



City of Tomball
OFFICE OF THE CITY MANAGER



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TO: Mayor and City Council
FROM: Jan Belcher, City Manager
DATE: May 8, 2008
RE: Six Month Report

April 29 was my six-month anniversary. It is hard to believe that half a year has elapsed since I came to Tomball. I provided a 90-day report on what we – the staff and I – accomplished during that time and I would like to update you on the last three months. My next update will be my annual report to Council.

In the “Current Issues” section of the city manager recruitment brochure, the following issues were listed. I will address them in the order they were stated on the brochure and provide an update as to the progress on these items within the first ninety days.

It is important to point out that I cannot do these things alone. We have an excellent staff that has been supportive and responsive as we work together on these and other issues.

- Growth and Development – In order to address the growing needs of the community, particularly in the development area, I made some changes to city staffing to be more responsive to increasing demands:
 - Reorganized the departments for more efficient service delivery and accountability.
 - Named Mary Coker as Assistant City Manager for Community Development with responsibility for engineering/planning, public works and building official.
 - Gave Shawn Cox responsibility for municipal court, tax and community center.
 - Created an Executive Team made up of city manager, assistant city manager, assistant to city manager, police chief, fire chief, city secretary, director of engineering/planning, building official, director of public works and director of human resources. This group meets weekly.
 - Created the Tomball Management Team made up of the Executive Team plus the mid-management group, 36 people total, to increase communication at every level in the organization. The group meets monthly.
 - Created the Development Review Committee (DRC) to facilitate the development process. Developers can meet with the DRC to ask questions, begin a project and to see the project through completion and obtaining a certificate of occupancy. Members of this committee include the assistant city manager, director of engineering/planning, director of public works, fire marshal and utilities superintendent. This group has already made a significant difference in helping people through the complicated development process.

- Hired Mark McClure as Director of Engineering/Planning, and hired David Kauffman as Director of Public Works. Both of these positions had been open for quite some time. We are close to filling the Planner/Community Development Coordinator position as well. In addition, I have started the process to fill the Chief of Police position. Once the police chief position is filled, all major positions will be fully staffed.
- Financial Stability
 - Reviewed the budget process and calendar, which you will see very soon. We plan to increase the time spent on the budget process so we can scrutinize the expenditures and requests for next year.
 - Moved all purchasing activities to the purchasing agent and created templates for bids, proposals and quotes so we know all purchasing activities are conducted according to law.
 - Created a set of financial policies which will appear on next week's council agenda. The city had very limited financial policies adopted as part of the budget. The new guidelines will serve to implement the conservative direction set by council.
- Strategic Planning
 - Hired a strategic planning consultant.
 - Set the first strategic planning session with Council for February 29, 2008.
 - Working with Executive Team to create lists of projects that need attention in the next year.
 - Working on an update of the Capital Improvements Program (CIP) to provide current information on progress, funding and future action needed.
 - Update of the utilities master plan in progress.
- Downtown Redevelopment
 - Met with downtown business owners twice.
 - Met with officers of the group to discuss history and future desires for redevelopment.
 - Met with TxDOT officials regarding the pavement project on 2920.
 - Reviewed formerly adopted downtown plan and discussing options and timing with TxDOT.
- Municipal Facilities
 - Request for proposals for consulting firm to complete the facilities needs assessment is complete and will be issued soon.
 - City facility improvements previously approved in the budget are underway.
 - Fire station improvements previously approved are being redesigned to meet the current needs of the fire department.
- Purchase of Hooks Airport
 - Held meetings with our airport consultant, TxDOT Aviation officials, the airport master plan consultants and the airport owner.
 - Discussed funding strategies with TxDOT and FAA.
 - Provided updates to council about progress.

- Zoning
 - Completed staff work on the zoning ordinance and scheduled public hearing.
 - Ordinance approved on first reading.
 - Second reading scheduled for February 4, 2008.
 - Hired planning/zoning consultant to assist staff in quickly preparing the process and procedures for handling future development requests under the new ordinances which would take effect Marcy 5, 2008 (if adopted.)

- Sense of Community
 - Created an “open door” policy to welcome citizen input.
 - Meetings with numerous citizens and business owners to hear their concerns.
 - Returned numerous calls to citizens to help them through city rules and regulations or help with neighborhood issues.
 - Began a series of customer service training sessions with city staff.

- Community Relations
 - In addition to the items mentioned above under sense of community, met with top executives from Tomball Chamber of Commerce, Tomball Economic Development Corporation, Tomball Hospital, Tomball Independent School District, and Lone Star College-Tomball to establish working relationships.
 - Created a “Tomball Think Tank” made up of representatives of the about institutions to meet quarterly to discuss common issues. The first meeting is in February.
 - Attend Chamber luncheons, committee meetings and events.
 - Created a community outreach program where homeowner’s associations or other community groups can receive presentations from city staff. Code enforcement recently completed the first one.
 - Met with community groups such as the genealogy society to discuss their goals and concerns.
 - Work with media representatives to quickly and accurately answer their questions and provide the best possible representation for the City of Tomball.
 - Working with our web site designers and staff to create a more user friendly web site. Update of content is underway.

This information provides an overview of the first six months. I may have left something out, but it clearly shows progress in the direction you have set. I look forward to the many months and years to come as we work together for Tomball. Thank you again for this opportunity to serve this wonderful community.