicking on the Readers' Choice logo or at <http://www.texashighways.com/travel/item/7579-texas-top-40-no-6-rockport-fulton>.

Scores for other coastal commu-

nities were Corpus Christi (13), Galveston (15) Padre Island (19), and Port Aransas (24). Larger cities and their rankings include Fredericksburg (7), Kerrville (23), Austin (26), Dallas-Fort Worth (31), and Houston (36). The top five will be announced in the weeks ahead. The *Texas Highways* recognition is the fourth time in the past year that Rockport has been ranked in the Top Ten in a state or national poll.



READERS' CHOICE

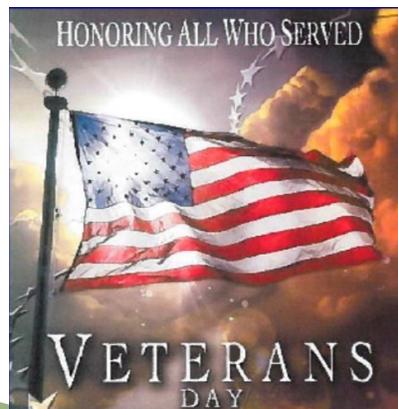
Rockport Budget and Tax Rate Set

On September 23, City Council approved the budget and tax rate for the City's fiscal year, which runs October 1, 2014 – September 30, 2015. The ad valorem tax rate will be raised to \$0.335179, which means an increase of \$25.59 on the median residential property—\$166,850.

Another major change in this year's budget is maintaining a fund balance for a total of 183 days. While there is no statutory or regulatory requirement for a minimum fund balance, City leaders continue to be prepared in case of a catastrophic storm. Generally, other cities keep a fund balance of 90—120 days.

Additionally, the City has established a policy of budgeting a contingency for the Hotel Occupancy Tax (HOT) fund to accommodate hurricanes or Texas legislative changes. The HOT funds, which are derived from special taxes on hotel, motel and other overnight rentals, are used

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Save the Dates

FEMA Flood Risk Open House
Thursday, November 6 2 to 7 pm
Rockport Service Center
2751 SH 35 Bypass
www.txchart.com

Veterans Day
Tuesday, November 11 at 11 am
at Veteran Park adjacent to
Rockport Harbor.

Arbor Day
Monday, November 17 at 4 pm
at Zachary Taylor Park on Pearl
Street.

Tropical Christmas
Saturday, December 6
Kicking off the holiday season,
Tropical Christmas is an all-day
event featuring a night parade,
children's programs, historic
home tours, decorating and
costume contests, food and
entertainment, and a visit with
"Tropical Santa." The grand
finale is a spectacular fire-
works display. For additional
information call the Park and
Leisure Services Department at
361-727-2158 or visit the City's
web site.

Rockport Budget

to underwrite tourism activities and special events.

The City's budget is available for viewing and download under the "Financial Transparency" section of the web site. Here are some Q&A that may be helpful. If you have additional questions, please feel free to contact the City Manager or Finance Director at 361-729-2213.

Why have my water, sewer and garbage services also increased?

The water conservation measure implemented due to persistent drought conditions decreased 22.3 percent in water consumption. Unfortunately, this forced fixed costs over fewer gallons. The net effect on an average residential water and sewer customer within the city is \$3.63 a month.

The City contracts with Republic Services for its garbage and recycling services. As part of the contract, Republic Services may ask for an annual increase based on the Consumer Price Index. The monthly increase of \$0.44 goes directly to them.

What's the City's true financial situation?

Very good. There are cash reserves equivalent to six months of operational costs. The generally accepted practice and rule of thumb is to have a fund balance of about 90 – 120 days.

Continued from front

What about debt?

Currently the City has an annual debt service of \$3,772,298. These are Certificates of Obligation, which are used to finance major projects that can't be covered under normal operations. They include sewer improvements and extensions, water tank maintenance and repair, construction of the new CNG station, mandates from the Texas Railroad Commission, and more. Payments for debt service are included in the City's annual budget. The City continues to look at recalling and/or refunding its current debt to take advantage of lower interest rates. Later this year, the City will undertake a program that will save more than \$450,000 over the life of the debt.

How are my tax dollars allocated?

