

TO: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council
From: Paul A. Hofmann, City Manager
Date: July 9, 2021
Subject: Weekly Memo, July 5-9, 2021



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Sign Code Public Messaging and Grace Period

As discussed during Council consideration of the recent amendments to the sign code, we will be conducting a substantial public information effort toward informing businesses and residents of sign code regulations. Our objectives are to ensure:

- 1) Consistent enforcement of the code
- 2) Public awareness of sign code requirements
- 3) Fair and reasonable opportunities for sign owners to comply by obtaining permits for currently unpermitted signs, and removing illegal signs, by January 2022.

Enforcement using citations will be suspended until January of 2022. Until that time, the City will target existing sign owners with our messaging, create a self-contained sign code “book” for distribution and inclusion on our website, create a frequently asked questions document, a sign code webpage, conduct a series of post card direct mailing, and create an information brochure.

As requested by Council, we’ll make sure we make personal contact with current sign owners and utilize our contact list for targeted messaging. Over the next few months, we’ll also pay attention to feedback we receive and respond accordingly.

Letters regarding CDBG Haz-Mit Grant Process

Attached is a letter from Mayor Schroeder to the General Land Office requesting reconsideration of the GLO’s scoring of our recent CDBG Haz-Mit grant application for the Gills Branch drainage project. As requested by Council, our follow-up on why the Gills Branch project didn’t score more favorably pointed out that our “social vulnerability score” as determined by the GLO included Bastrop County income data, rather than City of Bastrop data. While a portion of the Gills Branch project impacts the County, the majority is within the City, and we believe using City data is more appropriate, and more advantageous to the scoring.

The letter also addresses a recent GLO decision to forego a second round of competitive funding for Hurricane Harvey-related CDBG funding, and instead provide direct funding to Harris County. The Mayor’s letter suggests that given that decision, our request for reconsideration of the Gills Branch project deserves special attention.

Also attached are the Mayor’s letter to our state and local legislative delegation apprising them of the situation and requesting their assistance.

We appreciate the efforts of Langford Community Management Services in sorting out the scoring of our projects and suggesting a way forward.

July 12 Joint City Council/Bastrop Economic Development Council Meeting

The July 12 joint meeting with the Bastrop Economic Development Council will begin at 5:00 pm and will take place in the Council Chambers. We will provide a boxed sandwich dinner.

Trey Job, Genora Young, Jean Riemenschneider, and I have worked to provide a meeting format that results in positive and helpful direction for important future decision making by both the City Council and the EDC.

The meeting will include an overview of economic development corporation statutory requirements by BEDC counsel Charlie Zech. Trey Job will overview City Council policy direction as it regards development, and that will lead into a discussion led by Genora Young and Trey on how current BEDC strategic action items align with City Council Focus Areas. We will also provide information on how the current development process works, including BEDC involvement in that process.

I'm looking forward to how that background information will guide discussion on "areas of common ground". Specific topics will be the development of the Industrial Park, the identification of developable land in our jurisdiction, and potential funding of projects included in the Capital Improvement Plan.

Solid Waste Services Contract

Please see the attached memo from Tracey Moffett recommending we implement a contract extension to our current solid waste services contract.

I believe the recommendation makes sense and plan to execute the one-year extension. Please let me know if you would like to discuss before I proceed.

Indictment in DWI and Intoxication Assault Case

The defendant in the case regarding the April 1 accident involving Assistant Fire Chief DeArmitt and Bastrop Police Sergeant Sanford has been indicted. Thank you, Sergeant Daniel McManus, for presenting the case to the Bastrop County Grand Jury.

American Recovery Plan

This week we received guidance on how the distribution of American Recovery Plan dollars to Texas cities will be administered. The Texas Division of Emergency Management will oversee the process and has published guidelines. Our first deadline for submitting information is August 2. Our plan, as previously discussed, is to apply our \$2 million allocation to water and wastewater improvement projects.

