

Rockport Transcript

A PUBLICATION OF THE CITY OF ROCKPORT

How the City Works

There are 123 full-time individuals employed by the City, who are dedicated to serving the needs of residents and visitors alike. 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 employees to get a better understanding of their contributions to the City.

In this issue, we focus on some of the activities of the Parks and Leisure Services Department. With 10 full time employees, this division is responsible for the operation, scheduling and maintenance of six City parks, the Aquatic Center and Skate Park, Bay Edu-

trails and the Wetland Pond and Demonstration Garden. While many of us are just getting up, seven members of the Parks Department are meeting at 7 am to discuss specific needs and assignments for that day, which include mowing, repair of facilities, trash removal, pruning, and cleaning. Prior to departing, all vehicles are checked to ensure that they are in proper working order and in good repair before tackling the day's tasks.

On a typical day, an employee will make a "parks run" to 19 different sites throughout the city. At each location they will inspect the facility for vandalism, ensure that the building or equipment is in proper working order, water plants, blow



Park Employee Teri Goldsby picks up trash as part of her daily 19-site park run.

the water fountains, benches, tables and playground equipment. Their thoroughness and attention to detail make it appear as if the particular park has been unused by residents which is rarely the case. *(continued on page 2)*

City Sets New Tax Rate for 2012-13 Fiscal Year

After intensive budget meetings, workshops, public hearings, and several years of maintaining the effective tax rate, City Council approved a tax rate of \$0.32584 per \$100 of assessed valuation. Based on values from the Aransas County Appraisal District, this will result in approximately \$157,502 (3.8%) more in property taxes from the previous year. The net effect on a median residential property (\$161,202) is an increase of \$22.99 annually and \$29.93 for the average \$209,912 homestead. The chart on page 2 shows how this revenue is spent if a resident paid a monthly bill.

For several years, the City has attempted to maintain the lowest tax rate possible, without impacting services. In essence, continually operating a budget on the effective tax rate, i.e. the tax rate that generates the same amount of revenue as the previous year, is costly both in the short and long-term future.

Taxing Jurisdiction Comparison 2012-2013*

ACISD	\$1.15938
Aransas County	\$0.381065
City of Rockport	\$0.32584
Navigation District	\$0.05579

*per \$100 valuation

The decision to raise taxes above the effective tax rate was not taken lightly. According to City Manager Kevin Carruth, there were a number of factors that influenced the decision. The first was the goal by City Council to look for efficiencies in operation, reduce expenses where possible, and maintain levels of service. *(continued on page 3)*

How the City Works (continued)



Joe Samora, Mario Trevino and Steve Clark unload equipment before mowing at Mathis Park.

The job itself is physically demanding. Five days a week, they work outdoors, almost eight hours a day, fighting the heat, humidity and mosquitos. But, if you were to ask any of them, they would say it was worth it. They take great pride in the work they do and their contribution to the City's recreational facilities.



Laura Clark removes debris from Compass Rose Park.

So, the next time you see a parks' worker emptying trash cans along Little Bay, watering plants in the Downtown Heritage District, painting over/repairing vandalism or picking up debris in a park, take the time to say "hello" and "thank you" for maintaining our reputation as one of the cleanest cities along the Coast.

Visit us on the Web
@ www.cityofrockport.com

Mathis Park Renovation

Park workers have finished updating the facilities at Mathis Park in South Rockport. New swing sets, park benches and tables were built and updated by Parks staff and the park was reconfigured to better accommodate its new equipment. By doing the work in-house, an estimated \$3,000 was saved.

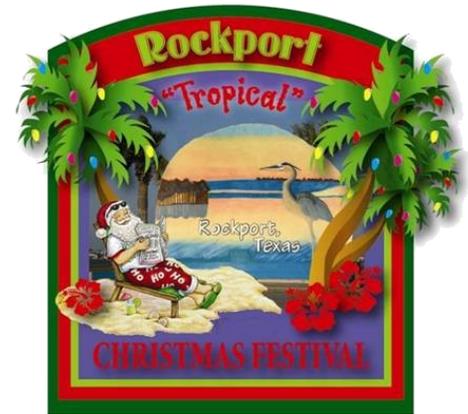
Mathis Park is also the site of the Community Garden.



