



## SENIOR ADVISORY BOARD MINUTES

Monday, August 19th, 2013

City Hall Conference Room  
4000 Main Street  
Rowlett, TX 75088

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Present: Bobbie Jo Kelly, Pamela Bell, Jerome Grossie, Della Vickers, Susan Bell  
Absent: Fred Cares  
Visitors: Larry and Gaylyn Beckham, Pauline Dedrick, Marvin Overstreet, Linda Maki, Elaine Clemons, Darrell Test  
Staff: Jermel Stevenson, Director of Parks and Recreation; Shelly Monroe, Parks and Recreation Administrative Assistant

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1. The Chair called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.
2. Quorum was present.
3. Della V. motioned to accept the June 3, 2013 work session minutes. Pam B. seconded the motion. All were in favor to approve minutes. Della V. motioned to accept the July 29, 2013 minutes. Pam B. seconded the motion. All were in favor to approve the minutes.
4. City Manager's Office – Power Point presentation by Brian Funderburk, Interim City Manager.
  - a. Fireworks on Main event.
  - b. City's second consecutive year to receive Financial Stewardship as Texas Comptroller Leadership Circle Gold Member.
  - c. Declining average taxable values: Residents are paying an average of \$118 less per year in property taxes than 7 years ago. Average resident pays \$997 per year for taxes which is about \$2.73 per day for city services. He reviewed the city services provided to residents of Rowlett such as police .58c, fire .44c, parks/juvenile crime prevention .19c, public works .26, and library .06c. Only 11.3% of homes in Rowlett have a taxable value in excess of \$200,000.
  - d. Common myths about Rowlett. 1) Rowlett has highest tax rate in north Texas – Rowlett ranked 9<sup>th</sup> in Dallas County out of 31 cities. Rowlett has had the same tax rate for 8 consecutive years. Rowlett only receives about 10% of the property tax bill of an average house property. 2) Citizens pay Rowlett too much tax. Comparative to other nearby cities Rowlett is below the median average and actually ranked 3<sup>rd</sup> from the bottom. 3) Rowlett will be a 50 residential / 50 commercial city. Rowlett will never be 50/50 but more likely 75/25. 4) Rowlett has too many employees. Rowlett is ranked 5<sup>th</sup> from the bottom compared to other cities. 5) Rowlett pays employees too much. Rowlett is ranked 3<sup>rd</sup> from the bottom. City opted out in 1980s for employees to receive social security but have TMRS retirement. Most of our employees fall below the average income of \$82,600. Rowlett is 13.6% below the median average. 6) Rowlett is a poor community. Rowlett exceeds the medium compared to other cities and ranks 6<sup>th</sup> from top. Rowlett is 40% above the median average. Residents pay nearly 20% less in taxes to their community for services they enjoy. It took 45 years for PGBT and 27 years for DART.
  - e. Rowlett presently has the vision of Realize Rowlett 20/20. As a community, Rowlett is now aging so infrastructures need repairs and this is not funded in the tax rate.

Population has significantly grown. There was a re-allocation of the Capital Improvement Program in 2007. DART is a long term investment so it will be decades before any revenue will be seen from this project. The value of revenues waived for DART and tax exemptions equals 9.4 million annually.

- f. Volunteers make up an equivalent of 13 full time employees. We cannot do it without our volunteers. Volunteers make a difference for our community. It has been a cost saving of \$602,619.
  - g. Signature Gateway is a long term vision such as high rise and residential on northern property.
  - h. Rowlett will need to re-evaluate the senior tax exemption. Rowlett has the 3<sup>rd</sup> highest senior tax exemption in Dallas County. Rowlett is one of only seven cities out of thirty one cities in Dallas County where property taxes paid by seniors are frozen. When a person becomes of senior age there is an automatic \$500 drop in taxes and remains as this as long as the senior remains in that home. This is not based on income but age only. The individual does have to file for exemption.
  - i. The dilemma is if nothing changes between now and 2015 the city will either have to raise taxes and fees or will need to cut some services (staff and programs). If citizens choose the option of cutting services then there is the issue of who will want to live in Rowlett.
  - j. New developments in the city will help but in the long term. If the city isn't able to diversify the development then the possibility of not being able to stabilize or grow the tax base. The ability to "bridge" the financial gap will no longer exist by FY2015. On the operational level the city is working on what it will look like if services will have to be cut so that citizens will have the information to make a strategic decision to determine the community's future.
  - k. The North District Water Division is going to pass on an increase in their water cost to Rowlett. Garland is increasing by .38 cents as well as the water supplier. Due to this residents will see an impact of increase \$3.87 per month.
  - l. In 2015 there will a drop in the water and sewer revenue bonds which will lend the capacity to add \$10,000,000 in bonds which will help the debt.
  - m. Next steps: Submitted proposed budget on August 6<sup>th</sup>. First public hearing will be on August 20<sup>th</sup> and September 3<sup>rd</sup> is second public hearing. September 17<sup>th</sup> will be the adoption of the budget. Proposing to have a conversation with the community on the senior tax exemption and the dilemma situation explained.
  - n. Question/Answer time: Questions from board members and visitors were answered by Brian F.
5. Travel Expo September 3, 2013
    - a. Della V. inquired about the possibility of A-frame signs being placed for advertisement and Jermel S. said this can be done.
    - b. Bobbie Jo K. shared that flyers were placed at RCC, library, annex building, and at City Hall. She encouraged members to pick up some flyers on their way out to distribute. Information will also be on Channel 16.
    - c. Being a senior is not a requirement to attend.
  6. Medicare Program – October 8, 2013
    - a. Bobbie Jo K. stated this will be publicized after September 3<sup>rd</sup>. The program will have the same speaker as last year.
  7. Discuss program ideas for January – April 2014

