

The Bandera PROPHET

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Briefings from Commissioners Court

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After receiving a petition from residents of Lake Medina Shores, Bandera County commissioners have been trying to form a feasible plan to improve and repair the roads in and leading into the Wharton's Dock subdivision.

"We've had about a month since the petition was submitted to the county," Pct 4 Commissioner Jordan Rutherford said, referencing shoulders that need repair, large holes in the road and no center striping, among other issues. "I've been forced off the road by larger vehicles that seem to want to take most of the road up."

Road and Bridge Supervisor John Andrade said he would get the costs of the paint to do center striping, as well as confer with an engineer to explore expanding the bridge crossing at San Julian Creek from six to eight feet.

County Judge Richard Evans cautioned that once construction begins, road crews would need help from the public in order to complete the work. Andrade said in the past, notices have been posted 30 days in advance but still motorists become frustrated with construction delays. He said flaggers have been intentionally bumped by cars and drivers pass the pilot cars.

"There are people who make it dangerous for our crews to work. They disregard barricades and speed limits," Evans said. "It puts our crews at risk. We have to be able to do it safely."

On the subject of road safety, Eino Zapata implored commissioners to help create a protected turn lane for residents of Lacey Park Subdivision off Hwy. 173, and reduce the speed limit near the intersection. Zapata

said there have been near misses at the dangerous intersection for both people who live there and passers by.

Dale Picha, Texas Department of Transportation operations director for the 12-county San Antonio district that includes Bandera County, said he agreed the speeds are too high, but setting it too low is dangerous, too. “The speed limit setting procedure is not arbitrary. People drive to the conditions of the roadway and very few people pay attention to signs,” Picha said. “Is 45 a reasonable speed limit on 173? Absolutely not. It’s more treacherous than 70.”

Picha said TxDOT has some criteria that engineers use to justify a speed reduction based on crash history, narrow shoulders, and pedestrian and bicyclist activities.

“I think there’s some justification to extending 55 mph to some degree, but I will need to look at the data,” he said. “Near Lacey, if people are driving 80 today, they’ll still drive 80 without some sort of physical change.”

Commissioners unanimously approved a resolution supporting the petition to reduce the speed limit and add a turn lane.

In their monthly reports, Sheriff Dan Butts said the Sheriff’s Office received 567 priority calls and deputies traveled 26,794 miles during June. The average response time was 13.07 seconds. Deputies made 31 arrests and there were 60 people booked into the county jail.

The average inmate population was 65, of those three were contracted from surrounding counties.

“We’re up to 62 of our own inmates,” Butts said.

The animal control facility took in 30 dogs and zero cats; the average dog population was 12, the average cat population was zero.

Dispatchers fielded 6,913 incoming calls and 1,413 911 calls.

“That number just seems to keep going up,” Butts said.

EMS Director Calvin Plummer said his department received 229 EMS calls and EMTs traveled 12,223 miles for the same month. The average tone to en route time was 1.12 minutes, and the average tone to on scene time was 9.46 minutes.

Plummer said the county EMS received 2,120 calls thus far for the fiscal year.

Commissioners will hold their next regular session on Thursday, Aug. 12, at 10 a.m., in the Bandera County Courthouse.