

TO: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council
From: Paul A. Hofmann, City Manager
Date: October 15, 2021
Subject: Weekly Memo, October 11 – October 15, 2021



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Cemetery Tour

A cemetery tour conducted by the Bastrop Museum and Visitor Center will take place on Saturday, October 23, 2021, at Fairview Cemetery. Council Members wishing to participate can choose between Tour 1, beginning at 3:00 p.m., or Tour 2, beginning at 4:30 p.m. on October 23. Nicole DeGuzman, Executive Director, is requesting RSVP's. Nicole can be contacted at 512-303-0057 or nicole@bchs1832.org.

October 28 – 3rd Annual Women's Leadership Luncheon

The Family Crisis Center is hosting a Women's Leadership Luncheon on October 28 at the Convention Center. One of the featured speakers is Assistant Chief Vicky Steffanic. Several staff members plan to attend.

Please let Ann or Victoria know if you would like to attend, and we'll make sure to make the arrangements.

Domestic Violence Awareness Month

We have been working to better engage our Community Support Groups through support beyond the fiscal support of their contractual arrangements each year. This has been exercised through greater communication, use of our platforms and networks to get out their messaging, and incorporation of the groups at our community programming events. The City was approached by the Family Crisis Center to discuss supporting this year's Domestic Violence Awareness Month through greater incorporation of City buildings in the going purple theme. The cost to do so was \$724.82 for lights, extension cords, brackets, and colored light film which came from the Special Events budget. The colored film can be changed to any color the City would like to support our other Community Support Group causes.

Bastrop Boo Bash

This year's Boo Bash will take place on Saturday, October 30, at Mayfest Park. The primary reason for choosing the Saturday date, as opposed to Sunday, October 31, is based on the inclusion of the Fire Department and Police Department in this year's event. In recent years the event was put on by the Bastrop YMCA, with the City providing a supporting role. For last year's event the Fire Department helped with the drive through traffic to ensure safety for volunteers, attendees, and Loop 150 traffic while our Police Department was focused on the safety of the large crowds on Pecan Street, Hunters Crossing, Pecan Park, and other neighborhoods during Halloween night. This year the Fire Department is in the role of host, with many City Departments participating in decorating assigned areas and passing out candy. Both Police and Fire will be on scene to help with traffic control as well as decorate and hand out candy at Boo Bash and be available to help ensure the safety of our large crowds on Halloween night.

Habit for Humanities contract extension

The organization has been unable to spend the community support funding awarded to them for FY2021, due to COVID challenges. They have asked for additional time to spend these funds. We have communicated with them that the FY2022 community support funding will stay on hold until they are able to spend the FY2021 funding in full.

Upcoming Training

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

- **TML Economic Development Conference**

Date: November 11, 2021 – November 12, 2021

Time: All Day

Location: Bastrop

- **TML-TAMCC Elected Officials' Conference**

Date: February 2, 2022 - February 4, 2022

Time: All Day

Location: Sugar Land

Scheduled Time Out of Office

I have planned vacation time Thursday, October 21 thru Monday, October 25.

October 20 Building Bastrop University

The next session of Building Bastrop University will be held on October 20 and will concentrate on electrical trades.

River Loop Sidewalk Project

This week we published a message to social media announcing the commencement of construction on the River Loop Sidewalk Project. Construction was planned to begin on Thursday, October 14, weather permitting. As it turns out, weather was not permitting, and the start day has been pushed to Monday or Tuesday, October 18-19, depending on how quickly conditions dry-out.

The project is expected to last approximately 6 months. Dates are subject to change due to weather or as needed.

The trail will connect the June Hill Pape Riverwalk, Loop 150, and Main Street to a bicycle/pedestrian bridge that is part of the ongoing TxDOT improvements over the Colorado River.

Citizens should not experience any service interruptions (e.g., water, wastewater) during this time related to this project.

September 18 Household Hazardous Waste Event

The City of Bastrop participates in partnership with Bastrop County and the cities of Smithville and Elgin on periodic household hazardous waste events conducted in Smithville. The most recent event was held on September. Ninety-Nine households participated, 30.5% of which were from the 78602-zip code. Over 450 gallons of paint and 200 pounds of batteries were collected. A request to renew the city's agreement to participate will be scheduled on a future City Council agenda.

MESA Conference held at Convention Center

BP&L staff attended the 2021 Municipal Electric Service Association (MESA) Annual Distribution Conference held at the Bastrop Convention Center on October 13. Conference organizers were thrilled with the accommodations at the Convention Center and the customer service.

October 14 Structure Fire

Bastrop Firefighters promptly responded to a structure fire on the 600 block of Cypress the evening of October 14, successfully limiting the damage to the interior of the house. There were no injuries.

