

The FAIR OAKS Gazette

September 2016

Volume 6 Issue 9



NEWS FOR THE RESIDENTS OF FAIR OAKS RANCH

From the Mayor's Desk...

When I began writing this column, I committed to writing articles that were relevant to serious issues in the city. I also committed to dealing with these issues openly and to talk through challenges as readily as I talked about the many wonderful things in our city. This month I am going to present a basic explanation of how we budget, identify the initiatives you have told us are important, and explain the strategy for financing these initiatives.

UNDERSTANDING THE BUDGET

Who Taxes Us

Regardless of where you live, you will have at least three taxing entities. For example, Dedie and I live in Kendall County so we have three taxing entities. We pay 64% of our taxes to the Boerne ISD, 20% of our taxes to Kendall County, and 16% of our taxes to Fair Oaks Ranch.

How Taxes Are Calculated

The next question is how taxes are calculated. There are two components: an assessed value set by the county appraisal district and a tax rate set by the taxing entity. For example, on our tax bill last year BISD taxed at a rate of \$1.294 per \$100 of assessed value, Kendall County at \$0.3867, and Fair Oaks Ranch at \$0.3073.

Keep in mind that taxing entities like our city do not control the assessed values. We only control the tax rates that we set.

Our City's Budget

At the highest level, we have a General Fund that budgets for basic services like streets, police, and building code enforcement; an Enterprise Fund that budgets for the water and wastewater utility services we provide; and a Capital Improvement Fund for major projects like waterline extensions or the recent Public Safety/Municipal Court building.

When we set our tax rates, we do that exercise in two pieces: an Operating and Maintenance (O&M) rate and an Interest and Sinking Fund (I&S) rate. Each of these has separate sets of taxation rules associated with them.

Servicing our City's Debt

The bond amortization schedule for the \$7,000,000 we approved for street reconstruction defines how much we have to collect on the Interest and Sinking fund side since that is our only general obligation debt. General obligation bonds are paid from the property taxes we collect. The rate varies up or down a little each year depending on the amortization schedule. This year, for example, our tax rate for I&S has dropped.

We have two other pieces of debt which are paid out of the rates you pay for water and sewer services: Revenue bonds that were issued years ago to buy the water and wastewater systems and a capital lease that was used to finance the upgrade to electronic metering of water.

Our City's Operating and Maintenance Costs

The O&M portion which pays for services like police, fire protection, and maintenance is more complex. You cannot raise the O&M rate more than 8% over the "effective tax rate" (rate that would generate the same tax revenue as last year based on current year's valuations of the same properties taxed in the prior year) without additional reporting and possible tax rollback. The rates we are proposing are well below that level.

Our Tax Rates Are Lower Than Similar Cities

Our current tax rates are low compared to similar cities. We are currently at an "all in" rate of \$.3073. Leon Valley is at \$.556599. Hollywood Park is at \$.510081. Boerne is at \$.472.

There are multiple reasons why our rates are low: Other cities

(Continued on Page 3)



Stream MOVIES EVEN **Faster**

With speeds up to 100Mbps!

Make multiple device sharing simple. Download videos, music, photos, and games in just seconds. Take advantage of this bundle offer and save!

SPEEDS UP TO 100MBPS

**GVTC HOME WIFI WITH
MANAGED ROUTER**

**TV + CHOICE OF ONE TIER:
MOVIES / SPORTS / LIFESTYLES / FAVORITES**
VISIT GVTC.COM FOR DETAILS

WHOLE HOME DVR

UNLIMITED PHONE

BUNDLE & SAVE!

\$129⁹⁵
mo.

Call **800-367-4882**
or visit **gvtc.com**



GVTC[®]
COMMUNICATIONS

Residential limited time offer. Offer available to new subscribers to GVTC's phone, broadband and/or cable television service only in select GVTC service areas. Price excludes applicable taxes, surcharges & fees. Installation fee may apply. Other restrictions may apply. Services provided by Guadalupe Valley Communication Systems LP d/b/a GVTC or its wholly owned subsidiary Guadalupe Valley Communications Systems LP d/b/a GVCS. Service subject to terms and conditions published from time to time at gvtc.com/support/policies-terms-conditions. This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

FAIR OAKS RANCH

From the Mayor's Desk (Continued from Cover)

provide services that we do not provide at all, or provide at a lesser level (volunteer fire department vs. having a full time fire department.) We don't have a Parks department because your FORHA dues pay for that.

