

The Bandera PROPHEET

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City Council Notes

By Jessica Nohealapa'ahi
The Bandera Prophet

Bandera City Council members passed a resolution expressing no objection to the renovation of 76 apartments at Oaks Trails (Oaks of Bandera) on Old San Antonio Road in front of Bandera High School. Speaking to council last week, management company representative Trey Hunt said the complex, built in 2006, is under new ownership, and plans for the property's rehabilitation will move forward this summer. Scheduled among the improvements are new roofing, Energy Star appliances, floor replacements, new AC units, new cabinetry, ADA renovations at the pool and sidewalks, and the addition of four ADA compliant units. The \$3 million rehab is expected to be complete within one year, Hunt said, and the tenants will be able to stay in their homes during construction.

Hunt said the organization is not requesting a tax abatement or exemption. The city was asked to pass the resolution in accordance with the Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs requirements, because the proportion of the city's population living in affordable housing doubles the state average (the state average is 0.0108, compared to Bandera at 0.113263).

"Based on the market study, there is a need for this type of unit in the area," Hunt said.

It is a statewide issue, and a necessity in every community, Council Member Tony Battle said.

"While serving on the EDC in New Braunfels...affordable housing became a dirty word in a lot of communities," Battle said. "We have a really good location for it, and it serves the community well."

~ In other business, council took care of some housekeeping, including changing the day council holds regular meetings. Normally scheduled for the first and third Tuesdays at 6 p.m., City Attorney Dan Santee will no longer be available on the third Tuesday of the month. To accommodate, council will shift its regular meetings to the second and fourth Tuesdays of the month, effective in June.

~ Council discussed the roles and responsibilities of council members, regarding emails and directives to city staff. “City council determines policy with advice from public boards established by council and the city staff,” Santee said. “I’m not here on a daily basis, so I’m not suggesting anyone has run afoul of that. The problem is when any employee does not see it that way, or doesn’t interpret the rule that way.”

“Council gives directive as a body,” Santee continued, adding no single council member may direct him to take action that will incur cost from the city. “This is a way to protect council members. If an employee takes a directive, they do so at their own risk.”

Santee also said it was not acceptable for council members to speak during the public forum, because they have a unique opportunity to place items on the agenda. According to the attorney general’s opinion, those who sit on a board or commission may not speak during the citizen’s comments section of their meetings.

~ Council will hold a special meeting on Thursday, May 25, at 6 p.m., during which members will go into closed session to complete Zoom interviews with possible candidates for city administrator. The next regular meeting will be Thursday, June 13, at 6 p.m.