Library Server Fail

A storage array failed in the server handling the library's public computing infrastructure early Wednesday morning. IT was able to recover the array to limited capacity Friday morning, and the public computers are currently operating on a minimal scale to maximize reliability of services. The adult computers are available for use, and printing services are limited. The library server is reaching its end-of-life and we are working to expedite the replacement process that we have been planning for several months now.

October 14 Board and Commissions Appreciation Banquet

Thank you for your attendance at the annual Board and Commission Banquet. I'm sure attendees appreciated banquet. I'm sure attendees appreciated the attendance of the full City Council and enjoyed the presentations by Mayor Schroeder and Mayor Pro Tem Nelson.

Future Agenda Items

October 26, 2021

- Visit Bastrop End of Year Report
- Texas Community Development Block Grant requirements
- Art Immersion Agreement
- Authorization to proceed with bond sale
- MUD Policy Presentation
- Zoning Concept Scheme 1st reading Farm Street Village
- Drainage Master Plan contract
- Broadband feasibility contract
- Zoning Board of Adjustment appointment confirmation
- Ratification of water main contract

- Voting system to be used by Bastrop County for elections
- FY 21 Budget Amendment

November 9, 2021

- Work session: economic development policy direction
- FY 2021 4th Quarterly Report for July-September 2021
- Consider action on DMO agreement with Visit Bastrop
- Zoning Concept scheme 2nd reading Farm Street Village
- Construction Management Professional Services agreements

December 14, 2021

- Presentation of Strategic Planning Calendar
- Economic Development Policy Resolution
- Water Plant Construction Manager at Risk Contract

Attachments

Library Newsletter

Halloween road closure flyer

TML Legislative Report

HALLOWEEN NIGHT CLOSURES ON PECAN STREET

The highlighted streets below will be **CLOSED** to traffic and not available for parking on October 31 from 6-8 PM.

For public safety reasons, Pecan Street from Spring to Cypress Streets will be closed to **ALL** vehicular traffic starting at 6:00 PM and ending at 8:00 PM on October 31st (Halloween Evening).

Cedar, Buttonwood, Beech, and Farm Streets will be closed to all but residential traffic in a one block area east and west of Pecan Street during this time.

Pecan Street Residents:
Please make parking arrangements during these hours if the entrance to your home is on Pecan Street. We apologize for any inconvenience.

Please be aware of the CDC recommendations for Halloween activities.





IN THIS ISSUE

Book and Plant Sale a Success!

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Patrons Suggest 4 New Books!

Stay up-to-date with everything happening at the library by following us on Facebook and Instagram!



A service of the City of Bastrop

Book and Plant Sale a Success!

Wow! We are just blown away by how much money was raised at this year's Book and Plant Sale hosted by the Friends of Bastrop Public Library and Lost Pines Garden Club! Thank YOU for coming out and buying up their books and plants!

The Friends raised nearly \$2400 and the preliminary estimate from the Lost Pines Garden Club is \$3500.

Highlights from the two-day event include, of course, all of the nice, friendly community members who stopped by. There was a good turn-out for the members-only preview sale. If you'd like to get in on that first access to the books, pick up a membership form at the Circulation Desk; annual dues are \$15. Other bargain-hunters included those who brought their FOL bag, which is a tote bag you can purchase year-round in the Book Nook. You pay only \$10 for whatever you can fit in it at the Book Nook and at larger sales! The most popular items that were purchased were kids' titles, history books, and mysteries/thrillers.

If you couldn't make it to September's Book and Plant Sale, don't worry: there will be a spinning sale in March 2022!

Possible New Book Club



Do you like to read? Do you like to talk about what you read? Have you ever thought about joining a book club?

Bastrop Public Library is interested in starting a new book club-- but we want to make sure it's tailored to those who want to be an active book club participant! If you're interested, please email us at info@bastroplibrary.org and ask for the book club interest survey.

Super Savers!

Have you checked the bottom of your receipt to see how much money you've saved by using the library? January through September 2021, patrons saved over \$811,000!

That's 26,161 copies of the newest James Patterson book; 57.928 months of Netflix; or 154,476 Pumpkin Spice Lattes at Starbucks!

A Little Word Told Me

Fall is the busiest time in the book industry because publishers want new titles available for the holiday gift-giving season. That means we have lots of new titles --both fiction and nonfiction-- coming into the library's collection! And YOU can be one of the first to hear about those titles!

When you subscribe to the A Little Word Told Me monthly newsletter, you'll get an email in your inbox early each month that tells you all the new adult fiction and nonfiction titles that we've ordered. You then can put yourself on hold and be first or second in line to check it out when it's here!

