

Rockport Transcript

A PUBLICATION OF THE CITY OF ROCKPORT

How the City Works

There are over 123 full-time individuals employed by the City, who are dedicated to serving the needs of residents. From public safety to street repair to utility management, their often invisible presence is essential to protecting and enhancing the welfare of our citizens and visitors. Additionally, there is a comparable number of unpaid volunteers in our region, who serve us in the capacity of firefighters.

According to archives, Rockport's first volunteer fire department was created in 1885 when Sam Smith bought a fire wagon with a chemical tank and hose for \$1400 and donated it to the City. More than a century later, approximately 50 dedicated volunteers continue to suppress fires and provide vehicular accident and technical

rescue services through four stations and an impressive array of equipment.

Like other first responders, the Volunteer Fire Department remains on call 24/7 and provides mutual aid for like organizations in neighboring cities and towns. Training is a mandatory requirement as these individuals must be able to perform quickly in desperate situations, while wearing 75 pounds of clothing and gear. Research shows that 15 minutes of actual firefighting is equivalent to eight hours on a construction site.

As a quasi-government entity, the Rockport Volunteer Fire Department receives annual funding through the City's General Fund. Additionally, a *(continued on page 2)*



Over Labor Day, the police and fire departments unveiled their newest fire fighting device – a marine water pump. Mounted on the Police Department's patrol and rescue boat, a 22' Trans Sport, the fire pump has a range of 150-200 feet and can pump 400 gallons per minute.

According to Lt. Larry Sinclair, the pump is a much-needed addition to the City's fire fighting arsenal. "Now we can fight fires from the waterfront and reduce danger to residences that are aflame and to our firefighters." Funding for the \$7500 pump was a cooperative efforts between the Harbor Oaks HOA, Key Allegro HOA, Rockport Volunteer Fire Department, and the City of Rockport.

Budget Message

The 2013-2104 budget, which calls for a \$0.327728 ad valorem tax rate, was approved by City Council in September. The net effect on a median residential property is an increase of \$11.89.

Despite the improved economy, the budget is conservative in its revenue estimates and expenditures. According to City Manager Kevin Carruth, the

budget maintains a high level of reserves in order to mitigate the risks posed by Rockport's somewhat limited economy, modest scale, reliance on tourism, and threat of strong storms. The City's conservative fiscal policies and budgets have enabled it to enjoy a AA- credit rating.

"Meeting the fundamental health, safety and welfare needs of our

citizens is essential to a progressive and successful community," Carruth notes. "This budget will not only ensure the safety of our citizens, but also enhance their quality of life while providing an environment for successful development."

The complete budget is available on the City's website at www.cityofrockport.com

How the City Works (continued)

monthly surcharge on each utility bill is placed in a special utility fund.

On or before October 15 of each year, the City disburses the fund balance to the Rockport, Fulton and Lamar Volunteer Fire Departments on a pro rata basis depending upon the number of meters in their respective service areas.

While the Fire Department is strictly a volunteer organization, it must still comply with the Texas Commission of Fire Safety Protection and accounting/financial procedures set forth by the City and Texas Legislature. Additional funding is also provided by Aransas County and through the Rural Volunteer Fire Department Assessment Program.



If you're interested in becoming a member or assisting in any way, please visit the Central Station at 212 Gagnon on any Thursday evening at 7:30 pm.

Let's Talk Trash

We receive numerous calls about what can and cannot go into trash cans or recycling bins. Here's a list of acceptable and non-acceptable items from Republic Services, our waste service provider:

Accepted recyclables for your home include aluminum and metal cans; newspapers and their inserts; plastic containers with a recycle symbol; typing, writing and computer paper; discarded mail flyers; magazine and catalogs; cardboard cut down to 2' x 2'; paperboard boxes (shoe and cereal boxes).

Unacceptable items include glass, paint, light bulbs, batteries, automotive fluid and hazardous materials, paper or cardboard products with food stains (e.g.

pizza boxes), and plastic bags. HEB and Walmart have receptacles at their entrances for your clean, plastic shopping bags.

Unacceptable trash from your home includes tires, automotive fluid and hazardous materials, oil-based paint, appliances, medical waste and sharps, furniture, and over-sized yard waste. Area automotive centers may accept automotive fluid and tires and non-hazardous materials may be taken to the Country Transfer Station with a voucher. There is a drop off center for expired or unused medications at the Public Safety Center.

There are some special handling requirements for *acceptable trash*. For adhesives and latex-

based paint, remove the covers and allow to dry thoroughly before placing in the trash. Make sure that aerosol containers are completely empty before disposing of them in the trash. Leaf and grass clippings should either be bagged or placed in a container. Branches and limbs should be cut to four feet or less and bundled. During our semi-annual Live Oak leaf drop, trucks will be able to pick up only a limited amount of yard waste per household.

