

Notes & Questions from the District 3 Listening Session

The Opportunity Center recently lost the bid to assist the City in picking up trash.

Questions & Answers:

- Why did that happen? Why did the City not choose the Opportunity Center?
 - The City posted an RFP for Park Facility Cleaning in spring, 2023, with bids due in May. The RFP requested bids for 1) restroom cleaning services only, 2) outdoor facility cleaning services only, or 3) both restroom cleaning AND outdoor facility cleaning services together. Six (6) parks were listed with restroom cleaning requirements, including three (3) that were being requested to be cleaned Monday – Sunday (every day of the week). Six (6) parks were listed with facility cleaning requirements, including two (2) to be cleaned Monday-Sunday (every day of the week).
 - The Opportunity Center submitted a bid for park facility cleaning only, but could not meet the requirements of the RFP since they cannot work on weekends. Without being able to fulfill the requirements of the bid request, their bid was invalidated as a “No Bid”.
- Why was the weekend added to the bid when it was “ok” that the Opportunity Center wasn’t picking up on the weekends before?
 - Baytown’s Parks and Recreation staff was being utilized to clean parks and restrooms, often at an overtime rate.
 - Restroom cleaning was added to the contract. This service was not performed previously by Opportunity Center, but was instead done by staff, with overtime rates not uncommon.
- Was it a Baytown company that was awarded the contract?
 - The contract was awarded to a company based in Austin, but that company held the current contract for cleaning and janitorial services for the City of Baytown, so we were aware of their positive quality of service.
 - Del Sol is not a Baytown company but they are a company that the City currently has multiple contracts with for the following:
 - Building Janitorial Services (City buildings)
 - CJIS Janitorial Services (Police building locations)
 - Nuisance Abatement Mowing (Health)

Water Bills – discussion around water bills being higher in the summer of 2023 than they were before.

Questions:

- Why were water bills so high last year?

- Without having the specific detail related to individual water bills, there could be several reasons why water bills were higher last year.
 - A change in household behavior could contribute to higher water consumption.
 - Rates were increased and the sewer rate cap was removed. This was the most impactful reason regarding a majority of the calls staff received.
 - Undetected leaks could create an increase in water consumption.
 - The Houston area experienced a drought during the summer of 2023 due to extreme heat.
- Is the City able to rebate/refund citizens if homeowners choose to get a new irrigation meter?
 - The City Council would need to take this action upon an updated policy. The City Council will hear more information about rates and possible solutions in the coming months.
- Will the sewer cap rates be addressed by Council?
 - The City Council will discuss water/sewer rates, along with the sewer cap rate in the coming months.

Ditches on Shrek – there was a discussion around the culverts on Shrek not draining as they should. The residents want to know if it is on the City's radar and being addressed. Councilmember Griffith discussed how the City has addressed the issue, and the residents stated there is still standing water.

Questions:

- What is the City's plan to ensure the drainage in the area is flowing as designed?
 - 12 City Works requests/jobs completed including ditches cut 10/2020 and again first quarter of 2023, excel spreadsheet attached
 - Attached is a contour map showing the natural land drainage through Mr. Woodard's property.
 - Attached is a satellite map showing the same natural drainage through Mr. Woodard's property. This map also shows a low area in his yard. Plus, the driveway to the metal building and metal building disrupts the natural flow of rain runoff.
 - Attached are pictures of the ditches on Shreck during a recent rain event. The ditches are flowing with no issues. We received approximately 1" of rain in the hour between 2-3 o'clock. These pictures were taken after that time.
 - Jesus Favela (Storm Water Maintenance Foreman) has spoke with Mr. Woodard on multiple occasions about the drainage on W. Shreck. Jesus has explained to him that the ditches are not the issue with the property at 113 W. Shreck. The issue is on private property and not in City of Baytown's R.O.W.

- Staff has mentioned it is private property and the City has limited options with private property. The citizens stated the City has a lift station near the private property. Can the City use the road easement to the lift station for drainage?
 - The City will further investigate this.

Safety issues – regarding the homeless. There was a lengthy discussion around how citizens do not feel safe due to homeless issues in certain areas.