Board and Commission Open House

The Board and Commission Open House is scheduled for July 15 at 4:00 p.m. in the City Council Chambers. Staff Liaisons will be in attendance to explain the roles of the boards to prospective applicants. We have invited Board chairs to be in attendance, as well. The meeting has been publicized on social media and through our stakeholders contact list.

Pecan Tree Removal

Curtis Hancock has negotiated a plan for the removal of the large pecan tree in Fisherman's Park. After receiving several proposals, we've chosen a local contractor to remove the fallen tree at no cost to the City. The contractor will mill the tree, ensure that all wood material is utilized for benches, tables, and other wood products, and will provide two benches from the fallen tree to the City. The work to remove the tree is scheduled to begin today, weather permitting.

Active Attack Training for City employees

Thank you to Chief Clint Nagy for conducting "active attack" training for city employees earlier this week. Chief Nagy overviewed the characteristics of active shooters, recent nationwide trends, and how city employees should protect themselves in instances of an active attack.

Overheard at City Hall

Episode 7 of the Overheard at City Hall podcast features a great conversation with Trey Job, Assistant City Manager for Community Development. Watch this episode here: <https://youtu.be/M636Yk4FzLU>

Upcoming Community Events

Corvette Invasion – July 16th-18th – Bastrop Convention Center

Contractor Forum – August 11th - Council Chambers

Bastrop Chamber of Commerce Ribbon Cutting for Children's Advocacy Center – July 26th

Bastrop Chamber of Commerce Ribbon Cutting for Chic-fil-a – July 27th

Scheduled Time out of Office

I am planning a day off on Monday July 19.

Weekly Memo Webpage

We are developing a site to house these Weekly Memos.

Future Agenda Items

July 27, 2021

- Receive the City Manager's submitted budget for FY 2022
- Receive quarterly presentations from Bastrop EDC, Visit Bastrop, and our Community Assets
- Receive presentation for Bastrop County MUD 3 and 4
- Interlocal agreement with Bastrop County for 911 addressing
- Consider FY 2022 community support group funding requests
- Consider approval of the PID Finance Agreement PFA with Continental Homes. (Viridian Development)

August 10, 2021

- City Manager Evaluation
- Financial Management Policy and Purchasing Policy
- Third quarter report
- Contract for new fencing in Hunters Crossing
- SCADA Maintenance Contract

Attachments

- TML Legislative Update Number
- General Land Office Mitigation Letters
- Solid Waste Services Contract extension memo from Tracey Moffett
- July City Employee Memo from City Manager
- TML Training Schedule



Legislative UPDATE

July 9, 2021
Number 26

Governor Announces Special Legislative Session Agenda

On Wednesday, Governor Abbott announced the [agenda](#) for the special session that began on July 8. The following items are on the agenda:

- **Bail Reform:** Legislation reforming the bail system in Texas to protect the public from accused criminals released on bail.
- **Election Integrity:** Legislation strengthening the integrity of elections in Texas.
- **Border Security:** Legislation providing funding to support law-enforcement agencies, counties, and other strategies as part of Texas' comprehensive border security plan.
- **Social Media Censorship:** Legislation safeguarding the freedom of speech by protecting social-media users from being censored by social-media companies based on the user's expressed viewpoints, including by providing a legal remedy for those wrongfully excluded from a platform.
- **Article X Funding:** Legislation providing appropriations to the Legislature and legislative agencies in Article X of the General Appropriations Act.
- **Family Violence Prevention:** Legislation similar to Senate Bill 1109 from the 87th Legislature, Regular Session, requiring schools to provide appropriate education to

middle- and high-school students about dating violence, domestic violence, and child abuse, but that recognized the right of parents to opt their children out of the instruction.