Here's a preview of the August edition:



A Little Word Told Me

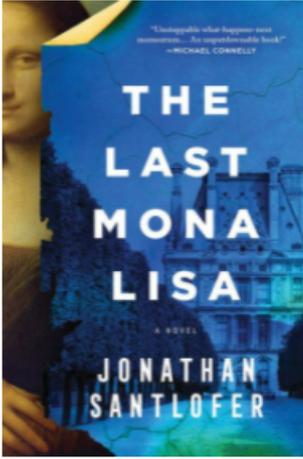
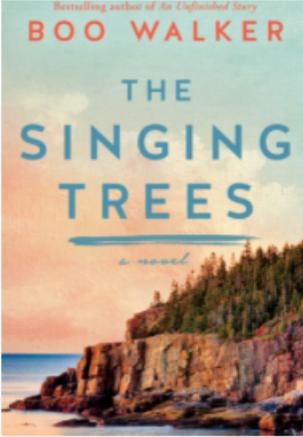
New Adult Fiction and Nonfiction
AUGUST 2021

New Mysteries & Thrillers



[Find more new mysteries and thrillers.](#)

New Historical Fiction



[Find more historical fiction.](#)

New Romance & Women's Fiction



[Find more new romances and women's fiction.](#)

New Literary Fiction

You can subscribe on our website at BastropLibrary.org and clicking on About the Library in the left-hand menu, then Subscribe to the Library Newsletter.

Sign-up to be first in line for new books arriving at the library!



1100 CHURCH ST.
BASTROP, TX 78602

Library's Open House Preview



Bastrop Public Library staff, the Library Board, and the Friends of the Library are hard at work planning for the annual Open House that will be on Saturday, December 11, 2021 from 10:00-4:00. It will be a fun day of great holiday cheer!

Here's a brief preview of what is happening that day:

Our graham cracker house decoration tradition continues with some tweaks to keep everyone happy. Each hour from 10:00-3:00, we will have 40 houses available to decorate. The Pressley Meeting Room will have limited seating so kids are welcome to take a house and a few supplies home to decorate their masterpiece. Groups of up to eight can be accommodated in the Meeting Room.

A variety of musicians, including the Bastrop Honor Choir, will perform.

The second annual Great City Decorating Contest (GC&DC) challenges City departments to decorate a graham cracker house and you get to decide which department did the most spectacular job. The competition is fierce, so be ready to make the hard decision! Winners receive Facebook fame, a fabulous trophy, and bragging rights for the entire year!

Teens will participate in the Lighted Christmas parade. Space is limited to ten teenagers between the ages of 13-17 (or 18 if still in high school). Registration will open Thursday, December 2.

More details will be available soon. But mark your calendars today so you won't miss the jolly fun!



Holiday Closures

The library will be closed the following dates in November, December, and early January:

- Thursday, November 11 for Veterans' Day
- Saturday, November 13 for the Veterans' Day Car Show
- Thursday, November 25 through Sunday, November 28 for Thanksgiving
- Friday, December 24 through Monday, December 27 for Christmas
- Saturday, January 1- Monday, January 3, 2022 for New Year's

Tell Us!



In September, the 2nd graders at Calvary visited for a library orientation. While they were here, one of them told us that the library was their "happy place!"

Is the library your happy place, too? Tell us about it by emailing us at info@bastroplibrary.org.



We Suggest!

We're expanding who is writing newsletter reviews so that we can get a variety of genre suggestions for all types of readers! If you've read a book and want to write a positive review for the newsletter, please email Bethany at bdietch@bastroplibrary.org.

Staff

Bonnie Pierson, Director

Carmen Serna, Children's Assistant

Bethany Dietrich, Public Services Librarian

Sheila Bowman, Library Associate, Administrative Services

Catherine Lombardo, Library Associate, Circulation & Volunteer Services

Terry Carwell, Library Associate, Circulation Services

Ronni Nuñez, Executive Administrative Assistant

Hours

Mon. Wed. Fri.
10:00 am – 6:00 pm

Tues. & Thurs.
1:00 pm – 9:00 pm

Sat.
10:00 am – 4:00 pm

Closed Sunday

Contact Us

(512) 332-8880
1100 Church St.
Bastrop, TX 78602

bastroplibrary.org
info@bastroplibrary.org

Becky Bennett, library board member

The Personal Librarian by Marie Benedict and Victoria Christopher Murray

Belle de Costa Greene was the personal librarian to financier JP Morgan. As such, she was a most accomplished businesswoman and moved in elite social circles. However, she had a secret: she is light-skinned Black, spurring an inner struggle with her authentic identity versus her ambition. Throughout this rich story, you will be drawn to Belle's story as she sacrifices her extended family, marriage, motherhood, and even her father to maintain the life she has built as a white woman.

