

City Business
March 14th Agenda
by Michael Leamons

The monthly, Regular City Council Meeting will be held on Monday, March 14th at 5:30 p.m. at City Hall. Though it may change between now and when it is posted on Friday, the following agenda items are expected to be taken up:

1. City Auditor, Riggs and Company, will present their findings for fiscal year 2009/2010. State Law requires an annual audit of the City's books. Last year when proposals for audits had been solicited, in addition to professional qualifications, the City had requested cost estimates for both a first and a second year audit. In their proposal, Riggs estimated a cost of \$8,800 for this year's audit and \$6,800 for next year's audit. (The first year's audit is more labor intensive as the auditor becomes familiar with the City's operations and books.) After the audit is delivered and reviewed, the Council will consider whether or not to ask Riggs to do next year's audit.
2. As a housekeeping matter, the City's Rate and Fee Schedule will be updated to reflect the Park User Fees and Deposits adopted at last month's meeting. The Council will be asked to approve a \$3.75/sq. ft. asphalt repair rate to be assessed against private companies and contractors who tear up City streets in the course of their business (Atmos Energy for one). This is the rate currently used by the City of Stephenville. Also, the Council will be asked to review the existing Customer Service Inspection fee and related hose bib backflow preventer requirement.
3. An updated Peddlers Ordinance will be considered for adoption. The existing Ordinance was adopted in 1977 and doesn't reflect current practices. A sample ordinance along with a list of questions and answers regarding legal issues connected to the ordinance was provided by the Texas Municipal League. The primary concern of the Peddlers Ordinance is to protect the public by securing identification for and conducting background checks on parties wishing to go door to door. In its current form, the proposed Ordinance would allow citizens to sign up on a no-peddlers-allowed list.
4. Atmos Energy is asking its municipal customers to approve a couple of blanket changes to the franchise agreement. When Hico recently initiated changes to its local franchise agreement, these provisions were incorporated, but Atmos' corporate office would still like the City to sign off on this system-wide initiative.
5. The Council will discuss the Old Pecan Street Waterworks Property which is no longer used. The Council is being asked, "Should the property be sold?" and, "If so, should it be sold now, or should the City continue to maintain the property in hopes the real estate market will improve."
6. Carried over from last month's meeting will be consideration of garbage collection options. At the last meeting the merits of cans versus bags was discussed. IESI had indicated pricing for wheeled carts would be forthcoming for the City's consideration. That pricing, an 80¢ per residential customer increase, has been received. To select the cart option, the City would have to re-negotiate its contract with IESI which is set to expire next year.
7. The Council will be presented with information regarding a proposal to change City Park lighting. Currently, the City pays \$4,200/year to light the Park. The lighting is unmetered, so the City is charged a flat fee per light. The lights are on all night, every

night, whereas the park is closed and locked daily at dark. The only time the lights are used is for Old Settlers Days or perhaps for some other special night-time event. The City is looking into buying the lights (the cost is presently under negotiation) and providing electricity through metered and switched circuits. That way, the City could leave the lights off unless there is a special event. Should lights be required, the event holder would be responsible for paying the City for the actual electricity used. Then, the City's only expense would be the maintenance costs associated with the lights.

8. The Council will be asked to ratify the 2010/2011 EDC Budget. This was scheduled for last month's meeting, but the EDC meeting at which the budget was to be adopted was canceled.

9. City Mission and Vision Statements and a set of Goals to guide the City will be discussed and possibly adopted. Because of a full agenda, this item was dropped from last month's meeting.

These pre-meeting agenda summaries are provided to give you an opportunity to weigh-in on decisions which may affect you. You are encouraged to discuss any agenda items of concern with your elected representatives as they consider the decisions at hand. Also, you are welcome to attend the meeting.

On a final note, some of last week's rumors of good news have been confirmed. The City received formal written notification of approval of the TCEQ Supplemental Environmental Project and of an extension regarding compliance with the Wastewater Treatment Plant permitted phosphorus discharge levels until July 1st.

May God bless the City of Hico.