



CITY OF BALCONES HEIGHTS
JANUARY NEWSLETTER – TEXT ONLY



January 1, 2023

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Happy New Year to all!

Your City Council and Staff were very busy in 2022 and a lot of accomplishments were made. Along with many meetings and discussions regarding the City's Comprehensive Land Use Plan, Strategic Planning for the City and EDC, partnership with Wonderland of the Americas, Finance Committee Meetings, retirement of Fire Chief Brock Ward and new Fire Chief Thomas Marroquin appointed, many police officer promotions/recognitions/new hires, and approving a balanced budget, I also want to share some other highlights of 2022:

January

- Hillcrest Drive design phase began.
- Discussion and planning for the Neighborhood Watch Program.

February

- Project budget approved for reconstruction of 300 block of Crestview Drive (from Leisure to Hillcrest) for Community Development Block Grant application. Construction will be in completed in three phases.

March

- Resolution approved to distribute funds from the American Rescue Plan (ARPA) after citizen input.
- Resolution approved for Pleasant Drive reconstruction.
- Directive to staff to revamp City's Newsletter and reduce it to a 4-page monthly newsletter.

April

- Amendment to the Project Budget approved to increase funding to purchase handheld radios and dispatch consoles.
- Police Department received two new Tahoe's and order placed for two more for next year.

May

- Firefighters discussed the planning of a Citizen's Fire Academy for our residents and businesses.
- Economic Development Corporation (EDC) Board of Directors reappointed for one- and two-year terms.
- Councilwoman Cantu appointed as Mayor Pro Tem until May 2023.
- Discussion of un-branding Wonderland of the Americas. It is no longer a "mall" but a mixed-use facility with medical and dental services, retail shopping, entertainment, etc.

June

- Updates and discussion regarding the Strategic Plan, EDC Strategic Plan, Park/Trail Master Plan, street reconstruction projects and EPA Brownfields.

July

- Public Hearing to discuss redevelopment of Siesta Inn & Suites. Approval by Council.
- Approval to provide one time salary supplement to Staff.
- Discussion to create a committee to plan and organize the City's 75th Anniversary Celebration in 2023.
- Two fantastic Jazz Fest Concerts held in July.

August

- FY2022 -2023 Annual Budget unanimously approved.
- Ad Valorem Property Tax Rate of \$0.583 for every \$100 valuation approved to support City services. This approved tax rate will raise more total property taxes than last year's budget by \$152,156. This tax rate has remained the same for the past five years.
- Acadian Ambulance contract renewed. No additional cost to the City.

September

- Presentation by City Attorney regarding Collective Bargaining Agreement between the City and the Balcones Heights Police Officer's Association. After discussion, City Council approved the Agreement.
- Expansions at Wonderland to include UT Health Science Center and Woodlawn Theater (new name will be Wonder Theater).

October

- EDC By-Laws amended and approved by City Council.
- Congratulations to Student City Leaders for a Day 2022

Mayor – Paloma Ortega

Mayor Pro Tem – Matthew Chairez

City Administrator – Anderson Davis

November

- Action to adopt a Resolution on the Continuation of Crime Control and Prevention District. Public hearings will be held to consider adding a referendum to the May 2023 Election Ballot to seek the continuation of the BHCCPD for a period of twenty (20) years.
- Action to adopt Resolution for the assignment of Solid Waste Municipal Franchise from C-6 Disposal Systems to Republic Services to provide solid waste collection and disposal services to the City of Balcones Heights.
- Action to authorize replacement of security cameras at the Balcones Heights Justice Center.

December

- Updates Pending

Wishing you all a very happy, prosperous, and safe 2023.

Suzanne

Shop Balcones Heights!

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COUNCIL'S CORNER: NEW YEAR, NEW BEGINNING

Miguel Valverde, City Council Place 5

I begin by wishing each one of you a Very Happy, Healthy, and Prosperous New Year.

The new year brings a new beginning. What a better way to start the year than by getting involved in your community. Speaking from first-hand experience, I know my personal involvement with our community activities has been extremely rewarding.

Not only to me, but to my family as well. My wife is glad to get me out of the house doing my civic duty.

All kidding aside, everyone has something they are enthusiastic about, so why not use that knowledge to help those around you? You can make a real impact and change lives this way! That is the reason I am involved. I want to be effective, but I need your help. I have served on our City's Planning and Zoning Commission, City Council on and off over the years, the City's Economic

Development Corporation Board, to my most recent role as Chair off our annual Veterans' Day commemoration. I have also been a long-time advocate of uniform and consistent code compliance. All these activities have given me special and unique satisfaction. Whether it is helping honor the City's veterans, to helping plan for future prosperity and independence as a City, which by the way, will celebrate its 75th Jubilee this year, or just getting to know more of my neighbors and learning what they think about our community, and how I can help make their ideas a reality.