Find it: NOV Ben (New) + Libby ebooks

Dianne Tripp, Friend of the Library

The Secret History of Food: Strange but True Stories About the Origins of Everything We Eat by Matt Siegel

This book is a blast to read! It has everything: shock, cringe, laugh-out-loud, superstition, gullibility, and the list goes on. This is a must-read for anyone that consumes food (or what they think of as food!). I promise there will be at least one thing in this book that you didn't know!

Find it: 641.3 Sie (New)

Brenda Smith, library volunteer

Survive the Night by Riley Sager

Charlie is a troubled college student looking for a ride home to Ohio. Josh, a stranger, offers to share a ride with her. There is something very suspicious about Josh, and Charlie soon thinks he is the Campus Killer who has murdered girls at her small college. Will she figure out a way to escape or send a message for help while on dark, deserted roads and through sparsely populated towns? How can she survive the night? Enjoy the many twists and turns with a very unreliable narrator until the surprising finale of this quite excellent thriller. I was so enthralled that I read this book in two days!

Find it: MYS Sag (New)

Bethany Dietrich, Public Services Librarian

The Last Chance Library by Freya Sampson

June has lived in the same, small British hamlet all her life. She dreamed of going away to university, but then her mom got cancer, and June had to stay and take care of her. Eight years later, June still lives in the house she grew up in, all alone, and works as a library assistant. The town council has decided to potentially close various libraries in the area, including June's, but several very passionate patrons team up to try to prevent this from happening. Can they count on timid, shy June for help? As a librarian, I'm biased towards loving this book, but it's so sweet! June has to learn to move forward after grief and how to move out from under her mother's shadow as the community librarian. If you need an uncomplicated, pick-me-up read, check-out this one today!

Find it: NOV Sam (New)



Legislative UPDATE

October 15, 2021
Number 39

New Addition to Call as Legislature Enters Last Week

On Monday, Governor Abbott [added](#) the following item to the special session call:

Legislation establishing that no entity in Texas can compel receipt of COVID-19 vaccine by any individual, including an employee or a consumer, who objects to such vaccination for any reason of personal conscience, based on religion belief, or for medical reasons, including prior recovery from COVID-19.

The third called special session is set to conclude on October 19. The legislature will have until then to consider and pass legislation on any of the [topics](#) on the governor's call. Redistricting has largely been the focus at the capitol where both chambers have approved their respective maps. In the final days ahead, the legislature will still have many issues to sort out including how the state will spend its federal coronavirus relief funds from the American Rescue Plan Act.

TML Resolutions Approved

During the TML Annual Conference and Exhibition last week, delegates assembled to consider resolutions submitted by the membership. The delegates approved one resolution to be included in the legislative program. The resolution can be found [here](#).

Governor's Broadband Council Releases Annual Report

Last month, the Governor's Broadband Development Council released its [2021 Annual Report](#), which includes a number of recommendations and findings of interest to Texas cities. The report's recommendations include the following, among others:

- *Allocate a portion of the state's ARPA allotment, Coronavirus Capital Projects Fund dollars, and upcoming federal broadband infrastructure/digital equity dollars toward meaningful broadband projects, which include PPPs, middle mile and last mile investments, digital literacy training programs, and cybersecurity awareness.*
- *A multi-sector statewide study on the costs associated with the lack of broadband.* Studies of the economic impacts of broadband expansion into rural areas can be broadly categorized into local labor market effects, benefits accruing to consumers, benefits accruing to businesses and homeowners, benefits in healthcare including the support of Critical Access Hospitals and the accessibility of telemedicine, and benefits accruing to participants distance learning. However, there is limited information on the economic costs of not having broadband.
- *A study on the existence of any specific regulatory barriers general law cities may be facing when addressing the digital divide in their communities.* Home rule cities and general law cities may be operating under a separate set of rules when it comes to public private partnership opportunities and other connectivity initiatives. Identifying and addressing these barriers, if they exist, may help our smaller communities become better connected.
- *Partner with local communities, community anchor institutions, and the private sector to promote digital inclusion initiatives that help to advance broadband access, adoption, and use in Texas.* The issue of the digital divide is not one that the government can tackle alone because it reverberates across communities, sectors and families - and has the capacity to impact economic development, education, workforce development, and the quality of life in Texas. Therefore, it is imperative that each stakeholder play an important role in bridging the digital divide. For example, anchor institutions such as libraries and critical access hospitals have played an important role in advancing adoption and working with local communities to eliminate barriers to adoption. Anchor institutions are critical because of their proximity to Texans and their ability to customize programs to fit specific communities and get things done efficiently and effectively. In addition to deploying infrastructure, broadband providers also provide affordable services for low-income communities and have funded digital inclusion programs via philanthropy that help to increase adoption and education.