Another reason our tax rates are low, in my opinion, is that we have not been very diligent about setting aside funds for replacement of assets that is called for in our city's Mission Statement. This year, we are beginning to address that issue by creating and funding asset replacement funds for both the General Fund and the Enterprise Fund. This action moves us toward a model of planning our spending to replace assets that wear out instead of having the "emergency" purchases which the council has had to approve from general reserves this year.

YOUR PRIORITIES

During the election, and after, you told me and the other council members about your priorities for our city. They include:

- Addressing our drainage issue, some of which have been outstanding for years.
- Protecting our quality of life. There is a huge body of work, starting with changing our city's governance structure from General Law to Home Rule that must be done to address this concern.
- Creating a real strategic plan/vision for our city.
- Planning our infrastructure needs like water, wastewater, and roadways.
- Keeping our city safe through police, fire, EMS services.
- The comment we have heard from many of you concerning tax rates is that if we need to increase tax rates modestly to keep our city "nice," we should do that.

This year, we are beginning to address a large backlog of planning tasks. We have:

- Identified drainage issues and begun the analytical work to determine responsibilities for addressing.
- Selected a Home Rule Charter Committee that is moving steadily to get a charter written to present to you in the May 2017 General Election.
- Hired a new City Administrator who has a strong background in urban planning who has developed a game plan to create a real strategic vision and support our infrastructure needs.
- Begun the process of creating "Partnering" arrangements with other entities like the Municipal Development District (MDD) to move initiatives forward.
- Begun to work proactively with developers to encourage development that makes sense for our community and enhances the Fair Oaks Ranch "brand."
- Worked with our new City Administrator and council to place primary responsibility for preparing, justifying, and administering budgets with our department heads. My experience in managing budget groups for large entities in both the private and public sectors tells me that you cannot have accountability for budget results without creating ownership of the process.

(Continued on Page 4)

ADVERTISING INFO

Please support the advertisers that make Fair Oaks Gazette possible. If you would like to support the newsletter by advertising, please contact our sales office at 888-687-6444 or advertising@peelinc.com. The advertising deadline is the 20th of the month prior to the issue.

ARTICLE INFO

The Fair Oaks Gazette is mailed monthly to all Fair Oaks Ranch area residents. Residents, community groups, churches, etc. are welcome to include information about their organizations in the newsletter. Personal news for the Stork Report, Teenage Job Seekers, recipes, special celebrations, and birthday announcements are also welcome.

To submit an article for the Fair Oaks Gazette, please email it to fairoaksranch@peelinc.com. The deadline is the 15th of the month prior to the issue.

IMPORTANT NUMBERS

EMERGENCIES NUMBERS

EMERGENCY	911
Fire.....	911
Ambulance.....	911
Fair Oaks Ranch Police Department.....	210-698-0990
Animal Control.....	210-698-0990

SCHOOLS

Boerne ISD	www.boerne-isd.net
Fair Oaks Ranch Elementary.....	210-698-1616

UTILITIES

Allied Waste Services - Garbage & Recycling.....	210-648-5222
AT&T - Telephone.....	800-464-7928
CPSEnergy.....	(new service) 210-353-2222
.....	(service trouble or repairs) 210-353-4357
Fair Oaks Ranch Utilities - Water.....	210-698-7685
GVTC - Cable & Telephone.....	800-367-4882
Pedernales Electric Co-op.....	888-554-4732
Time Warner - Cable.....	210-244-0500

OTHER

United States Post Office	
607 E. Blanco. Rd. - Boerne, TX	830-249-2414
.....	(delivery info, stops, fuds, ect.) 830-249-9303
5837 De Zavala Rd - San Antonio, TX.....	210-641-0248

FAIR OAKS RANCH

From the Mayor's Desk (Continued from Page 3)

OUR BUDGET STRATEGY

First, our City Administrator has asked that we allow him a full year to look for organizational efficiencies before authorizing much additional staffing. He has recommended adding only one position, a Police Investigator, for the current year and has prepared a new organization chart. We are also doing a few reclassifications that fit the organization structure better and only cost a small amount of money. Other positions may be justified in future years, but we want to look for organizational efficiencies first.

