



ARANSAS PASS CITY NEWS

Issue 45

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ARANSAS PASS CITY COUNCIL HOLDS EMERGENCY MEETING

(City's Water System Shut Down For 42 Hours)

On Friday evening, June 25th, the Aransas Pass City Council held a hastily called emergency session. The meeting was necessary to address a possible threat to the City's potable and non-potable water supply. The City continues to see record-setting growth. Consequently, the City is working with business developers to get older business locations up to date with current codes. In doing so, the City discovered an issue at a local shopping center that might have led to last weekend's water crisis. It was a problem dating back several years.. We wanted to make sure the problem didn't spread citywide, so we contacted the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ). Neither TCEQ nor the City wanted to take chances, so the City's water system was shut down until tests could be conducted at labs in Houston and Savannah, Ga. With the help of the State we flew the test results to Savannah. Below left is a screen grab of the live stream from the emergency meeting. At the podium is EOC Director and Assistant Police Chief Lynn Pearce. The inset picture at the lower left shows Pearce addressing the City Council. Picture on the right is of a TCEQ official delivering by jet plane Aransas Pass water samples for testing to laboratories in Houston and Savannah, Ga. With the assistance of the State, the testing process was expedited and the ban was lifted. **WHAT HAPPENED? SEE BACK PAGE FOR MOST CURRENT EXPLANATION OF THIS EVOLVING SITUATION.**





Wastewater Treatment Plant Renovations Are Complete

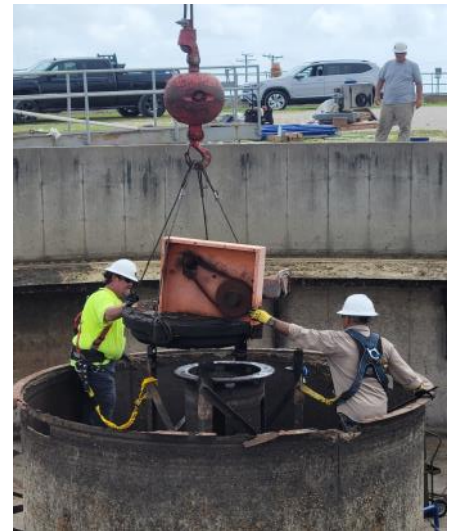
The WWTP Clarifier was commissioned back in 1984 and has never been restored until now. The work was completed on June 11th. The project was funded by a 2020 Tax Note at a cost of \$123,810. The Contractor was Rebuild-It Service Group. Please see two pics below of renovation work.

The Stapp/North McCampbell Project Given The Notice to Proceed

The long-awaited Stapp/N, McCampbell Drainage improvement project received its Notice to Proceed. Construction will start July 5th and will conclude about April 1 of next year.

This project is one of several that will be paid for from a \$10 Million Community Development Block Grant, which is being administered by the State of Texas.

The contractor for this project is R.S. Parker Construction from Corpus Christi. Above pic is of the June 24th Stapp/N. McCampbell pre-construction meeting at the City Hall Council Chambers.



Conn Brown Harbor Bulkhead Repairs Now Underway

The City's Last large FEMA project, repairs to the Conn Brown bulkhead damaged by Hurricane Harvey, is well underway. Work should be completed by the Spring of next year.. The Contractor is H.M. Davidson. See pic below.



