

**City Business**  
by Michael Leamons

At its May 9<sup>th</sup> Meeting the Council:

1. Ratified the EDC TEEX proposal to develop a long term economic development plan for Hico.
2. Decided the LED lights wouldn't adequately light the Esplanade and elected to keep the existing street lights.
3. Discussed Mission and Vision Statements, but took no action since not all of the Council members were present.
4. Adopted a new Nuisance Ordinance which makes 3 changes to the existing Ordinance (for details see the Notice included in this paper).
5. Scheduled a Public Hearing on the rezoning proposal for the Old Pecan Street Waterworks Property for 5:15 p.m. June 13th.
6. Agreed to approve a Planning and Zoning Commission recommendation that two alleys be abandoned, provided the property owner has water and wastewater taps installed in the next 6 months as a show of commitment to his development proposal.
7. After making one change, voted to approve the IESI contract amendment and extension which would allow for the use of poly carts and provide for rate increases reflective of changes in the Consumer Price Index in accordance with the existing contract terms. The current contract gives IESI exclusive rights to haul all waste generated in the City of Hico. The Council asked that construction and demolition waste be exempted. IESI then proposed that construction and demolition waste be exempted provided it came from a single family residence, that the waste could only be transported by the owner and that it had to be taken to property the owner possessed outside of the City limits. The Council wasn't satisfied with these limitations and agreed to sign the extension if all construction and demolition waste is exempted, period.
8. Spent considerable time discussing recent developments regarding the Joint Law Enforcement Agreement. The Council expressed support for the current agreement. There was a degree of frustration over recent comments that Hico was getting more than it was paying for. At this meeting and at previous meetings where the contract has been discussed the following points have been brought up: the Deputies stationed in Hico provide service to all of northern Hamilton County, beside the Deputy on duty, the Sheriff, Chief Deputy and the two investigators all operate out of Hamilton, the citizens of Hico also pay County property taxes, citizens of the two cities pay \$161.80/capita toward the Law Enforcement Contract while citizens in the unincorporated areas of the County pay \$52.03/capita, the Deputy in Hico provides back-up to the Deputy in Hamilton and there is more law enforcement activity in Hamilton than in Hico.

The following analysis was included in the Council packet:

"Rather than focusing on the benefits accruing and responsibilities assigned to any of the three governmental entities, the benefits and responsibilities should be viewed with an eye toward the whole community of residents of Hamilton County. By having the agreement, resources are pooled and duplications of service are eliminated, allowing everyone to get the most bang for their bucks. By working together, there are always at least 2 deputies on duty in the County, two investigators are available to pursue drug related and other criminal activity and there is a coordinated county-wide response to

crime. If each entity goes back to providing its own law enforcement staff, costs will go up and the quality of service will go down.”

May God bless the City of Hico.