

## **City Business** by Michael Leamons

We were caught off guard here at City Hall when Bryan DuBose turned in his two weeks notice. DuBose had received an offer he couldn't refuse from a private sector employer in the Metroplex. During his almost 4 years with the City, DuBose has provided exceptional service in encouraging code compliance, permitting and inspecting construction activities, providing guidance to the Planning and Zoning Commission (P&Z) and managing special projects. From 4:00 to 5:00 p.m. on Thursday, July 28<sup>th</sup>, refreshments will be served as staff and citizens are provided an opportunity to send Bryan off with best wishes as a new chapter in his career unfolds.

Recently, the City also learned that James Scott, Chairman of the P&Z, and his wife Kay have both taken jobs in New Mexico. James has served the City well on the P&Z and previously served on the City Council. May God bless the Scotts in their new endeavors.

The departures of DuBose, Scott and Max Robertson will be felt on the P&Z. At last month's meeting, the Council appointed Sunny Snyder to replace Robertson and also appointed Vikki Pitchford and Beau McClammy as alternates. Current members with a history of service on the P&Z include Michael Wurth, Sam Maserang and Randy McLean.

Whitney Underground Utilities, Inc. of Valley Mills began construction on the CDBG Wastewater Line Project. The contractor began the installation at the Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) and will be working his way up to Highway 6.

Staff continues to pursue various avenues for funding the proposed WWTP irrigation system as a solution to the City's ongoing phosphorus discharge permit exceedances. Last week, a run was made at some funding which could pay for 100% of the project if the Texas Department of State Health Services were to classify the City's phosphorus exceedances a "public health nuisance". The City is trying to discover if such a classification could be obtained.

The City recently received the 2011 Effect Tax Rate Worksheet from the Hamilton County Appraisal District. In spite of the recent annexation of 5 properties, total taxable property values in Hico have gone down slightly. To raise the same amount of property tax revenue, the tax rate would have to be increased 2¼ % from the current \$0.6999/\$100 to \$0.7159. Because of current economic hardships and after consulting with Mayor Tooley, staff intends on recommending that the Council maintain the current tax rate and that the approximately \$10,000 in lost property tax revenues be compensated for by spending cuts.

As a potential revenue source, the City is considering leasing part of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor of City Hall. If a tenant can be secured, the proposed \$12,000 in annual lease/utility payments would offset the anticipated property tax revenue losses. Also, the City is soliciting sealed bids for the Old Waterworks Property at the NE corner of College and Pecan. Both of the above, as well as the Building Official job opening, are advertised in this issue of the paper.

May God bless the City of Hico.