- **Youth Sports:** Legislation identical to Senate Bill 29 as passed by the Texas Senate in the 87th Legislature, Regular Session, disallowing a student from competing in University Interscholastic League athletic competitions designated for the sex opposite to the student's sex at birth.
- **Abortion-Inducing Drugs:** Legislation similar to Senate Bill 394 from the 87th Legislature, Regular Session, which prohibits people from providing abortion-inducing drugs by mail or delivery service, strengthens the law applicable to the reporting of abortions and abortion complications, and ensures that no abortion-inducing drugs are provided unless there is voluntary and informed consent.
- **Critical Race Theory:** Legislation similar to House Bill 3979 concerning critical race theory as originally passed by the Texas Senate in the 87th Legislature, Regular Session.
- **Appropriations:** Legislation providing appropriations from additional available general revenue for the following purposes:
 - Property tax relief;
 - Enhanced protection for the safety of children in Texas' foster-care system by attracting and retaining private providers for the system; and
 - To better safeguard the state from potential cybersecurity threats.

The League will summarize city-related bills (whether or not they are currently included in the governor's special session agenda) starting in next week's edition of the *Legislative Update*.

TDEM Releases Guidance on Stimulus Fund Disbursement for Small Cities

On Friday, July 2, the Texas Division of Emergency Management [sent notice](#) to Texas "non-entitlement units" of local government (typically cities under 50,000 population) that TDEM will soon announce the availability of federal stimulus dollars allocated to these cities under the American Rescue Plan's Coronavirus Local Fiscal Recovery Fund (CLFRF). According to the notice, the state will formally apply to receive the federal funds on August 2, 2021.

Included in the notice is a [CLFRF timeline](#) that details what steps cities need to take to request funding. TDEM warns that cities that do not complete the required steps by August 2 may lose access to their CLFRF allotment. **For this reason, it is imperative that cities act quickly to complete their submission packages and send them to TDEM to receive this funding.**

The full list of CLFRF allocations to non-entitlement Texas cities can be accessed [here](#).

TDEM will also offer CLFRF training sessions via Zoom every business day during July, starting July 7. Interested city officials and employees can register for the training sessions [here](#).

TDEM has created [a dedicated webpage](#) for CLFRF information, including information on how to apply for funding and proper uses of CLFRF revenue. The page also includes links to U.S. Department of Treasury guidance, as well as a Texas-specific [FAQ document](#).

The League will continue to provide updates on CLFRF disbursement as new information becomes available.

Speaker Phelan Announces New Select Committee

On Tuesday, Speaker Phelan announced the creation of the [House Select Committee on Constitutional Rights and Remedies](#). In his [press release](#), Speaker Phelan created the committee for the “purpose of studying certain issues that will be submitted by the Governor for the House’s consideration in the upcoming special session, specifically on matters relating to the constitutional rights of Texans and the entities, activates, and democratic institutions responsible for the administration and protection of those rights. The issues that the Legislature will be tasked with undertaking are by their very nature complex, and a select committee with expanded membership and expertise is the ideal forum for ensuring their thoughtful consideration.”

Stay Engaged During Special Session: Grassroots Involvement Program

During the special session, Texas cities will face many challenges and opportunities. TML will need to mobilize our membership at key points during special session. The Grassroots Involvement Program (GRIP) is one way to do so. Our GRIP survey focuses on a variety of items including your areas of expertise and involvement with other professional organizations. Most importantly, the GRIP survey asks how well you know various state legislators and if you are willing to communicate with those legislators during the session.

If you have a relationship with your legislator(s) or want to be more involved during session, please take the time to complete the [GRIP survey](#). Past efforts have proven that such participation is a highly effective tool.

We ask that you complete the survey as soon as possible.

Post-Session Update: Paid Quarantine Leave for First Responders

[House Bill 2073](#) was signed by the governor on June 15, 2021 and is effective now. The bill requires a city to adopt a paid quarantine leave policy for fire fighters, peace officers, detention officers, and emergency medical technicians (as applicable for each city) who are employed by, appointed by, or elected to one of those positions. The policy comes into effect when someone who holds one of those positions is ordered by a supervisor or local health authority to quarantine or isolate due to a possible or known exposure to a communicable disease while on duty. The policy is a stand-alone mandate that is unrelated to workers’ compensation benefits.

