

The Bandera PROPHEET

March 1, 2024

Notes from Bandera City Council

By Jessica Nohealapa'ahi
The Bandera Prophet

The gates at Bandera City Park will open at 8 a.m., on Monday, April 8, to host visiting total eclipse chasers.

Each car will be charged \$50 to park near the banks of the Medina River, and guests will be required to wear wristbands. The city has not solicited vendors, however there may be a few on site, and amenities will be available for sale.

“We won’t gouge anyone,” City Administrator Stan Farmer said during council’s regular meeting on Tuesday, adding eclipse viewing glasses and water bottles would cost a couple dollars each.

Limited eclipse t-shirts, designed by City Treasurer and Park Superintendent Allyson Wright, will sell for \$25 each. The park will remain open until 8 p.m.

The eclipse transition will begin at 12:14 p.m.; totality will take place at about 1:33 p.m., and last about four minutes; the transition will end at 2:55 p.m.

A public meeting on eclipse preparedness, hosted by the Bandera County Convention and Visitors Bureau, the county Chamber of Commerce and the Bandera Business Association, is set for March 12, at the Pipe Creek Volunteer Fire Department Bingo Hall, from 6-7 p.m.

In other business, council members discussed a Hotel Occupancy Tax application policy, however no action was taken, pending more research. Although the application is accessible on the city’s website, Wright said the fund’s remaining revenue has been budgeted for the eclipse.

“Technically, there is no money to give,” Wright said.

Mayor Rebeca Gibson suggested the city attempt to identify short term rentals that are neither properly filed nor paying appropriate hotel occupancy taxes.

CVB Executive Director Patricia Moore said the county is working with a company that searches for short-term rentals operating under the table. “The city could easily dovetail on the county contract. It’s worth looking into,” Moore said.

~ Council members approved an amendment to the City of Bandera Code of Ordinances Chapter 13 Drought Contingency Plan, Section 13.09.069 Drought Response Stage Responses and Water Use Restrictions. Councilman Tony Battle said a committee has worked on the ordinance for at least the last six months, which culminated last week in a meeting with the Bandera County River Authority and Groundwater District.

“It was interesting and eye-opening for me,” Battle said, adding he has new insight regarding BCRAAGD’s drought restrictions triggers, with which the city aligns.

The ordinance was revised to allow watering of trees by a hand-held hose, the watering of building foundations to prevent irreversable structural damage, the watering of gardens to sustain fruits and vegetables, and maintaining existing swimming pool levels when water evaporates. Battle said BCRAAGD was “very amenable” to the amendments.

“These would be allowed in all stages (1 to 5),” Battle said.