Second, we are funding about half a million dollars in reserves for replacement of vehicles and equipment for both General Fund and Enterprise Fund. Most of this funding is for future needs, not current year replacements. Our funding exceeds the minimum recommended by our bond financial advisors as being needed to help preserve our credit rating.

Third, we are funding over \$500,000 for the consulting and engineering services that are needed to address:

- Updating subdivision regulations
- Master Land Use Plan
- Annexation Plan
- Master Drainage Plan/Watershed Management
- Zoning Regulations
- Master Roadway plan
- Rate study for water/wastewater
- MS4 and SSO Permitting (regulatory requirements)
- Capital Improvement plan
- Asset management plan

All of these initiatives are putting in place tools that cities like us typically have. We are moving rapidly to catch up.

Fourth, we are transferring almost \$4,000,000 from our Enterprise Fund reserves to fund infrastructure projects to address valid city needs. We are budgeting almost \$2,000,000 dollars of this transfer to bring water line connections to Intrepid/Silver Spur and to Meadow Creek Trail. These additions will replace aging lines for operational efficiency and provide fire-fighting capability to some areas of the city that have lacked this service. We are also funding almost \$250,000 to start the work on an elevated water storage tower in the northern part of our city. This will allow us to maintain water pressure both for household use and for fire-fighting capabilities in the northern part of our city. Additionally, we are funding over \$550,000 to construct a water distribution interconnect that will enhance system reliability. We will also fund about \$400,000 of vehicle replacements and \$200,000 in consulting projects from these transfers. These expenditures have been funded by impact fees and charges on water bills over a period of years. The funds transfer will still leave us a little over \$6,000,000 in the Enterprise Fund reserves.

Our total proposed budget

Our total proposed spend on the General Fund side, including transfers to reserves is \$5,767,000. Our total proposed spend on the Enterprise Fund (Utilities) side is \$8,518,000, including fund transfers for vehicle replacement, capital improvements, and debt service paid by utility revenue.

Impact on your wallets

Our citizens are astute enough to know the basic economic truth that “there are no free lunches.” The strategy that we believe makes the most sense for funding the various initiatives is to use a combination of a modest increase in the overall tax rate and a small transfer from the O&M Reserve fund. The proposed tax rate increase is 1.6 cents per \$100 of value which translates into \$69 per year for a typical \$438,000 Fair Oaks Ranch home. This increase provides about \$263,000 of funding. We also anticipate funding part of our needs by transferring \$165,000 from the General Fund Reserve to the General Fund, which will leave us a balance of about \$1,600,000 in the General Fund Reserve.

OTHER INFRASTRUCTURE NEWS

Street Reconstruction Work

In addition to all the work planned under the new budget, we have existing work under way in the current year. The engineering work for our \$7,000,000 street reconstruction project has been completed. We had the bid opening on August 17th and our engineering consultants have started the work of evaluating the bids to determine best value. We are still anticipating actual “dirt turning” to begin in the October time frame.

GVTC Fiber Installation Work

GVTC has confirmed it will expand its state-of-the art fiber optic technology to residents living in the northern section of our city. The areas impacted will include Rolling Acres Trail, Keeneland Drive and Ralph Fair Road. This work will be done alongside aerial lines connected to utility poles so there will be little impact on property and infrastructure. If the community shows interest in GVTC fiber products, the company will consider expanding its network deeper into Fair Oaks Ranch. Additional work would require trenching in streets and direct bury of the fiber. We will keep you informed as GVTC decision making progresses on their scope of work.

Fair Oaks Ranch welcomes GVTC's fiber investment and applauds the company's transparency in communicating with our city staff about its current and future fiber endeavors. This work is one more enhancement to our quality of life on The Ranch.

FEEDING ORDINANCE

We will remind everyone that our new feeding ordinance goes into effect on October 1. After that date, feeding wildlife is prohibited. Our Wildlife Education Committee has begun their work and will be putting out relevant information periodically.

You can tell things have been very busy around our city. We will continue to keep you informed as we move forward on the various initiatives.

My best to all of you,
Garry Manitzas
Mayor
Fair Oaks Ranch

Porcupines & Woodpeckers vs. trees...

...And the terrorists win! Not only do they win, but the porcupine somehow miraculously does not lose its teeth stripping bark over its lifetime and the woodpecker manages the impossible feat of avoiding traumatic concussions after a lifetime of using its head as a jackhammer on stout tree trunks! Its not even a competition actually since the trees have no means of counter attacks – the best defense they offer is the fact that they are resilient survivors in the face of numerous and simultaneous stressors.

