

# RANSOM CANYON CITY NEWS

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**April 13 City Council Business**

- Accounting Software Previewed
- Atmos Energy Rate Increase Approved
- May election cancelled
- 40 yr roof warranty approved
- Horseshoe Hill development considered
- Drought Conservation plan fallout
- Water Tower Plans
- Bad News from Cops Fast Grant

## CHANGING OF THE GUARD

With a delayed swearing-in ceremony, (see insert) the new city council will hit the ground running next month to deliberate capital projects, new budgets, and city development projects that are already on the council agenda.

The second part of the 1.3 million dollar bond issue, the construction of a new water tower, is finally going to happen. The council met in special work session in March to discuss several water needs scenarios. The Town's engineers studied current use, pressures, water lines, fire hydrant pressures, and total system capability. They added the "build-out" estimates for Ransom Canyon as it will look when it is totally developed. There are currently 454 homes with about 40 sprinkler systems. This number could double within current city limits, with no annexation of adjoining property.

The council chose to build a new 300-350 thousand

The Town of Ransom Canyon hereby cancels the election scheduled to be held on May 15, 2004 in accordance with Section 2.053 (a) of the Texas Election Code. The following candidates have been certified as unopposed and are hereby elected as follows: Ron Cox, Richard Hulslander, Earl Starks, all elected to the offices of Alderman. There was no declaration of write-in candidacy, and no proposition is on the ballot.

The regular city council meeting is May 11, but the new city councilmen must wait to be sworn in until after the May 15 election. The general election date was changed by the legislature to May 15.

gallon elevated tank to replace the old ground storage tanks. Also, a 5-10 year plan to replace key arteries of the 40 year old water system will be on the new council's plate.

The outgoing council will wrap up business with an amended budget, and may tackle the issue of hiring a third police officer. At the April Council meeting, the council discussed hiring the third officer anyway, but decided to wait and review the amended budget. The decision to hire a third officer now will affect next year and subsequent

years. It will consider loss of 30K in budgeted Grant revenue in both this year and next.. Leon Whetzel commented that it would be good to consider the positions of the incoming council.

Aside from water, sewer and staffing challenges, the new council will be working with an amended budget, and will immediately launch into the 04-05 budget planning sessions.

New plat development and new home construction activity will challenge the council's skill in city planning, and city facilities planning.

## POLICE GRANT DENIED

In 1995, courtesy of the Bill Clinton Administration, Ransom Canyon went from one policeman to two, courtesy of a COPS-FAST Grant. This grant was a 75% match that paid 100% expense the first year. Last summer Ransom Canyon

applied for another grant under the same program. It was denied in the fall and has been denied the second draft this spring. Hiring of the new officer was delayed. The grant request that was worked into the budget was for a total Federal Revenue of \$75,000,

with \$30K due the first year. When the initial grant was denied, Chief Rawls said his team would continue to absorb the extra work, hoping for the possible 75K revenue. But with this latest news, Chief Rawls has renewed his request for the third officer.

## CINGULAR BILLS RAISE EYEBROWS

Two city cell phone bills with Cingular Wireless had charges that were way off the chart, and Chief Wayne Rawls and Officer James Hill have inves-



tigated and find the following: Cingular's new system, GSM, (Global System for Mobile Communication,) is experiencing a curious accounting glitch. GSM has no roaming charges.

No tower = no signal.

The old system is called the DTMF system. For customers who have contracts with free mobile to mobile contracts, the 2 systems are not billing accordingly.

Cingular counted (minutes used) against daytime minutes instead of free mobile to mobile minutes.

They will credit back money for mobile to mobile calls

billed incorrectly, but they are not correcting the minutes. They are charging 35 cents a minute on the end of normal daytime minutes. The city expects that Cingular will correct it all.

This is what happened to the city, and could possibly have happened to other Cingular customers.

Cingular has many customers in Ransom Canyon because under the old technology, Cingular was the only system that would reach into the canyon. Other, new technology is now available, and if you have a contract, you might want to go shopping.

## CITY CUTS BETTER DEAL WITH ATMOS

Ransom Canyon joined forces with 20 other small cities last fall to negotiate the rate increase that was requested by Atmos. The last increase from Atmos was three years ago.

Ransom Canyon benefited again from the strength gained through city cooperative bargaining.

The City of Lubbock and Ama-

rillo approved the increase several months ago, and will have a rate increase of 54% of the original requested increase.

The small city steering committee bargained for 41.6% of the increase.

The new rates, which will be an increase of \$1.23 per customer, will go into effect

May 1.

The City Council approved the new contract at the April City Council meeting.

*"The Spirit of Service"*

*Atmos energy*

## 40-YEAR ROOF APPROVED

The April City Council approved changes in the Building Regulations.

The Building Review Committee recommended that the 50 year roof shingle requirement benefit was not worth the additional cost to the customer, (RC homeowners)

So the council amended the regulation to require a 40 year warranty.