Holiday Happenings

The annual Rockport Tropical Christmas celebration will take place **December 1**. This year's event will be more pedestrian friendly with all events taking place around downtown and the Harbor.

Among the happenings will be a tree decoration contest, Santa visits and photos at the Bay Education Center, special children's events, live entertainment, and a lighted, evening parade followed by fireworks. All events are family friendly and free to the public. For more information, visit our web site or call 727-2158.



Law enforcement officers from the City of Rockport and Aransas County will provide an early Christmas for children from 30-50 local families as part of the Blue Santa program. This annual event enables children to fulfill individual Christmas dreams by selecting their own gifts. The names of the families and children are provided by school counselors. Each family will be joined by a representative of the public safety departments to assist with the shopping.

If you would like to make a donation to this program, please visit the Public Safety Center or contact Commander Mark Cory at 729-111.

Where Does the City's Money Come From and Where Does It Go?

FY 2012-2013 All Funds Revenue and Expenditure Summary

New Tax Rate

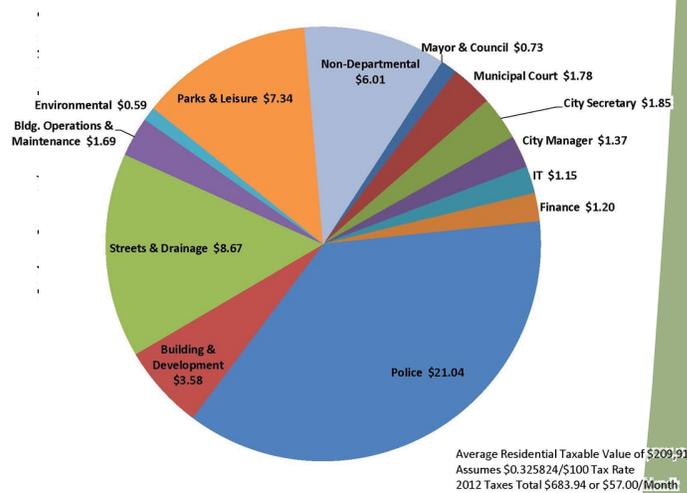
(continued from page 1)

Total Revenue - All Funds FY 2012-2013

General	\$6,646,207	22.83%
Utility System	\$9,514,606	32.68%
Sanitation	\$1,760,682	6.05%
Natural Gas	\$2,062,435	7.08%
Community Aquatic Center	\$249,215	0.86%
Municipal Court Technology	\$16,000	0.05%
Utility Surcharge	\$167,490	0.58%
Bay Education Center Oper.	\$44,700	0.15%
Juvenile Case Manager	\$15,000	0.05%
Fleet Operations	\$649,875	2.23%
Hotel Occupancy Tax	\$565,000	1.94%
City/County Communications	\$550,204	1.89%
Debt Service	\$3,827,199	13.14%
Vehicle & Equipment	\$349,274	1.20%
Capital Improvement Projects*	\$2,700,102	9.27%
	<u>\$29,117,989</u>	<u>100.0%</u>