Railroad Commission Proposes Rules for Designation of Critical Infrastructure

The Railroad Commission (RRC) is [proposing rules](#) relating to designating critical natural gas infrastructure during energy emergencies. The rules implement S.B. 3's requirement that the RRC adopt rules to establish a process to designate certain natural gas facilities and entities associated with providing natural gas in Texas as critical customers or critical gas suppliers during energy emergencies. The League previously reported on S.B. 3 [here](#).

Interested persons may submit comments in the following ways: (1) by mail to Rules Coordinator, Office of General Counsel, Railroad Commission of Texas, P.O. Box 12967, Austin, Texas 78711-2967; (2) [online](#); or (3) by electronic mail to rulescoordinator@rrc.texas.gov. Comments must be filed by 5:00 p.m. on **November 1, 2021**.

COVID-19 Update (No. 205)

All pandemic-related updates continue to be found in the [Legislative Update Newsletter](#).

Governor Abbott Issues New Executive Order

On October 11, Governor Abbott issued his [40th executive order](#) related to the on-going COVID-19 pandemic. The order states that no entity in Texas can compel any individual to receive a COVID-19 vaccine if that individual objects to such vaccination for any reason of personal conscience, based on a religious belief, or for medical reasons, including prior recovery from COVID-19. Violation of the order carries possible penalties of up to \$1,000 in fines and up to 180 days in jail. This is a broad order that purports to apply to all public and private entities and prohibits all vaccination requirements for any individual who objects.

Coronavirus Fiscal Recovery Funds: Updated Treasury Reporting Guidance

On September 30, the Treasury Department updated the Compliance and Reporting Guidance regarding Project Expenditure Reports related to State and Local Fiscal Recovery Fund recipients. States, territories, counties, cities, and Tribal governments will report project and expenditure data next on January 31, 2022 (instead of October 31, 2021). The first reporting deadline for non-entitlement units of government will be April 30, 2022 (instead of October 31, 2021). Treasury will provide recipients with user guides prior to the reporting deadlines.

Additionally, the National League of Cities has received correspondence from the Treasury indicating that NEUs will not be required to use ID.me for reporting. Treasury is working on rolling out an alternative, more user-friendly method for NEUs to login to the Treasury portal, and guidance will be developed in the near future.

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

City-Related Bills Filed

Property Tax

3H.B. 130 (Crockett) – **Property Tax Credit**: would provide that a person who owns real property and installs a solar energy device on the property is entitled to a credit against the property taxes imposed on the property by each taxing unit that taxes the property. (See **3H.J.R. 18**, below.)

3H.B. 132 (Allison) – **Appraisal Cap and Homestead Exemption**: would, among other things: (1) establish a five percent appraisal cap on all residential real property; (2) generally provide that if an individual qualifies property as the individual's residence homestead for at least 25 consecutive tax years, a taxing unit may not impose taxes on that residence homestead in a subsequent tax year in an amount that exceeds the lesser of: (a) the amount of taxes calculated for the taxing unit for the current tax year; or (b) the amount of taxes imposed by the taxing unit for the 25th tax year; and (3) provide that an individual who purchases property and qualifies the property as the individual's residence homestead is entitled to a property tax exemption of the total appraised value of the property for the first tax year the individual qualifies the property as the individual's residence homestead if the property: (a) is the first property the individual has ever qualified as the individual's residence homestead; and (b) has an appraised value of less than \$300,000 for the first tax year. (See **3H.J.R. 19**, below.)

3H.B. 144 (Schofield) – **Property Tax Limitation**: would establish a mandatory property tax freeze for all taxing units on the residence homesteads of individuals who are disabled or over 65 and their surviving spouses. (See **3H.J.R. 21**, below.)

3H.B. 148 (Krause) – **Property Tax Rate Adjustment for Federal Funds**: would decrease the no-new-revenue rate and voter-approval rate for a city or county for the 2022 and 2023 tax years based upon the amount of federal coronavirus relief money received by the city or county under the Coronavirus Local Fiscal Recovery Fund established under the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021.

3H.J.R. 18 (Crockett) – **Property Tax Exemption**: would amend the Texas Constitution to provide that a person who owns real property and installs a solar energy device on the property is entitled to a credit against the property taxes imposed on the property by each taxing unit that taxes the property. (See **3H.B. 130**, above.)