They also rescinded a require-

ment that called for a dual mode smoke detector. The International Building Code covers smoke alarm regulations.

In addition to approval for a number of home remodel and landscape projects, the committee this month gave the go-ahead to a preliminary plat of Horseshoe Hill. Builder Jason Sharkey will plat that 6 acre property as one lot, with plans for one home on the top

of the hill. The drive to the top will probably enter from East Brookhollow.

The council will consider the formal plat and Dedication Deed at the May council meeting. Preliminary landscape approval was issued based on the committee's preliminary plat approval. This property was in an estate. City Hall owns some old aerial photos of the site. They will be true historical documents.

# BUDGET AMENDMENT DISCOURSE

City budgets typically require a mid-year amendment, and this year presents many challenging issues.

There are Revenue deficits in Grant Funds and Building Permits. Buffalo Lake Sewer Revenue is down as expected with the installation of the new flow meter.

On the Expense side: additional funds were approved for the city accounting system. Insurance cost more and garbage collection expense is higher. Administrative staffing expense is down due to turn-over.

Hiring a third officer will have various effects because of the

way this hire was crafted into the current budget.

The \$1.320 million bond money has been earning interest, but checks are now being issued.

The Sewer Plant cost \$763K. Add-ons = \$35K. To date engineering = \$24K, and Bonding agent fees = \$40K.

The 2000 water tower bond money was \$285K, but the council expects this expense to be higher. To date engineering on the tower is \$46K..

The council is considering a new long-term water line capital improvement program.

Several 03-04 capital improvement items have been passed over : \$55K for seal coating, \$35.6K for water tank repair, \$50K for water pump house repair. \$50K is still in the budget for repair of the old sewer plant. Savings transfer of \$87.5K is still there. A third police car is still in the budget for \$27.5K, with purchase timing slipped to coincide with the hiring of the third officer.

The original budget called for transferring \$125K from savings, but initial number crunching shows that this transfer from savings will not be necessary this year.

# CITY WELCOMES NEW EMPLOYEES

Ransom Canyon welcomes Cory Needham as the newest career professional. Cory moved from part-time to full time as the second certified water wastewater operator. He will be attending school in Abilene for his first license in May. Cory has worked for the city part-time for several

years, and we know he and his father, Harold, will make a super team of water professionals!

Mr. Robert Keinast has taken on the part-time operations job that opened up when Cory was promoted.

Mr. Keinast is a NYC import,

and we welcome him to the crew.

In the office, Carolyn Brannon is the new receptionist. She also lives in Ransom Canyon with husband Rick and her sons.

Welcome to all!

*Make Plans now for Summer Activities at Ransom Canyon.*

?? Boating Season Begins. The Police Department issues permits for all watercraft. Call 829-2470 to register a watercraft or for information about requirements and rules and regulations.  
?? The library Summer Reading Program starts June 19. Plan now to: Color Your World...Read!



**City of Ransom Canyon**

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**Ransom Canyon  
City Council**

Mayor

Robert Englund

Mayor Pro-Tem

Glen Robertson

Aldermen:

Richard Hulslander

David Peterson

Inez Speed

Leon Whetzel

*The Deed of Restrictions for the Town of Ransom Canyon that was filed May 10, 1978 establishes the Ransom Canyon Property Owners Association. "This association shall be composed of all owners of home site lots in any section or replat of Lake Ransom Canyon Addition." The Property Owners Association is a separate organization from the Town of Ransom Canyon. The POA is lead by an elected body of volunteer officers. The POA operates the pool and owns the meadow areas and Jones-Warner Park. They also sponsor the "Echo". The new officers this year are President Candace Fletcher, Vice President Carol Hulslander, Secretary Helen Musiak, and Linda Jarvis, Lynn Opheim, Marlow Summitt, and Andy Wilson.*

*The City appreciates the efforts of this group of volunteers and thanks them for the work they do to complement the quality of life in Ransom Canyon .*

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## POA CORNER

By Candace Fletcher  
POA President

To the Residents of Ransom Canyon, Members of the City Council and Employees of Ransom Canyon,

I wish to apologize on behalf of the Ransom Canyon Property Owners Association for the article that appeared in the April 1st issue of the Echo. City Hall was not involved.

The POA Board never intended any harm and actually meant to be amusing. Everyone involved in the "joke" is truly very good. They are responsible citizens and would never intentionally cause any harm. Unfortunately, we did not research the possible backlash of the article, and just proceeded to print it in jest. Just for information sake , a year ago we were ready to discontinue the Echo, but because of a volunteer that does an excellent job for free, we were able to keep it going.

To all the employees of City Hall and the Police Department that had to field all of the angry and distressed calls during such a busy time, please accept our sincere apology and promise that in the future, jokes will not be of a serious nature.

Candace Fletcher

President

Property Owners Association