Now, more than ever, it is important that we actively take part in moving our community into the future. There will always be challenges, and in my mind, maybe due to my own military service, the only way to meet a challenge is to meet it head on and the more heads, the better!!

I am asking residents and business owners/managers to please get involved in what is going on in your precious community. Have a voice and change things. There are so many benefits of being involved in the community which is why everyone needs to get involved! Becoming more knowledgeable about what goes on around you by joining the community, you will learn things. This also means getting connected with local businesses and authorities if they participate in the community. When you take part in something together with someone else, your connection will grow. You can even make new friends this way!

Please give getting more involved in your city government and community activities your thoughtful consideration. I will be more than happy to answer any questions about your future involvement.

Reach me at (210) 508-7404 or mvalverde@bhtx.gov

Again, my best wishes to all of you.

Miguel

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Proposed changes to the side setbacks for residential side setback requirements for accessory buildings.

The Board of Adjustment has experienced an increase in requests for variances for the placement of accessory building (such as sheds and garages) closer to the side setback than the currently required 10 feet from the side lot line and ten feet from any other street line. At the request of city council, staff has been asked to present to the Planning and Zoning Commission amending language to consider reducing the side setback to 5 feet. The Commission will hold a public hearing on Tuesday, January 17, 2023, at 6:00 p.m. at the Justice Center, 3300 Hillcrest Drive to seek input from residents and to make a recommendation to the city council.

The Balcones Heights Planning & Zoning Commission will hold a Public Hearing Tuesday, January 17, 2023; 6:00 PM at the Justice Center, 3300 Hillcrest Dr., to consider reducing the residential side setback requirements for accessory buildings from 10' to 5'. Resident are

encouraged to attend and provide comments. Contact Janet Thelen, Director of Community Development, 210.957.3545 or jthelen@bhtx.gov with any questions.

The City Council will hold a second public hearing on this matter at the regular council meeting on Monday, January 23, 2023. The council will consider the recommendation of the Planning and Zoning Commission and the comments provided by the citizens. Citizens are encouraged to participate in the public hearings.

FAIR HOUSING COUNCIL OF SAN ANTONIO

The private, non-profit group is dedicated to promoting fair housing and eliminating discriminatory practices. Services are open to rental tenants, homeowners and landlords. Several programs are available for rental assistance, repair and rehabilitation of homes, and emergency needs. Contact the team at 210.207.5910. Learn more at bhtx.gov.

GRAND OPENING:

AR's Entertainment Hub, 4522 Fredericksburg Rd, Suites B-99 & B-100, will hold its Grand Opening Saturday, January 7, 2023; 12:00 PM.

Fun for the whole family includes mini-golf, laser tag, skating, playground, bumper cars, food, beverages and arcade. Come out and meet the AR team!

CITY COUNCIL NEWS

November 14, 2022

- Public Hearing was conducted on the City Council's desire to request that the Balcones Heights Crime Control and Prevention District Board order a referendum on the continuation of the District and sales tax of one-half of one percent for a period of twenty (20) years.
- Action was taken in adopting a Resolution on the continuation of the BHCCPD. City Council directed BHCCPD to hold a Public Hearing to consider adding a referendum to the May 2023 Election Ballot to seek continuation of the BHCCPD for a period of twenty (20) years.
- Action was taken to adopt a Resolution for the assignment of Solid Waste Municipal Franchise from C-6 Disposal Systems to Republic Services to provide solid waste collection and disposal services to the City.

December 12, 2022

- The Honorable Judge Raul Perales administered the Oath of Office to newly-appointed Fire Chief Thomas Marroquin. Joining Marroquin for his pinning were his wife, Donna and Mom & Step-Dad Esther & Gary Fullenwieder. Congratulations Chief!

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SAVE THE DATE:

All events held at the Balcones Heights Justice Center/City Hall unless otherwise noted.

January 2		New Year's Day Holiday-City Offices Closed
January 16		Martin Luther King Holiday-City Offices Closed
January 17	6:00 p.m.	Planning & Zoning Commission Meeting
January 18	11:30 a.m.	Economic Development Corporation (EDC) Meeting
January 23	6:00 p.m.	City Council Meeting
February 14		Valentine's Day
February 15	5:30 p.m.	Economic Development Corporation (EDC) Meeting
February 27	6:00 p.m.	City Council Meeting

The Economic Development & Public Affairs Office is located at 4522 Fredericksburg Rd, Ste A-22. Contact the office at 210.732.0055 or by email: lorenzo@bhtx.gov.