3H.J.R. 19 (Allison) – **Appraisal Cap and Homestead Exemption**: would amend the Texas Constitution to, among other things: (1) establish a five percent appraisal cap on all residential real property; (2) generally provide that if an individual qualifies property as the individual's residence homestead for at least 25 consecutive tax years, a taxing unit may not impose taxes on that residence homestead in a subsequent tax year in an amount that exceeds the lesser of: (a) the amount of taxes calculated for the taxing unit for the current tax year; or (b) the amount of taxes imposed by the taxing unit for the 25th tax year; and (3) provide that an individual who purchases property and qualifies the property as the individual's residence homestead is entitled to a property tax exemption of the total appraised value of the property for the first tax year the individual

qualifies the property as the individual's residence homestead if the property: (a) is the first property the individual has ever qualified as the individual's residence homestead; and (b) has an appraised value of less than \$300,000 for the first tax year. (See **3H.B. 132**, above.)

3H.J.R. 21 (Schofield) – **Property Tax Limitation**: would amend the Texas Constitution to establish a mandatory property tax freeze for all taxing units on the residence homesteads of individuals who are disabled or over 65 and their surviving spouses. (See **3H.B. 144**, above.)

Community and Economic Development

3H.B. 127 (Davis) – **Parks Grants**: would: (1) require the Texas Department of Parks and Wildlife to develop and administer a grant program for outreach to underserved populations to provide money to cities, counties, and nonprofit partners for use to increase: (1) access to and use of the department's parks, recreational areas, cultural resource sites and areas, and open space areas by underserved populations; and (2) participation of underserved populations in the outdoor, historical, cultural, and recreation safety activities of the department; and (2) appropriate \$180,000,000 from the general fund to the Parks and Wildlife Department for the state fiscal year beginning September 1, 2021, for the purpose of funding the grant program.

3H.B. 156 (K. King) – **Major Events Reimbursement Program**: would, among other things, make the following events eligible for funding under the Major Events Reimbursement Program: (1) the Formula One United States Grand Prix; (2) the Professional Bull Riders World Finals; (3) the Professional Golfers' Association Championship; (4) the Ryder Cup; (5) The Senior Professional Golfers' Association Championship; (6) the South by Southwest Conference and Festivals; and (7) the Women's Professional Golfers' Association Championship.

Elections

3H.B. 146 (Crockett) – **Residence of Incarcerated Persons**: would, among many other things: (1) provide for the determination of an incarcerated person's residence for voter registration; (2) require, not later than the 14th day following the date on which the tract-level population counts from the federal decennial census are released, the comptroller, in coordination with the Texas Demographic Center, the Texas Legislative Council, and the Texas Department of Criminal Justice, to prepare and disseminate adjusted population counts for each geographic unit included in the census counts based on information reported by state and local governments that operate a facility for incarcerated persons; and (3) require state and local government entities that operate a facility for incarcerated persons to prepare a report with certain information that will be used to adjust the decennial census based on the residence of the incarcerated persons for redistricting purposes.

3S.B. 47 (Bettencourt) – **Election Audit**: would, among other things: (1) authorize certain individuals to issue a written request to the county clerk or other authority conducting an election for an explanation and supporting documentation for: (a) an action taken by an election officer that appears to violate the Texas Election Code; (b) irregularities in results in a precinct or at a polling place or early voting polling place; or (c) inadequacy or irregularity of documentation required to be maintained under the Texas Election Code; (2) require the county clerk or other authority to provide the requested explanation and any supporting documentation not later than the 20th day

after the date a request is received under (1), above; (3) provide that if a requestor is not satisfied with the explanation and supporting documentation provided by the county clerk or election authority, the requestor may issue a request for further explanation and supporting documentation; (4) if the requestor is not satisfied with the follow-up explanation and supporting documentation from the county clerk or other election authority, the requestor may issue a request to the secretary of state for an audit of the issue; (5) require the secretary of state to audit the identified irregularity at the expense of the county or other authority conducting the election if the information provided in response to the initial request is deemed to be insufficient; (6) provide that if a county clerk or other authority conducting an election does not remedy a violation found by the secretary of state in an audit by the 30th day after the date the clerk or other authority receives the notice, the secretary of state shall assess a civil penalty of \$500 for each violation not remedied and, if possible, remedy the violation on behalf of the county clerk or other authority; (7) provide that if the secretary of state is not able to remedy the violation on behalf of the county clerk or other authority, the secretary of state shall assess an additional penalty of \$500 for each day the county clerk or other authority does not remedy the violation until the violation is remedied; and (8) authorize the attorney general to bring an action to recover a civil penalty that has not been paid.