(see chart below)

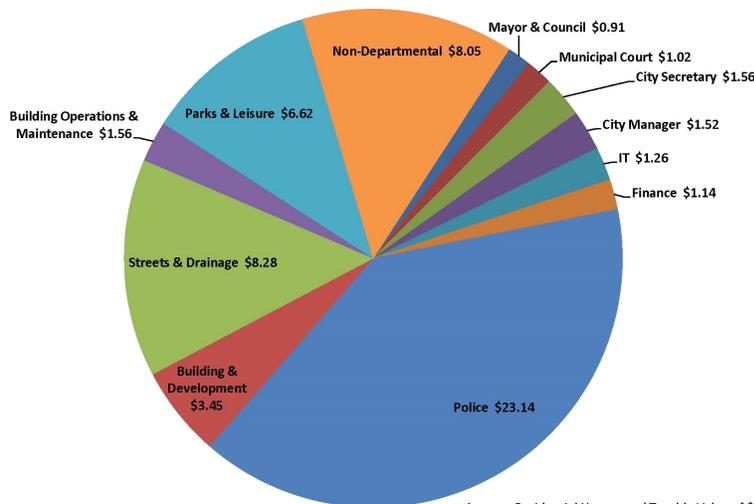
Kudos

The City's Comprehensive Annual Financial Report, developed by Finance Director **Patty Howard**, received the Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting, a top national award from the Government Finance Officers Association of the United States. This marks the 13th consecutive year the Finance Department has been recognized for its outstanding work.

Eli Ramos, an officer with the Rockport Police Department, was selected to participate in the 2014-2015 Leadership Aransas County program, sponsored by the Rockport-Fulton Chamber of Commerce.

Mayor C.J. Wax was named President-Elect at the October annual meeting of the Texas Municipal League. He will become President in September 2015, the second Rockport Mayor to serve in that capacity in TML's 103 years.

Monthly Allocation of Average Residential Homestead Ad Valorem Tax



Average Residential Homestead Taxable Value of \$209,472
 \$0.335179/\$100 Tax Rate
 2014 Taxes Total \$702.11 or \$58.51/Month

Visit us on the Web
 @ www.cityofrockport.com

City and School District to Open CNG Station



The City and the Aransas County Independent School District have entered into a mutual agreement for a compressed natural gas (CNG) fueling station, which will be located on ACISD property along Stadium Drive.

Both entities will be slowly converting their vehicle fleets to CNG, which provides significant fuel savings and lower emissions. Future plans call for offering CNG to the public and businesses.

Construction bids have been awarded. TxDOT has approved boring under Highway 35 to connect the pipeline. Construction time is estimated to be six weeks. Funding for the project was made possible through a Certificate of Obligation issued in July.

Stormwater Management Program Underway

The City has contracted with Houston-based Dredgit Environmental to remove sediment from four detention ponds located on the grounds of Rockport Country Club. The ponds, which act as water hazards on the golf course, are actually part of the City's master storm water management system and help prevent flooding during periods of heavy rain.

Dredgit will use its proprietary mechanical separation process to remove more than two feet of sediment sludge, debris and silt from each of the ponds. Using a floating hydraulic dredge, the company will pump the water into a mobile plant.



There, the process quickly and quietly separates the sediment and returns the clean water to its source without disrupting day-to-day operations or the environment. The captured dry sediment is set aside and will be transported offsite to landowners, who purchase it by the truckload.

The two ponds located on the #10 fairway at the corner of Traylor and Champions have been completed. Work will proceed to the signature pond on the #1 tee box, adjacent to Olympic Drive, and then the pond on #14. If funding permits, the pond on #12 will also be included.

The cost of the project is approximately \$340,000, funded through a 2007 Certificate of Obligation. It is estimated that more than 8,000 cubic yards of sediment will be removed.

Didja' Know?

Natural gas vehicles can extend the intervals between tune-ups by up to 50,000 miles and oil changes by up to 25,000 miles. Natural gas is also cheaper per equivalent gallon of gasoline by an average of one-third and 25-45 percent less than diesel.

**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



Barbara Gurtner

Reuniting Sister Cities



City Attorney Terry Baiamonte presents an Official Proclamation to Mayor Peter Gandolfi of Beachport, South Australia. Rockport and Beachport are "Sister Cities."

City Attorney Terry Baiamonte, who was visiting South Australia in her capacity as Vice Chair of the San Antonio River Authority, took a side trip to Beachport, Rockport's Sister City. A small coastal town 235 miles southeast of Adelaide, Beachport has a population of less than 900 and was founded in 1878.

Planning for the Sister City affiliation began in 1989 because of the many similarities shared by the two cities. An Official Proclamation was declared on October 22, 1991 and again this year.

Water—Looking to the Future

Contractors are ramping up field construction of the components of the \$160 million Mary Rhodes Pipeline Phase 2, which will deliver water from the Colorado River water for users served by the San Patricio Municipal Water District, including Rockport.

The project includes 41 miles of pipeline, a 6 million gallon ground storage tank and the tie-in to the existing Mary Rhodes Pipeline system. The contract also includes installation of fiber optic communications equipment. Additionally, the contract includes building a sedimentation basin and pumping facilities that will take water from the river. Project completion is scheduled for summer of 2015.

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
Mosquito Control 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.



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www.cityofrockport.com