Questions:

- What is the City doing to address the homeless situation?
 - The BPD Crime Prevention Unit has begun working with the area homeless population and patrol units to identify homeless persons and camps. We are offering them the opportunity to enter the diversion center where they get IDs, lodging, medical, and assistance with work placement and finding permanent residence.
 - CPU has begun training and observations of HPDs Homeless Outreach Team to learn how we can be more involved impactful
 - Patrol is locating camps and working with the City Clean Team to dismantle and rehab the sites, using CPU to arrange for willing persons to enter the Diversion Center.
 - Park Field Supervisors are doing random after hour monitoring using their Parks and Recreation Trucks with flashing lights. To date this has proven to be a proactive way to decrease vandalism and disrupt homeless activity. In fact, most recently we were having issues with a homeless person living in the port a potty at Bergeron Park. During one of the after hour trips to ensure no one was staying at the park, Field Supervisor, Leonard Graham, noticed a recently lit pile of pine needles near the playground. He was able to put out the small fire, and notified BPD who relayed to the Fire Department.
 - Health is working with PD to clean-up homeless encampments as they are identified.
- Is the Council discussing options?
 - Yes, the City Council recently discussed this topic at the Council retreat. They asked staff to bring options for consideration in the coming months.
- Can a new item be added to the Better Baytown App so that residents can report homeless encampments or homeless incidents?
 - Can this be used by business owners so they can report to the PD for trespassing?
 - BPD is in favor of this. Generally, it would expand the BPD awareness of the areas where camps pop up. BPD would also like to ensure it can record metrics on reports from the public. It would be a force multiplier for Officer King, who leads this initiative for CPU. He makes in-person contact with business owners to get trespass affidavits signed for

properties. An App would be beneficial for all, but would obviously require some intentional discussions about policy, content, intent, and use.

Panhandling – there was a small discussion about panhandling, with the majority of the conversation around the Bayway/Decker area. A small discussion also mentioned panhandling at 146/I-10 area. Overall, the residents wanted to bring awareness to it.

Questions:

- What is the City's stance on panhandling?
 - it is a dangerous practice that disrupts and impedes traffic. It also often harasses, annoys, or alarms others.
- Is there an ordinance that currently addresses it?
 - Yes Sec. 74-31. - Standing in roadway prohibited. "A person may not stand in a roadway for the purpose of soliciting a ride, contribution, employment or business from the occupant of any vehicle."
- Do employees actively enforce this?
 - Yes. PD has adopted zero tolerance over the last year and we have seen a noticeable reduction, especially along I-10 in the areas of Garth, John Martin, and N Main. We are still working on 146 areas. But have also greatly reduced the amount panhandling and sales along Garth in front HEB, Walmart, and Lowe's.

Fireworks – there was a small discussion about fireworks being activated in the County, but very close to the City limits.

Questions:

- Is there an ordinance that addresses fireworks being activated too close to the city limits?
 - Yes. We enforce to the best of our ability, but call volume makes it difficult during holidays.
- Sec. 38-195. - Penalty for violation.
- Any person violating any provision of this article shall, upon conviction be punished by a fine as provided in section 1-14.
- Sec. 70-6. - Firearms or fireworks.
 - It shall be unlawful for any person to carry or discharge any firearm, firecracker, rocket, torpedo or any other firework, airgun, BB gun or slingshot on or over any park.
- Sec. 38-193. - Unlawful discharge, ignition, display, or detonation.
 - Except as provided in this article, it shall be unlawful for any person without a permit, to: (1) Ignite, detonate, cast, throw, discharge or explode any, firecracker, torpedo, sky rocket, Roman candle or any other similar firework or to cause to be ignited,

detonated, cast, thrown, discharged, or exploded any substance of an explosive or pyrotechnical nature above, below, within, or upon any land, structure, body of water, or any other place within the jurisdiction;(2)Ignite, detonate, or cause to be ignited or detonated, any pyrotechnic charge or device above, below, within or upon any land, structure, body of water or any other place within the jurisdiction; or(3)Detonate, or cause to be detonated any explosive above, below, within or upon any land, structure, body of water or any other place within the jurisdiction.

- Can the City expand that distance?
 - The City's legal department is looking into this.

Exxon spoke about their operations and their plan to address noise and smell complaints. The plant manager took questions.