The League's legal department has received several inquiries about the bill and has prepared an [example policy](#) for its implementation. Of course, only a city that employs someone in one of the positions mentioned above needs the policy. Also, the benefits provided under a policy may be different for different cities. As such, the example is a starting place only. Each city's attorney should carefully review its city's policies prior to adoption.

Post-Session Update: Building Inspections

[S.B. 877](#) adds a section to Chapter 214 of the Texas Local Government Code expanding the list of specific individuals permitted to perform building inspections during declared disasters. Under the new provisions the following individuals may perform inspections during a declared disaster for compliance with building codes: (1) certified inspectors; (2) city building inspectors; (3) government building inspectors who have been approved by the city to perform inspections during a disaster; and (4) licensed engineers.

Because this bill is effective immediately and Texas is still operating under a statewide disaster declaration – at least for now – your city could receive inspection reports from different people.

Note that these “inspectors” must comply with the city's building regulations and policies and give the city notice of an inspection within 30 days of the inspection. The city may prescribe the format of the inspection notice but cannot collect an additional inspection fee based on the inspection being conducted by a person pursuant to these provisions.

Post-Session Update: Responding to Disasters

[S.B. 968](#), effective June 16, 2021, made several changes related to a city's response to emergencies or disasters. The bill provides that a mayor may not issue an order during a declared state of disaster or local disaster to address a pandemic disaster that limits or prohibits: (1) housing and commercial construction activities, including related activities involving the sale, transportation, and installation of manufactured homes; (2) the provision of governmental services for title searches, notary services, and recording services in support of mortgages and real estate services and transactions; (3) residential and commercial real estate services, including settlement services; or (4) essential maintenance, manufacturing, design, operation, inspection, security, and construction services for essential products, services, and supply chain relief efforts.

S.B. 968 also prohibits a city, other than for health care purposes, from: (1) issuing to a third party a vaccine passport, vaccine pass, or other standardized documentation to certify an individual's COVID-19 vaccination status; or (2) otherwise publishing or sharing any individual's COVID-19 immunization record or similar health information.

Additionally, the bill provides that, in the event of a disaster or other emergency as determined by the Texas Division of Emergency Management (TDEM), TDEM shall collaborate with first responders, local governments, and local health departments, to conduct wellness checks on

medically fragile individuals (as defined by TDEM) within 24 hours of such events. The wellness checks must include an automated phone call, a personalized call, and if the person is unresponsive to calls, an in-person check. The bill requires each city to adopt procedures to conduct wellness checks in compliance with minimum standards adopted by TDEM. At this time, TDEM has not published its minimum standards. The League will continue to monitor this issue and provide updates as new information becomes available.

COVID-19 Update (No. 193)

All pandemic-related updates, including information about the American Rescue Plan's city related provisions, will be in the [Legislative Update newsletter](#) from now on.

- **Open Meetings Act:** In March 2020, as Texans worked to mitigate the spread of COVID-19, Governor Abbott's office granted the attorney general's request to suspend certain open-meeting statutes. The temporary suspension allows, among other things, for telephonic or videoconference meetings of governmental bodies that are accessible to the public in an effort to reduce in-person meetings that assemble large groups of people.

On June 30, 2021, [the governor's office approved a request by the attorney general to lift those suspensions](#). The suspensions will lift at 12:01 a.m. on September 1, 2021. Thus, as of September 1, 2021, all provisions of the Open Meetings Act will be effective and all Texas governmental bodies subject to the Open Meetings Act must conduct their meetings in full compliance with the Open Meetings Act as written in state law.

Reminder: TML Coronavirus materials are archived by date [here](#) and by subject [here](#).

