

Rockport Transcript

A PUBLICATION OF THE CITY OF ROCKPORT

Energy Conservation Measures to Save \$500k

A recent report to City Council identified \$564,601 of energy savings and benefits following a six-month Energy Savings Performance Contract (ESPC) undertaken by Ameresco, a Massachusetts-based energy consulting firm retained by the City following a Request for Qualifications submission request in late 2015.

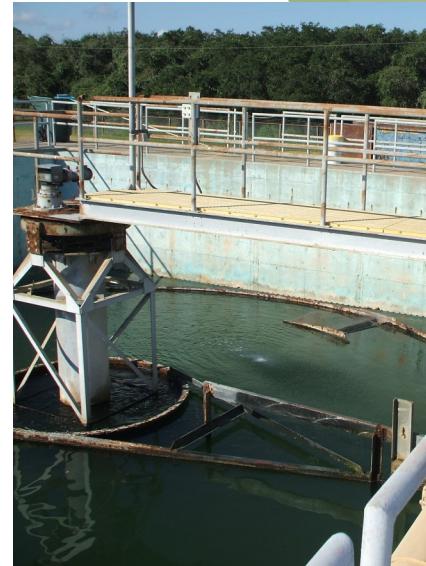
Section 302 of the Local Government Code allows local government to enter into ESPCs that permits an entity to complete energy-saving improvements within an existing budget by financing them with money saved through utility expenditures. By law, the contractor must guarantee that the savings will always be at least

equal to the payments for the cost of the improvements.

Working with staff, Ameresco sought to identify potential utility improvement measures that would improve or restore degraded meter accuracy and reduce operational cost and energy consumption. The areas they focused on were metering, water and water treatment infrastructure, street lighting, sports facility lights and City-owned and occupied buildings.

Among the findings and actions to be taken:

- Replacement of gas meters (4,500) and water meters



(9,000) and the implementation of a wireless system will reduce failure risks, lower the number of service calls,

(continued on page 2)



Hurricane Preparedness Week (May 7 -13, 2017) is your time to prepare for a potential land-falling tropical storm or hurricane. Even if you don't live directly on the waterfront, you may be threatened by dangerous flooding, destructive winds and tornadoes from these storms.

The City's web site (www.cityofrockport.com) offers stories relating to preparedness. Simply type "Hurricane Information" in the search bar.

Energy Conservation *(continued from front page)*

improve billing while reducing errors, and provide a portal for customers to view their historical utility consumption data.

- Installation of modern sports field lighting will address light level and distribution concern, improve efficiency and enhance the life cycle of the equipment.
- Building measures include both interior and exterior lighting retrofits; heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) replacements; and installing HVAC controls.
- Installation of variable speed aeration blowers at the wastewater treatment plant will improve efficiency, address life cycle concerns and minimize maintenance down time.

According to City Manager Kevin Carruth, energy conservation has been very successful with other local governments across the country. “Galveston was projected to save \$1.3 million in its first year and had reached \$1.5 million within seven months,” he noted. “This is a significant measure that will allow us to utilize the savings on infrastructure and other major projects.”



Less tangible, but still important, are the “green” and operational benefits to the City. With fewer vehicles on the road, there will be fewer emissions and a longer road-life for City-owned vehicles. Based on research undertaken by Ameresco, this is the equivalent of removing over 67 passenger cars from the road, reduction of emissions from 35,092 gallons of gasoline consumed annually, greenhouse gas emissions avoided by not landfilling 113 tons of waste, and reducing additional CO₂ emissions from the energy use of over 28 homes for one year.

Prior to implementation of the program, the City will contract with an independent engineering firm to verify the numbers. Citizens will be kept informed about the rollout and specific dates for replacement of their meters.

Whooping Crane Strut Results

Despite torrential rain and brisk, northern winds, more than 100 people showed up for the 29th Annual Whooping Crane Strut on Saturday, March 11, 2017, at Memorial Park. Runners, walkers, volunteers and cheerleaders braved the elements for the chip-timed event, which included 5k and 10k runs and a 2-mile walk on the Memorial Park and Tule Hike & Bike Trails.

Overall top performers in the male and female categories are listed below. For a breakdown of winners by age and category, please visit the City’s web site and type in the keywords “Whooping Crane Strut.”

5K Run

Jacob Krupa (Rockport)
Amanda Butler (Rockport)

10K Run

Arturo Mendieta (Portland)
Casey Rothlisberger (Portland)

2-Mile Walk

Kim Hodge (Marietta, OH)
Theresa Duncan (Fulton)



Cousins Caroline Stephenson and Ella Buckley took first and second place in the 2-Mile Walk Female category for participants 9 and under.