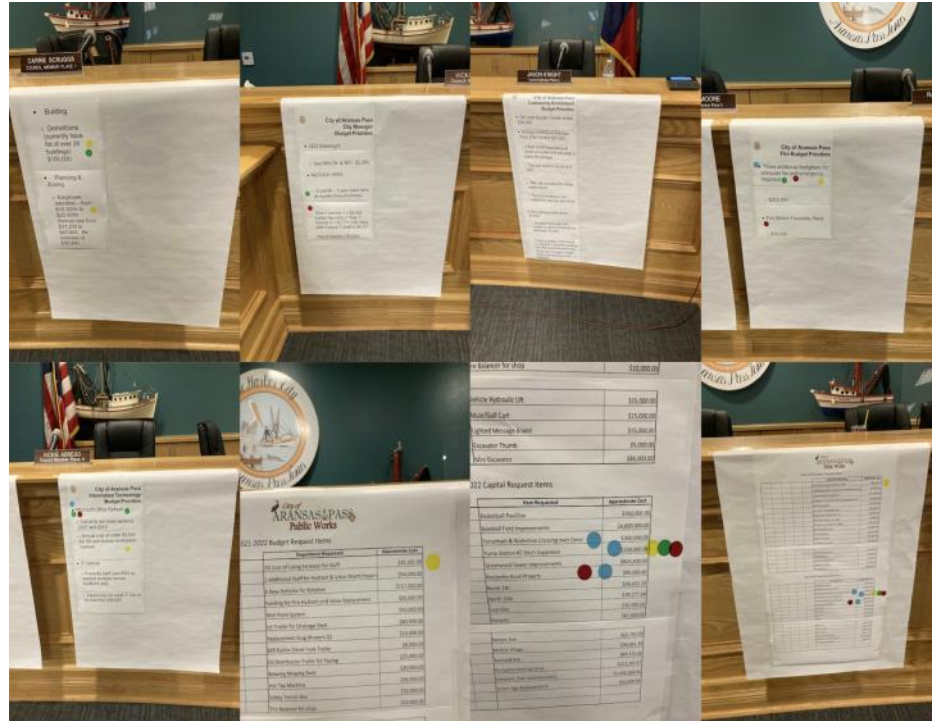


WORLD'S LARGEST SWIM LESSON

On June 17th, the Aransas Pass Aquatic Center participated again this year in the World's largest Swim Lesson. Its purpose is to send the message that drowning is preventable and swimming lessons save lives. The event is an official Guinness Book of World Records event. See above pic.

CONTACT US

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City Council and Department Heads Present Budget Priorities

During a special June 18th meeting, the Aransas Pass City Council heard from Department Heads about their FY21-22 budget priorities. Pictured above are the high ranking budget items for each City Department. These were posted around the room and at the conclusion of the meeting City Council members placed stickers on their preferred budget items. These were tabulated and the results were taken to the week-long budget meetings. Members of the public also participated at the June 18th meeting.

CITY BUDGET MEETINGS IN PROGRESS

During late June, budget meetings between the City budget committee and department heads were held. Department heads spent that time defending their budget requests. Also incorporated were the City Council's budgetary priorities. The committee is made up of Councilmember Vickie Abrego, Finance Director Sandra Garcia and City Manager Gary Edwards. See pic below. The budget must be completed before October 1st.



So....Why Was The 42 Hour June 25th Weekend Shutdown Of The City Water System Necessary?

In a high growth area such as the Coastal Bend and Aransas Pass, we are finding infrastructure problems from years past. But the responsibility to correct those problems falls directly on the City's shoulders. The recent water shutdown is one example. Another is the City's recent efforts to require RV Parks to have backflow preventers. Old water and sewer pipes need to be replaced throughout the City. These are just three examples. There is much more to do. .

The shutdown was a necessary precaution. Working with the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) it was agreed that we did not want to take a chance with the public's health and safety. Keep in mind, this was a complete shutdown...not just a boil order. Generally, the problem was the the lack of a Backflow Preventer at a local shopping center. Without a backflow preventer, there is always the chance pollutants could flow back into the City's water system. The City had reason to believe anti-freeze from an old store sprinkler system may have backed up into the City Water supply. However, testing at TCEQ certified laboratories in Houston and Savannah, Ga determined there was no anti-freeze in the water, and we were given the all-clear.

The City wants to thank Harbor Freight. They told us early on that there was no backflow preventer at the former Bealls, the building they had renovated. They were trying to correct the problem that they apparently inherited. The City is trying to determine why, for many years, there may have been no backflow preventer at that location.

Although inconclusive at this time, it appears that private inspectors pointed out a decade or longer ago that the building had no backflow preventer. On the other hand, subsequent inspections didn't indicate that this potential problem existed. Keep in mind this whole matter still is being reviewed. As of this writing, not all the answers are known. In a few weeks the City will be meeting with TCEQ for training sessions on backflow preventers. A local committee is being set-up to work with TCEQ on this matter. The goal is to prevent a reoccurrence of a similar problem. Below is a graphic of an industrial level backflow preventer courtesy of Pipingnow.