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Heart of the Lost Pines / Est. 1832

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July 7, 2021

Texas General Land Office
Commissioner George P. Bush
P.O. Box 12873
Austin, Texas 78711-2873

RE: City of Bastrop CDBG-MIT Applications

Dear Commissioner Bush,

The City of Bastrop respectfully requests a review of the scoring process used for our Gills Branch application in the amount of \$11,354,907.76. This project did not receive an award in what we understand may be the only round of competitive applications. For this project, the City received only two points for the Social Vulnerability Index as the GLO used Bastrop County's data rather than the City of Bastrop for this scoring criteria. This project is completely within the City limits serving citizens of the City. However, because a small physical portion of the block groups represented in this application extends into the County, the GLO determined it to be a County benefit and therefore used the County's Social Vulnerability Index.

In total, 28 Census Blocks, 12 of which have zero population, and lie just outside of the city limits. A total of 3905 beneficiaries are identified in this application in Census Tract 9504, Block Groups 1, 2 and 3. The 16 Blocks that have some persons living in them represent a total population of 633. Of the persons in the identified beneficiary area, 84% live within the city limits of Bastrop. The entirety of the project lies within the city limits.

This project is intended only for the City, and should have received eight points rather than two, which would have given us a score of 76.47, and would have been funded in the competitive application process.

The GLO guidance for this scoring factor scored applications based on impacts from the hurricane, and other criteria. The Gills Branch project was not funded in the first group (about \$1.2 billion), but we believe it merits funding due to the scoring discrepancy and because it is LMI qualified, which is an important HUD rule for use of these funds.

Sincerely,


Connie Schroeder
Mayor

CC: US Senator Ted Cruz and US Congressman Michael McCaul
Mark Haven, GLO Recovery



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July 7, 2021

The Honorable John Cornyn
221 W. 6th. Street, Suite 1530
Austin, Texas 78701

RE: General Land Office Mitigation Funding
Competitive Round

Dear Senator Cornyn,

The City of Bastrop appreciates all that you and your office does to represent us. We are writing today to ask for your help and support for our request to Commissioner George P. Bush of the Texas General Land Office (GLO) to review and fund a much-needed drainage project. You recall that HUD made \$4.2 billion in Mitigation Funds available to Texas after Hurricane Harvey. These funds are being managed by the GLO. GLO, with significant public input, submitted a required Action Plan for the use of the funds which was approved by HUD. From this Action Plan, GLO published guidelines for local governments to apply for funding of qualifying projects for a first round of competition for \$1 billion. Indicated in the State Action Plan, guidelines, FAQ's and on the website, GLO also stated there would be a second round of competition in the amount of \$1.2 billion dollars.

With the release of the scores and announcement of selected projects for funding, GLO has changed their mind and are redirecting \$750 million to Houston/Harris County. The press releases note that a second round of competition will not be held, and the remainder of the funds will be directed into a Method of Distribution process. GLO is in the process of preparing an amendment to the Action Plan to mirror the decisions they have made.

For the first round of competition, the City of Bastrop submitted applications for four projects within the City limits. One of the four applications submitted, the Gills Branch project in the amount of \$11,354,907.76, was not selected. With a review of the scoring for the project, it was noted that the City only received two points for the Social Vulnerability Index because the GLO used Bastrop County's data rather than the City's. This project is fully within the City limits, and the beneficiaries are within the City limits. However, because a small portion of a block group extended into the County, the GLO determined it to be a County benefit, and therefore used the County's Social Vulnerability Index. The City should have received eight points rather than two, which would have given us a score of 76.47, and would have funded the project in the first round.



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We also believe that GLO has not followed their own and HUD's rules regarding these funds and that the second competition should occur.

Your assistance with our ask is greatly appreciated. Please let me know if you need any further information.

Sincerely,

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July 7, 2021

The Honorable Michael T. McCaul
3301 Northland Drive, Suite 212
Austin, Texas 78731

RE: General Land Office Mitigation Funding
Competitive Round

Dear Representative McCaul,

The City of Bastrop appreciates all that you and your office does to represent us. We are writing today to ask for your help and support for our request to Commissioner George P. Bush of the Texas General Land Office (GLO) to review and fund a much-needed drainage project. You recall that HUD made \$4.2 billion in Mitigation Funds available to Texas after Hurricane Harvey. These funds are being managed by the GLO. GLO, with significant public input, submitted a required Action Plan for the use of the funds which was approved by HUD. From this Action Plan, GLO published guidelines for local governments to apply for funding of qualifying projects for a first round of competition for \$1 billion. Indicated in the State Action Plan, guidelines, FAQ's and on the website, GLO also stated there would be a second round of competition in the amount of \$1.2 billion dollars.

