

The Bandera PROPHEET

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Bandera City Council Notes

Council members discuss open records requests, the April 8 Easter Parade, eclipse planning

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The Bandera Prophet

Bandera City Council members on Tuesday discussed but delayed decision about whether to amend an ordinance that limits, by month and by year, Open Records Requests.

City Secretary Jill Shelton said certain people “continually flood” her inbox with ORRs, one of which was more than 800 pages long.

“I spend weeks and weeks and weeks on these requests, and they just continue to keep coming,” Shelton said, calling the inundation a form of harassment. “One person threatened to fill my inbox with ORRs for more than a year. It’s gotten to a point where I can’t get anything else done.”

The policy, if adopted, would limit requests from the same person to 36 hours annually, and 15 hours per month.

“It won’t stop people from filing ORRs, but we will keep track of who’s filing them and the amount of time that will be spent responding to them,” Council Member Lynn Palmer said. “It has cost the city, and has put our city secretary behind on her day-to-day tasks.”

Council briefly discussed whether to charge an hourly fee for requests that exceed the time limit, however they ultimately decided to postpone action until the April 21 regular meeting, when the city attorney would be present.

In other business, council approved the use of City Park for the April 8 Easter Parade. Parade-goers will be admitted to the park at no charge. The parade will begin at 10 a.m. Registration will take place at 9 a.m.

Palmer questioned the \$150 cleanup deposit, stating Glen and Marcia McComb, owners of the Bandera General Store, already pay city taxes and are offering to host the free community event.

“I don’t think we should charge a \$150 deposit fee. I know they don’t have a problem paying that, but... I feel we should allow them to use the park without that fee,” Palmer said. “It’s no different to the pet parade, or Mardi Gras parade when everyone uses the park. I feel like they’ll leave the park the way they found it.”

McComb said he did not mind paying the deposit, which is fully refundable if no city cleanup is required.

City Administrator William Cox said the event did not trigger the standard \$1,000 daily rental fee, and council could approve the contract exempting the cleanup deposit. Council Members Tony Battle and Jeff Flowers said they had no problem with a good faith deposit, voting to approve the contract as presented.

“Thank you all very much,” McComb said. “We’ll be hoppin’ down the bunny trail.”

Patricia Moore, executive director of the Bandera County Convention and Visitors Bureau, told council that a business meeting to discuss the upcoming October and April 2024 eclipses will be held Wednesday, March 29, at 6 p.m.

“Nationwide or all over Texas, there’s really no panic about the October eclipse. It’s always been described as a dress rehearsal for the April 24, 2024 event,” Moore said. “But the population could increase three to four times. It will not only impact restaurants and Main Street businesses, but if your well goes out, good luck getting anyone out there.”

Future agenda item requests from council members include agenda packet deadlines, budget adjustment for emergency water well repairs, loitering, City Park facility use agreement, noise permit, BEDC sign requests, and personnel manual updates.