Bark, living cambial tissue, soft tender stems, twigs, leaves and fruit of trees are the major food source of porcupines. They are aided in this acquisition of food by a lifetime guarantee of continued growth of the two main front teeth that gets whittled away by their preferred nutrition source. My experience has shown they are picky not so much on tree species as “mining” bark and cambium from trees that provide a lot of it, that are easily accessed, is not guarded by annoying canines, and offers good (nearby & safe) sleeping spots during the day. I have one customer whose large 10” diameter Purple Plum tree was severely stripped in less than a week (80%) that we were able to put up a non-climb fence around to keep the porcupine away, and we saved it just in the nick of time! They are nocturnal and normally sleep in and blend well into a tree, so they are hard (but not impossible) to hunt or catch in cages. I do not believe smells or “scarecrow” options are viable deterrents. The canine deterrent has its own drawbacks as “Sit Ubu sit” doesn’t work well, and the vets don’t pull quills out of convulsing, foaming at the mouth dogs for hours for free!

Woodpeckers hammer/drill trees (pecking, tapping are not accurate!) an estimated 10 to 12,000 times a day. Very unique physiological designs allow them to absorb the severe impact forces as well as the substantial amount of wood particles exploding back at them. They obtain nutrients primarily from sap flow caused by the damage, the insects found under bark and in hollow trunks by which they obtain entrance by drilling out impressively symmetrical portals into them, and finally from fruits and nuts. They also hammer trees to communicate to other woodpeckers. Possibly the worst damage they cause is not the drilling into hollows for food and nesting but the girdling they do to trunks when they hammer a perfectly symmetrical full circle around a tree’s trunk. Though eating insects is of some value, the girdling is a significant enough concern to consider options to dissuade them from jackhammering your more valuable trees.

Questions or comments this article or previous articles have generated, may be directed to me at: kevin@arborcareandconsulting.com

BUSINESS CLASSIFIEDS

PIANO AND THEORY LESSONS- Offering instruction for beginner to intermediate levels. 15+ years of playing experience, with classical background, and 5+ years teaching experience. Conveniently located in Fair Oaks Ranch. Affordable rates. Call Aleesha at 210.289.9591 or email ahotea07@gmail.com.

Business classifieds (offering a service or product line for profit) are \$50, limit 40 words, please contact Peel, Inc. Sales Office @ 512-263-9181 or advertising@PEELinc.com.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Do you have an opinion that you'd like to see printed in this newsletter? Send it to us and we will publish it in the next issue. Email your document to fairoaksranch@peelinc.com.



A vibrant, floral-themed poster for the Boerne Handmade Market. The word "Boerne" is written in a large, elegant, black cursive font at the top. Below it, "HANDMADE MARKET" is written in a smaller, black, sans-serif font. The date "Saturday OCTOBER 29, 2016" is prominently displayed in a mix of fonts, with "Saturday" in a large, flowing script and "OCTOBER 29, 2016" in a bold, blocky font. The time "9AM-4PM" is written in a smaller, black, sans-serif font. The location "Kendall County Fairgrounds" is written in a large, bold, black, sans-serif font. Below the location, it says "accepting vendor applications" in a smaller, black, sans-serif font. At the bottom, it says "Email us for SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES" in a smaller, black, sans-serif font, followed by the website "www.BOERNHANDMADEMARKET.COM" and "follow us on:" with icons for Instagram and Facebook.

**NOT AVAILABLE
ONLINE**

The Fair Oaks Gazette is a private publication published by Peel, Inc. It is not sanctioned by any homeowners association or organization, nor is it subject to the approval of any homeowners association or organization, nor is it intended, nor implied to replace any publication that may be published by or on behalf of any homeowners association or organization. At no time will any source be allowed to use The Fair Oaks Gazette contents, or loan said contents, to others in anyway, shape or form, nor in any media, website, print, film, e-mail, electrostatic copy, fax, or etc. for the purpose of solicitation, commercial use, or any use for profit, political campaigns, or other self amplification, under penalty of law without written or expressed permission from Peel, Inc. The information in the newsletter is exclusively for the private use of Peel, Inc.

