

HAYS HAPPENINGS

September – November 2023 Vol. 2023, No. 5

The next city election will be held on May 4, 2024

The election will be for the following offices: Mayor (incumbent Billy Maphies), Council Member Place 3 (incumbent Tony Valdez), and Council Member Place 2 (incumbent Glennell Strawn). Residents wishing to file for a place on the ballot may file with City Secretary Cynthia McCall between January 17, 2024, and February 16, 2024.

To qualify as a candidate, the resident must: be a City of Hays resident for at least 6 months; be a state resident for at least 1 year; be at least 18 years old; and be a registered voter in the City of Hays by the filing deadline.

Bulk (or Clean Up) Day

The clean up day on November 4th did not go well mainly because the city did a poor job informing residents. It was posted on the city's website at cityofhays.org – please look at the website as it is updated frequently. The City Council voted to do the following to make sure all residents are better informed:

- 1. Send notices to all water customers.**
- 2. Place signs around the city to notify residents of the upcoming event.**
- 3. Place two containers at one site instead of at two sites.**
- 4. Notify residents on the city's website.**

Accomplishments

The city council reviewed the accomplishments during the past year:

- 1. Filed reports and paid past due payroll taxes.**
- 2. Reorganized the city office and city filing system.**
- 3. Set office hours of 10am – 2pm Monday – Thursday.**
- 4. Consolidated city funds into TexPool (a state-sponsored money market funds used by cities, counties, and other government agencies in Texas)**

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- 5. Updated the city's website (cityofhays.org).**
- 6. Picked up branches on the city's right-away after last winter's ice storm.**
- 7. Updated the city's fee schedule and water rate tariff.**
- 8. Worked many unpaid hours to try and work out an agreement with Milestone (and before that with Walters Southwest) to develop Hays Commons. Unfortunately, those efforts were not successful, and the 10-year Development Agreement with the City of Hays expired in September 2023.**
- 9. Hired a new City Secretary, City Treasurer, and City Attorney.**
- 10. Completed a 5-year audit of the city's financial books by the city's CPA firm.**

ETJ

Extraterritorial Jurisdiction (ETJ) is designated areas beyond the city's official boundaries in which the city is allowed to exercise limited authority over developments. Hays Commons exercised its rights to exit the city's ETJ on the first day a new state law allowed it to do so in September.

The City of Hays spent nearly 20 years working with developers to come to agreements for developing Hays Commons. The first developer envisioned a large, big box shopping area similar to Sunset Valley where the City of Hays would enjoy large sales tax revenue. The "Amazon effect" killed that vision. The second developer envisions dense single-family and multi-family projects with a wastewater plant adjacent to the City of Hays. The City of Hays has no power to negotiate with the developer.