Other Finance and Administration

3H.B. 125 (Slaton) – **COVID-19 Vaccination:** would, among other things: (1) provide that a person is not required to comply with a federal statute, order, rule, or regulation mandating or purporting to mandate COVID-19 vaccinations if that vaccination requirement does not exist in state law; (2) prohibit a governmental entity, including a city, or an officer, employee, or other individual under the direction or control of the entity from enforcing or attempting to enforce any federal statute, order, rule, or regulation; (3) prohibit a governmental entity or an officer, employee, or other individual under the direction or control of the entity from requiring a person to respond to or make an appearance in court for an action or suit filed against the person based on a violation of a federal statute, order, rule, or regulation; (4) require the attorney general to defend a governmental entity in any action or suit filed against the entity based on a violation of federal statute, order, rule, or regulation; and (5) provide that an officer, employee, or other individual under the direction and control of a governmental entity who violates (2), above, commits a third degree felony.

3H.B. 137 (Harris) – **COVID-19 Vaccination:** would, among other things, prohibit a state agency or political subdivision from entering into a contract with a company for goods or services unless the contract contains a written verification from the company that it does not, and will not during the term of the contract, require, as a condition of employment, an employee to receive a COVID-19 vaccination.

3H.B. 140 (Minjarez) – **Federal Coronavirus Relief Appropriation:** would make supplemental appropriations of money received from the Coronavirus State Fiscal Recovery Fund established under the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 to include, among other appropriations: (1) the amount of \$3,000,000,000 to the comptroller of public accounts for the purpose of providing funding for grants, loans, and incentives for broadband services in areas of the state currently in need of those services; (2) the amount of \$2,000,000 to the Texas Historical Commission for the purpose of providing funding for downtown and main street revitalization projects in small and

rural cities designated as part of the Main Street Program, including projects for infrastructure improvement, to encourage tourism and economic development in rural areas impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic; (3) the amount of \$5,000,000 to the Department of Public Safety for the purpose of providing targeted COVID-19 testing and purchasing personal protective equipment for law enforcement officers and other public safety employees; (4) the amount of \$2,000,000 to the Texas Department of Agriculture for the purpose of supporting downtown and main street revitalization projects, including infrastructure improvement, in rural cities and towns to encourage tourism and economic development in rural areas affected by the COVID-19 pandemic; (5) the amount of \$100,000,000 to the Water Development Board for the purpose of providing loans and grants and issuing bonds to support clean drinking water and flooding and wastewater infrastructure; (6) the amount of \$500,000,000 to the Department of Housing and Community Affairs for the purpose of addressing housing issues caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, including by providing access to and availability of safe, affordable housing through initiatives that may include new housing development, upgrades to infrastructure, and weatherization of existing affordable housing units; and (7) the amount of \$1,000,000,000 to the Public Utilities Commission for the purpose of providing funding for grants, loans, and incentives to support electrical grid and infrastructure weatherization, hardening, resiliency, and improvements.

3H.B. 145 (Bonnen) – **Federal Coronavirus Relief Appropriation:** would make supplemental appropriations of money received from the Coronavirus State Fiscal Recovery Fund established under the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 to include, among other appropriations, the amount of \$500,475,163 to the comptroller of public accounts for the purpose of providing funding for broadband infrastructure.

3H.B. 155 (Oliverson) – **COVID-19 Vaccination:** would: (1) require any law, policy, or other measure requiring an individual to be vaccinated against COVID-19 to enter or gain access to, receive a service from, or be employed by an establishment to allow the individual to claim an exemption from the vaccination requirement based on: (a) the individual’s acquired immunity against COVID-19 through post-transmission recovery; (b) a medical condition; or (c) reasons of conscience, including a religious belief; (2) authorize an employee of an establishment who is the subject of a violation under (1), above, to bring an action in district court in the county in which the violation occurred for injunctive or equitable relief for compensatory or punitive damages for a violation as if the establishment engaged in a discriminatory or unlawful employment practice; and (3) provide that a complainant may recover reasonable expenses incurred in bringing an action, including court costs, attorney’s fees, investigation costs, witness fees, and deposition expenses.

3H.B. 168 (Harrison) – **COVID-19 Vaccination:** would, among other things, prohibit a person from compelling or coercing an individual lawfully residing in Texas into obtaining a medical treatment involving the administration of a COVID-19 vaccine, including a COVID-19 vaccine approved or authorized by the United States Food and Drug Administration, contrary to the individual’s vaccination preference.

3H.B. 169 (Toth) – **COVID-19 Vaccination:** would prohibit a state agency or political subdivision from entering into a contract with a company for goods or services unless the contract contains a written verification from the company that it does not, and will not during the term of

the contract, require, as a condition of employment, an employee to receive a COVID-19 vaccination.

3S.B. 8 (Nelson) – **Federal Coronavirus Relief Appropriation:** would make supplemental appropriations of money received from the Coronavirus State Fiscal Recovery Fund established under the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 to include, among other appropriations, the amount of \$500,475,163 to the comptroller of public accounts for the purpose of providing funding for broadband infrastructure.