Articles and ads in this newsletter express the opinions of their authors and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of Peel, Inc. or its employees. Peel, Inc. is not responsible for the accuracy of any facts stated in articles submitted by others. The publisher also assumes no responsibility for the advertising content with this publication. All warranties and representations made in the advertising content are solely that of the advertiser and any such claims regarding its content should be taken up with the advertiser.

* The publisher assumes no liability with regard to its advertisers for misprints or failure to place advertising in this publication except for the actual cost of such advertising.

* Although every effort is taken to avoid mistakes and/or misprints, the publisher assumes no responsibility for any errors of information or typographical mistakes, except as limited to the cost of advertising as stated above or in the case of misinformation, a printed retraction/correction.

* Under no circumstances shall the publisher be held liable for incidental or consequential damages, inconvenience, loss of business or services, or any other liabilities from failure to publish, or from failure to publish in a timely manner, except as limited to liabilities stated above.



**The Children's Hospital
of San Antonio™**

CHRISTUS Health

Everything for our children.™

**Primary
Care**

Your Dominion Crossing pediatricians!

Welcoming new patients and same-day appointments.

Our expert group provides full-service pediatric care from birth to 18 years, including:

- Free prenatal consultations
- Well-child visits
- Care of chronic illnesses, asthma, ADHD, etc.
- Treatment of minor injuries
- Vaccinations and immunizations
- Care of acute illnesses
- School and sports physicals
- Hearing and vision screening

**Call 210.698.7663 to schedule
your child's appointment today.**

**The Children's Hospital of San Antonio Primary Care
Dominion Crossing**

21727 IH-10 West • Suite 205
San Antonio, Texas 78257



Board-Certified Pediatricians

Theresa Willis, MD, FAAP
Courtney Smith, MD, FAAP
Juan Jose "Joe" Ferreris, MD, MHA, FAAP

www.chofsa.org/primarycare

Why drive all over town...We are just around the corner.

Hill Country

wine & spirits

Liquor
Beer
Cigars

Exit #546 Fair Oaks Parkway
28604 IH-10 W, Suite 1
Boerne, TX 78006



**Best Wine selection in
Fair Oaks Ranch!**

*Locally owned by Fair Oaks
Ranch residents*

830-755-6065



www.hillcountrywineandspirits.com

On The Move Inc.

830-755-2474 www.onthemovevehicles.com

@otmusedvehicles

**Check out our
preowned inventory**

2825 IH-10 W
Boerne, TX 78006

We offer late model, low mileage, foreign and domestic pre-owned cars, trucks and SUVs. And with access to a network of more than 1,700 dealers nationwide, if we don't have what you are looking for, we can find it. Browse our inventory online or call us today!





PEEL, INC.

308 Meadowlark St.
Lakeway, TX 78734-4717

PRSRST STD
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
PEEL, INC.

FOR

WAGNER is #1 in SALES the past Decade in Fair Oaks Ranch!

OVER 70 MILLION SOLD IN 2015 ACCORDING TO THE SAN ANTONIO BUSINESS JOURNAL

- San Antonio Business Journal ranked The Wagner Team the #1 TEAM in San Antonio & the Hill Country in 2013 and 2014 across all Real Estate Companies.
- Keller Williams is the #1 Brokerage Company in Fair Oaks.
- Wagners are #1 in Fair Oaks Ranch over all other Realtors or "Individual Brokers" by a very wide margin.
- 34 Year Resident & Member of the Club. Expansive LOCAL NETWORK & KNOWLEDGE that is unparalleled.
- 10 Time Consecutive Platinum 50 Winner & Texas Monthly 5-Star Realtor.
- Trinity graduate with numerous industry designations & certifications.
- Lives right around the corner!



Wendi Harrelson

Team Leader, Regional
Area Director, South Texas
Keller Williams Realty

"Congratulations David on being the number one producer in Fair Oaks Ranch over the last 10 years. According to the San Antonio Multiple Listing Service you have had, by a wide margin, more sales, more listings, more buyers and more transactions than all other realtors or individual brokers from all companies in Fair oaks Ranch!"

DAVE WAGNER 210.862.7616



HUNTER WAGNER
210-852-5462



**ALL TEAM MEMBERS LIVE & WORK
IN FAIR OAKS RANCH
EVERYDAY!**



TRAVIS WAGNER
210-323-1346