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July 7, 2021

The Honorable Sarah Eckhardt

PO Box 12068

Capital Station

Austin, Texas 78711

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Your assistance with our ask is greatly appreciated. Please let me know if you need any further information.

Sincerely,

Connie Schroeder
Mayor



BASTROPTX

Heart of the Lost Pines / Est. 1832

MAYOR

Connie Schroeder

cschroeder@cityofbastrop.org

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Place 4

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City Manager

Paul A. Hofmann

phofmann@cityofbastrop.org



1311 Chestnut Street
P. O. Box 427
Bastrop, Texas 78602

512-332-8800

www.cityofbastrop.org

July 7, 2021

The Honorable Ted Cruz
300 E. 8th. Street, Suite 961
Austin, Texas 78701

RE: General Land Office Mitigation Funding
Competitive Round

Dear Senator Cruz,

The City of Bastrop appreciates all that you and your office does to represent us. We are writing today to ask for your help and support for our request to Commissioner George P. Bush of the Texas General Land Office (GLO) to review and fund a much-needed drainage project. You recall that HUD made \$4.2 billion in Mitigation Funds available to Texas after Hurricane Harvey. These funds are being managed by the GLO. GLO, with significant public input, submitted a required Action Plan for the use of the funds which was approved by HUD. From this Action Plan, GLO published guidelines for local governments to apply for funding of qualifying projects for a first round of competition for \$1 billion. Indicated in the State Action Plan, guidelines, FAQ's and on the website, GLO also stated there would be a second round of competition in the amount of \$1.2 billion dollars.

With the release of the scores and announcement of selected projects for funding, GLO has changed their mind and are redirecting \$750 million to Houston/Harris County. The press releases note that a second round of competition will not be held, and the remainder of the funds will be directed into a Method of Distribution process. GLO is in the process of preparing an amendment to the Action Plan to mirror the decisions they have made.

For the first round of competition, the City of Bastrop submitted applications for four projects within the City limits. One of the four applications submitted, the Gills Branch project in the amount of \$11,354,907.76, was not selected. With a review of the scoring for the project, it was noted that the City only received two points for the Social Vulnerability Index because the GLO used Bastrop County's data rather than the City's. This project is fully within the City limits, and the beneficiaries are within the City limits. However, because a small portion of a block group extended into the County, the GLO determined it to be a County benefit, and therefore used the County's Social Vulnerability Index. The City should have received eight points rather than two, which would have given us a score of 76.47, and would have funded the project in the first round.



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July 7, 2021

The Honorable John Cyrier

PO Box 2910

Austin, Texas 78768

RE: General Land Office Mitigation Funding
Competitive Round

Dear Representative Cyrier,

The City of Bastrop appreciates all that you and your office does to represent us. We are writing today to ask for your help and support for our request to Commissioner George P. Bush of the Texas General Land Office (GLO) to review and fund a much-needed drainage project. You recall that HUD made \$4.2 billion in Mitigation Funds available to Texas after Hurricane Harvey. These funds are being managed by the GLO. GLO, with significant public input, submitted a required Action Plan for the use of the funds which was approved by HUD. From this Action Plan, GLO published guidelines for local governments to apply for funding of qualifying projects for a first round of competition for \$1 billion. Indicated in the State Action Plan, guidelines, FAQ's and on the website, GLO also stated there would be a second round of competition in the amount of \$1.2 billion dollars.