3S.B. 51 (Hughes) – **COVID-19 Vaccination:** would, among other things: (1) prohibit a governmental entity from requiring an individual to provide any documentation certifying the individual’s COVID-19 vaccination or post-transmission recovery on entry to, to gain access to, or to receive service from the governmental entity; (2) prohibit a political subdivision from issuing an order, adopting an ordinance, or otherwise requiring an individual to be vaccinated against COVID-19; (3) require an employer, labor organization, or employment agency to allow an individual to claim an exemption from a required COVID-19 vaccination based on a medical condition or reasons of conscience, including a religious belief; and (4) provide that an employer commits an unlawful employment practice if the employer fails or refuses to hire, discharges, or otherwise discriminates against an individual with respect to the compensation or the terms, conditions, or privileges of employment because the individual claims an exemption under (3), above.

Personnel

3H.B. 134 (Middleton) – **COVID-19 Vaccination:** would, among other things: (1) require an employer, labor organization, or employment agency to allow an individual to claim an exemption from a required COVID-19 vaccination based on a medical condition, reasons of conscience, a religious belief, a disability or other status, or previous recovery and immunity to COVID-19 as evidenced by the detection of antibodies for COVID-19; and (2) provide that an employer commits an unlawful employment practice if the employer fails or refuses to hire, discharges, or otherwise discriminates against an individual with respect to the compensation or the terms, conditions, or privileges of employment because the individual claims an exemption under (1), above.

3H.B. 164 (Holland) – **COVID-19 Vaccination:** would, among other things, provide that: (1) an employer commits an unlawful employment practice if the employer fails or refuses to hire, discharges, or otherwise discriminates against an individual with respect to the compensation or the terms, conditions, or privileges of employment because the individual has not received a COVID-19 vaccine; and (2) an employer, labor organization, or employment agency is not liable for a claim arising from exposure to COVID-19 on the basis that the employer, labor organization, or employment agency failed to require an individual to receive a COVID-19 vaccine.

3H.B. 165 (Slaton) – **COVID-19 Vaccination:** would authorize an employee or the immediate family member of an incapacitated or deceased employee to bring an action against the employee’s employer for damages incurred by the employee’s injury or death sustained as a result of the employer requiring the employee to receive a vaccine against COVID-19 as a condition of employment.

3H.B. 167 (Slawson) – **Vaccine Requirement:** would authorize: (1) an employee to bring an action against an employer for actual damages caused by a vaccine if: (a) the employer requires the employee to receive the vaccine as a condition of employment or incentivizes the employee’s receipt of the vaccine through any form of remuneration, compensation, or benefit; and (b) the employee receives the vaccine on account of the employer’s requirement or incentive; and (2) an individual to bring an action against a person for actual damages caused by a vaccine if: (a) the person requires the individual to receive the vaccine as a condition or receiving goods or services offered by the person or incentivizes through any form of remuneration, compensation, benefit, or discount, the individual to receive the vaccine in connection with the provision of goods or services to the individual; and (b) the individual receives the vaccine on account of the person’s requirement or incentive.

3H.B. 170 (Toth) – **COVID-19 Vaccination:** would, among other things, provide that an employer commits an unlawful employment practice if the employer fails or refuses to hire, discharges, or otherwise discriminates against an individual with respect to the compensation or the terms, conditions, or privileges of employment because the individual has not received a COVID-19 vaccine.

3S.B. 53 (Eckhardt) – **COVID-19 Vaccination:** would: (1) authorize a local governmental entity to, as a condition of employment, require an employee to provide to the entity in the form and manner prescribed by the entity documentation of the employee’s COVID-19 vaccination, including any recommended booster dose of the vaccine; (2) provide that a local governmental entity that requires an employee to be vaccinated against COVID-19 must allow the employee to claim an exemption from the required vaccination based on a medical condition or a religious belief if the employee submits an affidavit form developed by the Texas Workforce Commission claiming an exemption; and (3) provide that an executive order, proclamation, or regulation issued under the Texas Disaster Act may not suspend, limit, or alter an employment condition established by a local governmental entity under (1), above.

Transportation

3H.B. 153 (Cain) – **High Occupancy Vehicles:** would provide that an operator of a motor vehicle who is pregnant is entitled to use any high occupancy vehicle lane in the state regardless of whether the vehicle is occupied by a passenger other than the operator’s unborn child.

Utilities and Environment

3H.B. 154 (Rosenthal) – **Weatherization of Certain Natural Gas Facilities:** would require the facility used for producing natural gas to implement measures to prepare to operate during a weather emergency.

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