



A MESSAGE FROM OUR MAYOR

MARCH 2020



First, I want to say it is with great pleasure to announce that our interim Police Chief Tracy Keele was selected and appointed as the new Police Chief of Clear Lake Shores. We all look forward to working with Chief Keele. His wealth of experience, along with his outgoing and friendly personality, will bring plenty of positive changes to the Clear Lake Shores Police Department. I am confident that CLS PD will be even more successful under his leadership.

Thanks to everyone who participated in the It's Time Texas Community Challenge. At the time of writing, this article Clear Lake Shores was ranked 6th out of 70+ in the extra small cities categories. That is an awesome showing on our community. Overall in Galveston County we are 2nd with only Texas City leading the way. We will get them next year!

The City recently completed construction of a temporary parking lot and related improvements on the old Lee property at the entrance to the Island with sidewalks, drive approaches, storm water drainage and eventually final landscaping. Thanks to the EDC for providing the funding for this project. Did you know that this lot used to be occupied by South Shore Beer Garden, which closed after Hurricane Ike in 2008. The City acquired the property after Ike to help guide development on such a key commercial tract at our community's front door. The long-term vision for the site is to attract a viable commercial user that would both contribute to the quality of life in Clear Lake Shores and generate significant sales tax revenues. However, EDC and city council concluded in early 2019 that current market conditions, particularly in light of the SH 146 widening, are not conducive to attracting that target user at this time. At the same time, the existing nearby businesses are materially constrained by insufficient parking. EDC and city council determined that providing parking for the nearby businesses could help generate immediate sales tax revenues through increased retail sales until market conditions allow for development of a viable commercial use.

Even though the parking lot project took much longer than expected due to having issues with the subgrade, we did take away one major lesson learned on the importance of properly utilizing our city engineering firm to perform major projects. Our engineering firm is here to provide the essential design of our roads, drainage and other infrastructure projects as in this one and to ensure we adhere to established engineering, budgetary and environmental requirements. Due to the few hiccups along the way, I have enacted that all future major project endeavors be ran through our Engineering firm to ensure this does not happen again.

We are very fortunate that there are no City property taxes assessed in Clear Lake Shores and most of the funding for the City comes from the following sales tax revenues that businesses in Clear Lake Shores collect with an 8.25% Sales Tax:

- 6.25% is state sales tax that the state uses
- 1.5% is for the City general fund
- 0.25% is a voter approved tax to provide revenue for the Economic Development Corporation and
- 0.25% is a voter approved tax to provide revenue for the maintenance and repair of municipal streets.

Local businesses drive our revenue and it makes sense to support them in that effort and especially with the parking lot mentioned above.

The next General Election will be held on Saturday, May 2, 2020. On this day, our voters will elect three council members for the City of Clear Lake Shores. The list of candidates consist of Randy Chronister, Rick Fisher, Daniel Otto, Elliott Rittershaus, Alex Scanlon and Steve Wirtes. Thanks to each of you for stepping up and volunteering to serve your City.

There will also be a Special Election to re-authorize a one-fourth of one percent (1/4%) sales and use tax according to Chapter 327.007 of the Texas Tax Code to continue to provide revenue for the maintenance and repair of municipal streets.



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What a great turnout to Mancakes on Feb 15th and Kudos to everyone that helped and a special callout to the leadership of Doug Whitmarsh's and Joe Shulsky's breakfast cooking skills. I think we had over 90+ hungry folks attend. In addition, new this year we had scrambled eggs, which seemed to be a huge hit. Definitely a great time was had by all.

Lastly, it's time to get ready for spring and summer and don't forget to stop in for some coffee at my Coffee with the Mayor on March 7th from 9:00 to 11:00. We will see where the City is heading with a review of the City strategic plan, projects being worked on and discussion of any issues. We will also be hosting several upcoming events including a hurricane preparedness meeting in early May and another social gathering with our police department that Chief Keele is putting together so standby for that. As always, please feel to reach out to me with any questions, concerns or complaints at any time via email at Mayor@clearlakeshores-tx.gov, or you can call my cell phone at (832) 584-0975. You can stay informed via this monthly column or by following us on social media and our website. Where every sunset is celebrated and we look forward to every sunrise!

Sincerely,

Mayor Kurt