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Sincerely,

Connie Schroeder
Mayor

T0: Paul A. Hoffman, City Manager
FROM: Tracey Moffett, Supervisor Utility Customer Service
CC: Tracy Waldron, CFO
DATE: July 2, 2021
SUBJECT: Solid Waste Contract



=====

The City of Bastrop's seven-year contract with Waste Connection (formerly Progressive Waste) will come to term August 31, 2022. Waste Connections has provided overall good customer service to our residents and commercial customers over the last 6 (six) years. Though we have experienced some mishaps with some of the service, Waste Connects has consistently been prompt to correct any errors in their service. We hold them accountable for all reported misses that occur with customers, and their supervisors have been responsive to recover the occurrences.

Any time we consider changing contractors for solid waste service within the City of Bastrop, we must consider all the affects it will have to our residents and commercial customers alike. Even if our requirements of the contract maintain no changes to the schedules or service value with a new vendor, we must consider the turmoil that is generated for our commercial customers in having to change their individual service contracts.

Our assigned representative from Waste Connections, also their District Manager, has been consistently accommodating to listen to and assist with our city's needs. It is my recommendation as supervisor of Utility Customer Service that we utilize the one to three (1 to 3) year optional renewal in our existing agreement to give staff ample time to gather optimal solid waste contract alternatives for everyone.

We will be sending Waste Connections a letter by August 31, 2021, to inform them our intention to exercise the option to extend the contract for an additional year.

T0: City of Bastrop Employees
FROM: Paul A. Hofmann, City Manager
DATE: July 6, 2021
SUBJECT: Independence



=====
Last month's memo, which you probably haven't committed to memory, mentioned that we Americans believe the pursuit of happiness is an inalienable right. Pursuing that theme, the Declaration of Independence, which we celebrated this past weekend, declares our inalienable rights are "endowed by a Creator". That foundational thought serves as the underpinning of this country's form of government.

The Founders intended for us to be independent of British tyranny. They also intended for us to be free of tyranny within our own borders and set up a governmental structure with "the people" in charge of governmental affairs.

This applies to the local level, as well. It isn't really true or proper for us to think the people are dependent on us for safe streets, homes, or businesses. Nor are they dependent on us for good and timely information, and for access to decision-making. On the contrary, we're accountable to them. If we don't behave properly, they get to make changes. We're not benevolent dictators, we're humble public servants.

Sometimes, though, we red-blooded Americans take this idea of independence and twist it into something else. We take pride in doing stuff by ourselves and not depending on others for help. We employees of the City of Bastrop certainly know better. No department gets by without help from another.

The Founders of our country knew better, too. Thankfully, they understood that there is something out there bigger and stronger than any of us. It is wrong to think any government is the source of our inalienable rights, rather we are actually quite dependent on that source for our basic rights. Government's job is to protect those rights, and to not infringe upon them. It isn't government's job to take them away, or to add to them.

This weekend's Patriotic Festival was a wonderful celebration of who we are as a city, a community, and as Americans. I was proud to observe the hard work of so many city employees from several different departments to make sure people had fun and were kept safe. The event wouldn't have been a success without you.

Thank you. Stay safe and be careful of the heat.

UPCOMING TRAINING

Below are future training opportunities. If you are interested in attending any of the training please notify the City Secretary and she will take care of the registration for you.

TML Small Cities' Problem-Solving Clinic

Date: July 15, 2021

Time: All Day

Location: Austin

TML Region 10 Meeting

Date: July 20, 2021

Time: 5:30 p.m.

Location: Virtual

City Hall Essentials - Whose Turn Is It Anyway? Using Parliamentary Procedure for More Efficient Meetings

Date: July 28, 2021

Time: 1:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Location: virtual

TML-TAMCC Newly Elected City Officials' Orientation

Date: August 12, 2021 – August 13, 2021

Time: All Day

Location: Bastrop Convention Center

TML Annual Conference and Exhibition

Date: October 6, 2021 - October 8, 2021

Time: All Day

Location: Houston

If you are interested in attending the TML Annual Conference please let me know by July 19th. Registration opens at 10:00 a.m. July 20th and the slots fill up very quickly.

TML Economic Development Conference

Date: November 11, 2021 – November 12, 2021

Time: All Day

Location: Bastrop