- a. Bobbie Jo K. asserted that ideas for the upcoming year need to be discussed since the information is due in Lakeside Leisure in October. The usual speaker for insurance program was promoted therefore there is a new potential speaker for this but should consider planning this later than the spring months. Della V. expressed this should be scheduled but agrees to postpone it until after April 2014.
- b. Bobbie Jo K. mentioned the Scams program by the police department. Larry B. mentioned that the police will be conducting a Scam workshop next week and reminder that SCOR did one too. Bobbie Jo. And Della V. suggested not to host the Scam session since this has been done twice this year.
- c. Della V. reminded that the Health Fair is in April but wondered if DART would be a good educational event to add. Susan B. concurred on the DART idea. Larry B. also shared the liking of DART and suggests a trip using DART to be included.
- d. Della V. recommended an educational event such as Trusts and Estate Planning. Gaylyn B. and Darrel T. agreed with interest on this topic.
- e. Linda M. stated the activities need more publicity and in more advance. Della V. responded that there are no funds to purchase advertising so some times this can be an issue. Bobbie Jo K. shared the board has a new contact, Monique Oaks, for the Rowlett paper in which Kenny Green made the referral and this it is much appreciated.
- f. Larry B. mentioned looking into a 211 assistance program. He believes it is a county service.
- g. Elaine C. asked about the possibility of using the radio as a source of advertising. Della V. shared there is a Rowlett radio station and may try using them.
- h. Della V. said she would like to see the In Case of Emergency program continue.
- i. Pauline D. asked about the possibility of a senior talent show. Bobbie Jo K. replied that SCOR hosts one. Bobbie Jo K. explained that the purpose of this board is to take concerns of seniors to the city council and not really focus on programs such as travel expo and health fairs but this was something that was added. Jermel S. concurred that the other things were added but it has been a good thing because while they take the concerns/needs to council they also look to provide and recommend enrichment programs which end up with parks and recreation, police and/or fire department.
- j. Bobbie Jo K. said that Angie S. will be providing some dates to her in order to schedule some of these events.

8. Review Board Goals.

Bobbie Jo K. commented that the goals are usually reviewed in September and certificates of appreciation are presented at that time. She reminded that city employees are not able to receive certificates because what they do is part of their job. The 2012-13 goals were completed.

- a. Expo with State Representatives – included with the Health Fair
- b. Insurance Program
- c. I.D. Theft Program
- d. ICE (In Case of Emergency Program)
- e. Travel Fair – scheduled for September 3<sup>rd</sup>

9. Senior Concerns.

Larry B. revealed he may need some assistance with obtaining information for a resource database project. This includes more details than the resource list that is available for seniors. If there are other services seniors should be aware that is not on the resource list to please call or email the information to him.

10. Senior Budget.



Jermel S. provided a report of July expenses and shared with members.

11. Director's Report given by Jermel S.
  - a. Thirty one seniors attended the Monthly Birthday Lunch at the Rowlett Community Centre on Wednesday, August 7<sup>th</sup>. Each month different businesses provide lunch along with cake and a birthday song for our seniors to celebrate those that have birthdays that month. This program has grown from ten to twelve participants at this time last year to twenty five to thirty each month now.
  - b. On Saturday, August 10<sup>th</sup>, the City held a Pet Adoptathon. Shelter staff did an amazing job getting the shelter ready and members of "Friends of Rowlett Animals" helped out by transporting animals to PetSmart. The Vaccine Clinic, which started at 2:00 p.m., was well attended and the Microchip Clinic also did well with Dr. McKelroy implanting a total of ten microchips. At the end of the event, Staff placed a total of twelve animals, achieving a placement of 92.6% for FY2013.
  - c. Library Program Coordinator, Kathy Lane, retired with 14 years of service on Tuesday, July 24<sup>th</sup>. On Monday, July 29<sup>th</sup>, Paul Sandman was sworn in as our new Assistant Chief of Police. Paul comes to us from the City of Highland Park where he worked as a Lieutenant and Commander of the Criminal Investigations Unit. Paul will be formally introduced to Council on Tuesday, August 6<sup>th</sup>.
12. Public input and questions – none.
13. Public announcement. Members of the Board or Commission and/or staff may make announcements of local civic events. No member of the board or commission may discuss nor take any action with regard to the announcements.
14. Members of the board may request topics for future agenda meetings. No member of the board or commission may discuss any of the requested subjects until such matter has been properly placed on a posted agenda.
15. Jerome G. motioned for adjournment at 11:38 a.m. and Pamela B. seconded the motion. All in favor for adjournment.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Della Vickers".

Della Vickers, Vice-Chair

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jermel Stevenson".

Jermel Stevenson, Director of Parks and Recreation