



## ***Teamwork keeps our city humming along***

The City Council approved our general fund and utilities budget for the fiscal year which began October first. As new residents and businesses make Boerne their home and pay their property taxes, state law requires that we must make sure our revenues square with our expenses – much like you do with your own household budgeting. This year we did not need to increase the city's property tax rate to cover all of the additional services that this community demands. In fact the city property tax rate has been steady at 47.2 cents per one hundred dollar valuation for seven years in a row. And for those of you who are new to our area, the city of Boerne also owns and maintains the Boerne electric, natural gas, water, wastewater, and reclaimed water utilities for over 15,000 residents and businesses. Expenses for those services are covered by the fees you pay for your utilities.

As we all know we live in the "information age"; how did we ever get by without computers and the portable devices that we all use? The Information Technology (IT) industry impacts our everyday lives and it takes a team of critical thinkers to keep us all connected. IT refers to anything related to computing technology, such as networking, hardware, software, the Internet, and the people that work with these technologies. Every one of us uses either a desktop or laptop computer, a mobile device and applications, the internet, security systems and more. Behind the scenes there are servers, networks, databases, voice communication systems and cyber security processes that are managed by IT professionals. We have a fantastic crew at the city of Boerne – Mike Raute, Sheldon Cravey, Antony Moy, and Barrett Squires keep our systems humming along, not just for our city offices, but for you the Boerne public. Did you know there are several Wi-Fi hotspots throughout town so people can access the internet for free? These are located in all of our public park areas, along the trails, and along the Hill Country Mile.

Another group of city staffers that I want to recognize here are members of the Boerne Fire Department – Chris Copeland, Toby Vicknair, Beau Obregon, Josh Seillier, and Michael Sullivan. These firefighters/paramedics deployed to the Port Arthur and Houston areas a few weeks ago as active members of the state's disaster response team. Adam Hawkins, from the Bergheim Fire Department, also joined the team. Chris, Toby, and Josh shared some of their Hurricane Harvey response and recovery experiences during one of my recent Facebook Live segments. If you would like to watch, just go to my Mayor Mike Schultz Facebook page and check out the September 28<sup>th</sup> segment.

There are still a lot of folks working to recover from the devastating impacts of Hurricane Harvey's trek along the gulf coast last month. While the Boerne area felt very little physical impact from Hurricane Harvey, hotels, restaurants and shops, especially those along the Hill Country Mile, may feel Harvey's impact for months to come. Boerne's tourism industry typically experiences a very robust holiday season with a lot of gulf coast visitors. We don't expect as many from those areas this year, so our Convention and Visitors Bureau is advertising in other markets such as Austin and central Texas.

As you probably know by now, we have already begun promoting the annual Dickens on Main events, being held Thanksgiving weekend, and the Parks Department is already taking applications for the annual Weihnacht parade scheduled for December 2<sup>nd</sup>.

That leads me right into recognizing and thanking our Parks and Recreation Department team for their outstanding work in the Boerne community. They were recently presented with awards from the Texas Amateur Athletic Federation – the "Platinum City" award for the third consecutive year and the "Member City of the Year" award, the highest award given by TAAF. These awards are not possible without an amazing parks maintenance crew that keeps our sports fields in shape and ready for play for the hundreds of amateur sports teams we host every year.

In closing, please help me encourage all of the drivers you know to use extra caution when traveling near our schools. Over the last few weeks there have been some totally unnecessary pedestrian and vehicle accidents in these areas. It is so important for people to slow down, be vigilant and patient, and use extreme caution in our school zones or anywhere near a school, whether in a designated school zone or not. With so many parents choosing to drop off or pick up their children, it can get chaotic during those peak times. And there are a lot of students and staff walking, so please, please be very careful and move slowly through these areas.

I look forward to seeing many of you out and about enjoying all of the wonderful Fall season activities in Boerne!