To lessen odor and prevent pests, rinse all food packaging before putting it in the garbage. Diapers and pet waste bags should either be emptied in the toilet or double bagged. And, a sprinkle of baking soda can go a long way in eliminating odors.



New Water Conservation and Drought Plans Underway

By contract the City is required to adopt a Water Conservation Plan and a Drought Contingency Plan that is consistent with plans adopted by the San Patricio Municipal Water District and the City of Corpus Christi, managers of the regional water supply. These plans include new, more aggressive efforts to expand water conservation; reduce unnecessary water uses; identify the triggers, e.g. storage capacity in the reservoir system; and explain how they will apply to customers.

City Council is expected to vote on these plans by December. An announcement will be made in the media, utility bills and on the City's web site prior to implementation

Proposed Stage 2

- No watering between 10 am—6 pm
- Watering ONCE a week
- No ponds, fountain or water-fall refills. Swimming pools filled on designated day
- Car washing on designated day, only
- Dust Control prohibited, except by permit
- Restaurant water available only upon request
- No run-off allowed

Former Stage 2

- No watering between 10 am—7 pm
- Watering allowed 2x a week
- No limitations on pools, ponds, fountains and waterfalls except designated day
- Car washing allowed with use of an on/off spray nozzle.
- Dust Control, Window Washing, and Building Cleaning on designated days
- No run-off allowed

New Service

In-person credit card payments are now accepted at City Hall and the Service Center. These include American Express, Discover, MasterCard and VISA.

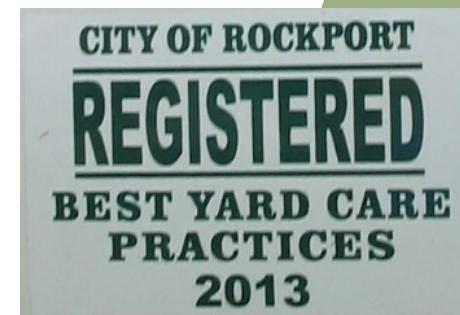
Credit cards may be used for utility bills; fines or violations through Municipal Court; and for permits and licensing in the Building and Development Department. The City will continue to use an outside vendor for credit card payments online.

Lawn Care Certification Program

If you see vehicles displaying this sign, you'll know that the owner successfully completed a Lawn Care Certification Program, sponsored by the City of Rockport, the Mission Aransas NERR and Texas Agrilife Extension Service.

Offered at no charge to area lawn care services and homeowners, the program included best management practices of lawn care, including impacts on water quality; appropriate use of fertilizer, herbicides and pesticides; soil testing; disposal of yard waste; native plants, and watering techniques.

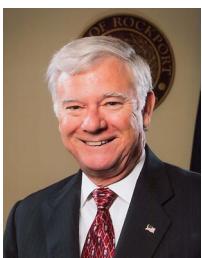
If you would be interested in attending this program in the future, please contact Kendra Baird, Rockport's Environmental Specialist at 361-790-1160 or by email at publicworks2@cityofrockport.com



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Keep your retail sales taxes
working at home

Rockport City Council

Mayor



C.J. Wax

Ward 1



Rusty Day

Ward 2



J.D. Villa

Ward 3



Pat Rios

Ward 4



Adelaide Marlatt

Save the Date

Veterans Day - November 11. In honor of those who have served in the United States Armed Forces, a special program will be held on Monday, November 11 at 11 a.m. at Veterans Memorial Park on Austin Street. The event is free and open to the public. The ceremony will include the presentation and posting of the colors by the ACISD Navy Junior ROTC, recognition of local veterans' organizations and law enforcement agencies, laying of the wreaths and dedication, and a musical presentation by the Rockport-Fulton High School Band and Choir. Sigurd Murphy,

Assistant National Commodore - Forces Command (ANACO-FC), United States Coast Guard Auxiliary, will be the guest speaker.



Tropical Christmas – December 7. Tropical Christmas is a day-long

extravaganza kicking off the holiday season with fun, festivities, fireworks and more in Historical Rockport. Among the featured events are an illuminated night parade, children's programs, tour of historic homes, decorating contests, pet costume contest, treasure hunt, professional pirate show and costume contest, food and entertainment, and, of course, a visit with "Tropical Santa." Topping off the annual event will be a spectacular fireworks display.

For additional information on the event, including parade entries, contact the City of Rockport's Park and Leisure Services Department at 361-727-2158 or parks3@cityofrockport.com or go to www.cityofrockport.com.

Who Do I Call If ...

Emergency
Non-Emergency Public Safety
Utility Bill Questions/Concerns
Street Issues and Repairs
Sewer, Water and Gas Issues
Trash Pick-Up
City Administrative Offices
Building and Development Dept.

911
729-1111
729-2213 x 234
790-1160
790-1160
729-2213 x 234
729-2213 x 221
790-1125

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



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www.cityofrockport.com