* Doesn't incl. \$3,026,380 previously budgeted

Monthly Allocation of Average Residential Ad Valorem Tax

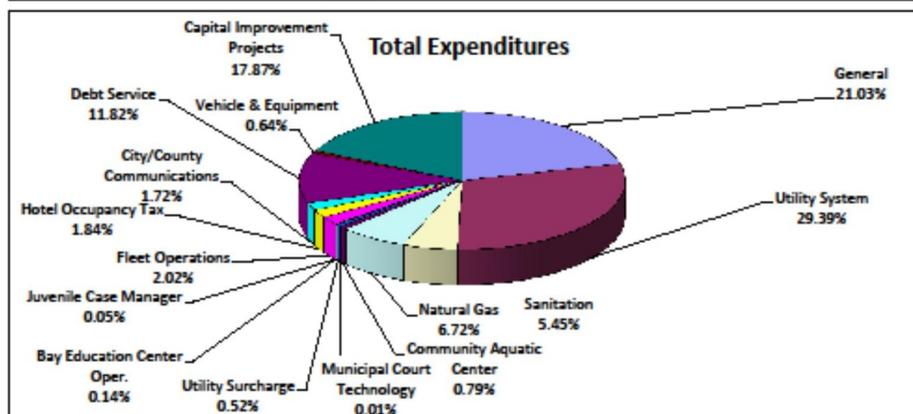
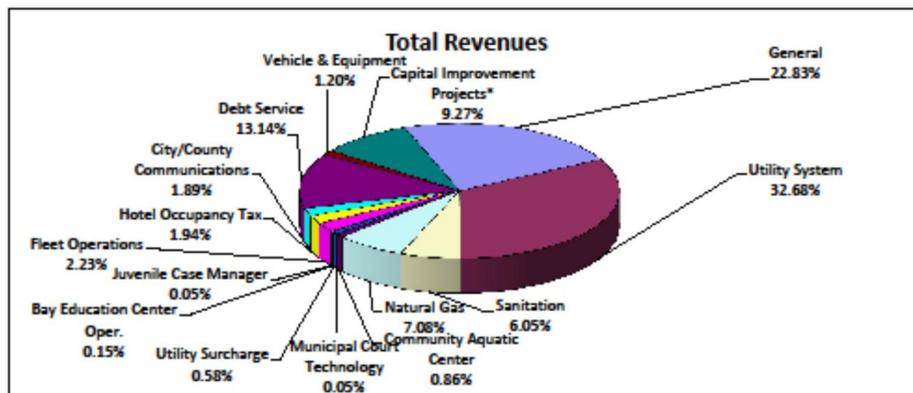


Total Expenditures - All Funds FY 2012-2013

General	\$ 6,737,855	21.03%
Utility System	\$ 9,415,131	29.39%
Sanitation	\$ 1,744,640	5.45%
Natural Gas	\$ 2,153,480	6.72%
Community Aquatic Center	\$ 251,543	0.79%
Municipal Court Technology	\$ 3,200	0.01%
Utility Surcharge	\$ 167,420	0.52%
Bay Education Center Oper.	\$ 44,700	0.14%
Juvenile Case Manager	\$ 15,000	0.05%
Fleet Operations	\$ 646,986	2.02%
Hotel Occupancy Tax	\$ 590,000	1.84%
City/County Communications	\$ 550,204	1.72%
Debt Service	\$ 3,786,015	11.82%
Vehicle & Equipment	\$ 204,500	0.64%
Capital Improvement Projects	\$ 5,726,482	17.87%
	<u>\$ 32,037,156</u>	<u>100.0%</u>

Secondly, is the “reality” of the community and the numbers served. While the actual population figure of full-time residents is around 9,357, the physical and human infrastructure must accommodate 15,000 – 20,000 people most of the year. Rockport’s tourist and seasonal visitors have a definitive impact on the City’s fiscal needs.

Finally, local governments face inflationary pressures that are historically higher than what most citizens and businesses experience. The U.S. Municipal Cost Index was 2.6 percent higher over a 12-month period while the U.S. Consumer Price Index was up 1.7 percent during the same period.



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Rockport City Council

Mayor



C.J. Wax

Ward 1



William Fisher

Ward 2



J.D. Villa

Ward 3



Paul Lippke

Ward 4



Adelaide Marlatt

Pool Updates

The City and American Healthways Services, LLC will soon complete an agreement to provide free visits to the Community Aquatic Center for the organization's SilverSneakers® program.

The SilverSneakers® Fitness Program is an innovative health, exercise and wellness program helping Medicare-eligible adults live healthy, active lifestyles. The free program is open to individuals with participating health plans. For information, visit www.silversneakers.com.

This winter, the pool will be open Tuesday through Friday and 10 am—4 pm on Saturdays. The baby pool is closed until Spring.

Blankets went over the pool in early October and the pool heater will be turned on when warranted by the weather.

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.

Plug Into Recycling



Obsolete televisions that end up along the roadside or are otherwise illegally dumped will now be properly recycled thanks to new legislation. Televisions disgorge heavy metals and other *toxic materials* into the ground and water as they break down in landfills.

A new state bill compels TV manufacturers to take back and recycle old sets. Additionally, retailers of new TV sets in Texas are required to provide recycling information to consumers. To learn more about the program or to identify a recycling site, please visit TexasRecyclesTVs.org



622 E. Market Street
Rockport, Texas 78382
Phone: (361)729-2213
www.cityofrockport.com