Why I Serve - Volunteers Integral to the City

Service on a Committee or Advisory Board holds different meanings for those who volunteer. Some seek to get more involved in the community, while others work toward change. These dedicated volunteers serve the City through research, recommendations, strategic planning and implementation of programs and policies that impact the quality of life for residents and the City's future.



Parks Board Member Ty Brisgill helps plant a tree as part of the City's annual Arbor Day celebration. Rockport's active efforts and participation in this national observance has also qualified it as a Tree City USA Community for the 17th year.

Ty Brisgill, a volunteer on the Parks and Leisure Services Advisory Board for more than 15 years, hadn't given much thought to serving on a committee, having just moved to Rockport from the San Antonio suburbs. But, as he was working in his garden, he was approached by a then member of City Council who asked if he'd be interested in serving on the Parks Board.

"Those early years were a bit difficult as we couldn't gather a quorum. We sought other individuals who shared our interest, and were able to get things going," he noted. "One of the greatest privileges is working with like-minded individuals and the pleasant staff under Tom Staley and now Rick Martinez."

While some plans may take an inordinate amount of time, like 10 years for the Tule Hike & Bike Trail, Brisgill knows that all the projects and special events undertaken by the Board and Department benefit residents daily. "We've really accomplished a lot in the past decade and I look forward to participating in the long-term plans for Memorial Park and the recently-purchased property on the Bypass."

Planning & Zoning Commission member Ruth Davis was approached by a City staff member about a decade ago. Having moved here in the mid-80s, she had watched the City grow by leaps and bounds and was concerned about the future. Serving on P&Z was a perfect fit.

"Although I didn't know much about development, I recognized the need to help manage the City's growth," she stated. "I've learned so much from some incredible folks and I'm proud to be part of a citizens group that makes specific recommendations to Council."

Davis says the P&Z Commission is always fine tuning its zoning maps to develop business and industrial corridors and maintain the integrity of residential neighborhoods.

(continued on page 4)



When doing projects around your house, digging without knowing where underground utility lines are buried can be very risky. Any time underground lines are damaged, vital services and everyday conveniences can become disconnected, not only to your home, but to entire neighborhoods. Don't risk harming yourself, your family or your neighbors.

When planning an excavation project, including building new flower beds, simply dial 811 at least 48 hours (two working days) before you plan to start your work. They will notify underground utility providers, who will send professional locators out to mark the approximate location of their utility lines. If you prefer the computer, go to <https://txhop.texas811.org/>

Then you can dig confidently, knowing the utilities will not be disturbed. It's simple, free and it's the law.

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Rockport City Council

Mayor



C.J. Wax

Ward 1



Rusty Day

Ward 2



J.D. Villa

Ward 3



Pat Rios

Ward 4



Barbara Gurtner

Why I Serve - Volunteers Integral to the City (continued from page 3)

"A lot of folks don't realize how important zoning can be," she added.

She alludes to a situation last year when someone wanted to develop an RV park in a newly annexed part of the City. "Residents were concerned because the streets were too narrow to accommodate recreational vehicles and that grading of the land would cause some flooding issues. P&Z agreed with them and recommended that City Council deny the project," she said. "This is an example of why zoning is a 'win' for citizens."

Every June, the City of Rockport solicits applications from interested residents for open and expiring positions on its Committees. The Committees consist of Planning and Zoning, Parks and Leisure, Building and Standards Commission, YMCA Development Committee and other advisory boards.

Information about these Committees and applications for membership can be picked up at City Hall or by visiting the City's web site at www.cityofrockport.com. All meetings are open to interested parties and are publicly announced as part of the Open Meetings Act.

Special Note: The City Council elections scheduled for May 6 have been cancelled as there were no challengers against the incumbents for the Ward 1 and Ward 3 positions.

Who Do I Call If ...

Emergency	911
Non-Emergency Public Safety	729-1111
Utility Bill Questions/Concerns	729-2213 x 234
Street Issues and Repairs	790-1160
Sewer, Water and Gas Issues	790-1160
After-Hours	729-1111
Trash Pick-Up	729-2213 x 234
City Administrative Offices	729-2213 x 221
Building and Development Dept.	790-1125

For additional questions or concerns, visit the "FAQs" or "Fix It" sections on the City's web site (www.cityofrockport.com) or call City Hall at (361) 729-2213.



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