

The Bandera PROPHET

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Bandera City Council Notes

City Council members approve HOT funds commitment; surplus property in Marshal's Office, Public Works

By Jessica Nohealapa'ahi

The Bandera Prophet

Bandera City Council members approved an agreement that sets aside \$50,000 from Hotel Occupancy Tax funds to Social Hill Music, LLC, dba 11th Street Cowboy Bar, for reimbursement of music events and projects throughout the year.

There is currently \$130,000 in the HOT fund balance. City Administrator Stan Farmer said the city budget projects \$60,000 in HOT revenue this year, twice the \$30,000 typically raised annually.

"I can't project with only three months of data in the off-season that we would get that much, but that is what is projected," Farmer said, adding \$7,100 had been collected from October to December.

D. Foster, of 11th Street Cowboy Bar, originally requested \$75,000, but said he spent closer to \$100,000 on promoting events in 2023.

"I'm concerned about setting a precedent," Councilman Tony Battle said. "There are a lot of businesses in town that generate heads in beds. In fully transparent fashion, we would generate an RFP and advertise for applicants."

Battle further stated the HOT funds could also be used for capital improvements that relate to "heads in beds," such as work in City Park.

"There are needs throughout the community," Battle said. "The goose that laid the golden egg is the park."

Acknowledging the city needed to better communicate the availability of HOT funds with businesses, Councilwoman Lynn Palmer said Foster

“did everything he was supposed to do in order to request this funding,” adding she was open to a smaller financial commitment, as well as scheduling a workshop to further discuss the distribution of the money. “I want to be educated more. It doesn’t seem like we have enough information to make a decision,” Councilman Brett Hicks said. “We can’t pay \$50,000 if we don’t make that in one year.”

The motion to commit \$50,000 to 11th Street carried with Councilwoman Debbie Breen, Palmer and Councilman Jeff Flowers in favor; Battle and Hicks abstained.

~ In other business, council approved the declaration of surplus property valued at an estimated \$7,500 for the Bandera Marshal's office. The items include a 2016 Aluma MC210 motorcycle trailer; a Colt M4 fully automatic rifle; and an IWI Tavor-X95 fully automatic rifle.

“I don’t think we need machine guns in Bandera,” Marshal Nancy De Foster said, adding the guns, as well as the motorcycle trailer, were already in inventory when she took office.

De Foster said the X95 was purchased in 2017 for \$1,291, and she could not find paperwork on the Colt. She said the motorcycle trailer was purchased in 2017 or 2018, however the Marshal’s Office did not own a motorcycle.

De Foster said the firearms would be sold to other law enforcement agencies in accordance with regulations set by the federal Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives.

Council members also approved the application for a grant from the Office of the Governor Public Safety Office Criminal Justice Division, for funding of body-worn camera equipment. The funding per applicant is uncapped with a 25-percent match requirement.

~ Council members unanimously approved an update to the Bandera Comprehensive Plan and Code of Ordinances, requiring storage of RVs on properties outside of P2 to be located in the second or third layer of the lot.

The wording, reviewed by the Planning and Zoning Commission, states, “...residential occupancy of recreational vehicles within the city limits shall be permitted only in Place Type 2 (P2). Residential occupancy of one (1) recreational vehicle outside of Place Type 2 (P2) shall be permitted for a period not to exceed fourteen (14) days within any given one-year period, whether calculated cumulative or consecutively. Such limited residential occupancy shall also be subject to all applicable City, county, and state laws and regulations. A recreational vehicle must remain mobile at all times in that it must be capable of running and being driven under its own power or is capable of being towed without any physical modification. Storage of one (1) unoccupied recreational vehicle is permitted in all districts of the City. However, such storage is prohibited on public streets and rights-of-way. Storage outside of Place Type 2 (P2) must be located in the second or third layer of the lot.”

~ Bandera County Convention and Visitor’s Bureau Executive Director Patricia Moore said an eclipse planning meeting was planned for Wednesday, Jan. 17, at 6 p.m., at Mansfield Park. The total solar eclipse will take place Monday, April 8.

~ In his report to council, Farmer proposed publishing a regular community newsletter. He said while several options were available, he suggested a two-page letter inserted in utility bills. Flowers also suggested the newsletter be available in digital format, via the city website and email.

~ City Public Works Officer Terry Wells recommended council declare a pressure tank, abandoned 13 years ago at the Dallas well site, as surplus property, which could then be sold to the Medina Water System for \$2,500.

“It has not been used for 20 years,” Wells said, adding the tank was one of two. “We’ll keep the other one as a back-up.”

Wells said the approximately 8,000-pound tank could be sold for scrap metal at 32 cents per pound, however the Medina Water System has requested to purchase it.

“This way, we’d be helping another community,” Wells said.