



ARANSAS PASS NEWS

Issue: 2

December 2017



“The lack of a clear process combined with a lack of communications between the Federal, state and local governments has crippled our ability to respond to temporary housing needs caused by Hurricane Harvey”

Mayor Ram Gomez Aransas Pass,

Aransas Pass Mayor Ram Gomez addressed the Texas House Committee on Urban Affairs in Corpus Christi on December 4, 2017. The Committee was looking into emergency temporary housing in Hurricane Harvey stricken areas. Mayor Gomez said our citizens have been told they can turn to their local governments for desperately needed temporary housing for themselves and their loved ones, but the unfortunate truth is that those of us at the city level have not been given even the most basic tools from the Federal and State Governments .



Mayor Ram Gomez, Mayor Pro-Tem Carrie Scruggs, Councilman Billy Ellis, Councilwoman Vicki Abrego, Councilwoman Jan Moore, and City Staff all wish you and yours a Merry Christmas and a Very Happy 2018.



THE ARANSAS PASS BUILDING DEPARTMENT WILL BE “FAST TRACKING”

The City Building Department is updating our permitting process. This will make it more expedient, transparent and efficient. By February we will have our process and requirements for each type of permit outlined clearly and concisely. Frankly, a major problem in this area of serving citizens and builders is communications. We are working to change that and to get permits issued as quickly as possible.

As we work to improve the departments overall performance, we also are planning to implement a “Fast Track” system. Our goal is to offer residential and commercial developers the option to expedite the permitting process with a consolidated plan review session. Permitting is a process that requires several departments to participate in a plan review. With the “Fast Track” process we hope to offer citizens and developers the chance to have their plans completely reviewed in one plan review session.



During the early morning of December 8th, residents of Aransas Pass and most of South Texas awoke to a very rare snowfall. This drone picture was taken near City Hall by I.T. Director Jeff Martin and Marvin Leister.

CITY CODE ENFORCEMENT FACES POST-HARVEY CHALLENGES

City Code enforcement officer, Cory Elrod, could be facing a large number of unrepaired Harvey damaged buildings as our City continues to recover from hurricane damage. As a result, Officer Elrod will be paying special attention to these new problems. Although he and the City will do all we can to work with these property owners, the City also has to be concerned about health and safety matters. Code Enforcement is under the City Police Department. In addition to problems with buildings, Officer Elrod will be monitoring areas with excessively high weeds and grass. *Below: Code Enforcement officer Cory Elrod inspecting the window of a hurricane damaged building.*



WORK ON HURRICANE DAMAGED CITY PROPERTIES CONTINUES

The city of Aransas Pass continues to work with FEMA on hurricane damaged city property. A master list of these city owned facilities is being constantly reviewed by City Staff and FEMA officials. Visits to the sites have been conducted by FEMA. Assuming FEMA agrees, the City's goal is to receive FEMA funding for repairs. Otherwise, these expenses could not be carried by the City budget. An example would be the collapsed elevated water tower. Other examples include damage to the city parks, the civic center, the aquatics center, and the sewer plant. Of course, FEMA will cover 90% of these expenses and the City must find financial sources for the remaining 10%.

PLEASE NOTE:

Because the first Council meeting in January falls on January 1st, the regular City Council meeting has been moved to Tuesday January 2nd.



TOWN HALL MEETING WELL ATTENDED

An estimated 130 citizens attended the Aransas Pass November 30th Post-Harvey Town Hall meeting held at the Civic Center. The purpose of the session was to report to citizens on the status of the hurricane recovery work. Community leaders and city staff gave presentations after residents were welcomed by Mayor Ram Gomez. It was pointed out during the meeting that the Care Regional Medical Center planned to reopen in 8 months to a year, although this might be accomplished in phases. The hospital received substantial hurricane damage. The Chamber of Commerce reported that 80% of the local businesses are now open with 46 closed and undergoing repairs and 8 have closed permanently. Also in attendance were FEMA, the Texas General Land Office, Cable One, the Aransas Pass Independent School District, AEP, and Frontier Communications. The meeting was live-streamed. (Photos courtesy of Jeff Martin)



The hugely successful Aransas Pass Fall Feast was held November 14th at the Civic Center . Several hundred residents were in attendance . The event is a gift from the City to its citizens. Thank you to the event sponsors.

Holiday Trash Pick-Up Schedule

If your trash day falls on Monday Christmas day or Monday New Year’s day it will be picked up on the next scheduled pick-up day.



The debris pile on the Shrimpoore grounds is getting smaller. What had been a huge mound is from hurricane debris collected around town following Harvey clean-up. So far over a half-million cubic yards have been collected. Yes, it will be cleared before Shrimpoore!

Contact Us

Aransas Pass City Hall
600 West Cleveland Blvd
Aransas Pass, Tx 76336
361-758-5301

Visit us on facebook or on the web at:

WWW.aransaspasstx.gov

PLEASE GIVE US YOUR E-MAIL ADDRESS IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO RECEIVE THIS NEWS-LETTER; OR LET US KNOW IF YOU WISH TO UNSUBSCRIBE

PLEASE NOTE: The next General Election is Saturday May 5, 2018. The candidate filing period is January 17, 2018 through February 16, 2018. Candidate packets will be available December 18th.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

What do you want to see in the future for Aransas Pass? The City’s first ever Comprehensive Plan will begin in January. This highly important state recognized document will provide community planning direction for the next 10 to 15 years. The long-term post-hurricane recovery process also will be a part of the Comprehensive Plan. A document such as this must have extensive public input. So, you will be asked to participate and provide your ideas.