

City of Jewett relaxes firearms ordinance

By Sherry Matney

The City of Jewett held its regular meeting January 12 at the Jewett City Hall. Mayor Judi Kirkpatrick advised Council members that it appears necessary to revise the firearms ordinance which went into effect in December. There are several individuals who live within the city limits who have plots of land large enough for hunting and these citizens need an exception, especially during deer season. The Council voted to issue exceptions on a case by case basis.

The Council awarded the wastewater system improvement project to McKinney & McMillan, inc. with a bid

of \$837,540. Rudy Hibbeler advised members that this company had built the waste water plant thirty-one years ago and he has complete faith in them.

Water Treatment Construction Company was awarded the water system improvement project with a bid of \$138,400. This includes demolition of some old equipment and drilling a new well, which is in progress.

The City of Jewett General Election will be held in May and will have four positions open. One is the Mayor position and three council positions.

Francisca Ramirez requested permission to move

her mobile home onto a lot in Jewett. The mayor and council determined that the home fit the City's criteria and advised Ramirez that she would need to come back on Tuesday and secure a permit and pay fees.

In regular business December minutes were approved, check and deposit listings were approved and the budget report was approved.

Mayor Kirkpatrick said she had not heard from the person concerning the price of land being considered for purchase. The Council approved appointment of Barbara Dorsey to the Zoning Commission.



City employee Rudy Hibbeler explains where certain sections of land are located within the Jewett City limits. *Sherry's Shots*



Architect Paul McCullough and school board member Jennifer Humphries consider selections for the new campus' carpet, tile, etc. *Van 'Go' photo*

BISD shines in rating and audit

by Vanessa Goodwyn

The January meeting of the BISD school board included reports on the district's academic and financial condition, and the news was very encouraging.

In a public hearing at 6:30, Academic Coordinator Tracy Gleghorn reported on the AEIS (Academic Excellence Indicator System) -- the "report card" by which the state lets the public know how BISD compares with other districts. There was plenty of good news in the report:

- The elementary campus increased in every area in which they were tested in the 2007-08 school year. Their percentage of commended students was also up in every testing area.
- At the junior high there was improvement in every area, and writing remained at the exemplary level. The percentage of commended students was also up in every testing area.
- Buffalo High School's percent passing increased in all

four testing areas, and the percent of commended students stayed the same in one area and improved in the other three.

- As a district, BISD increased in four of five testing areas: reading/ELA, math, science and social studies. Writing remained at the exemplary level. (Details of the report are available on TEA's website.)

The regular school board meeting followed the public hearing. One focus of the January meeting was the progress on the new high school campus. Consultant Jim Hanks presented a slide show and update on the new construction. Architect Paul McCullough brought a sample board and selections were made for the carpet, wall coverings, counter surfaces, door colors, blinds, etc.

Alan Younts presented the annual audit, on behalf of John R. Pechacek, CPA. He commended the district's business department for the books being in good shape.

He briefly went over the finances and the summary of activity. He reported that "quite significantly" to their General Fund, where most of the activity flows. The district has twelve months' fund balance, which exceeds the state minimum. Younts applauded the district for this "rainy day fund", pointing out, "When you live in an area where there are fluctuating values, (gas/oil revenue for examples) it is especially good to have a strong fund balance." He noted that the food services department even turned a profit, which is very rare. Superintendent Jackie Thomson acknowledged, "In all the years that I've been a superintendent, it's the first time I've ever seen that. I'm really proud of the team effort that went into that."

The good news continued on the compliance side of the audit. There were no financial statement findings to be reported to the state. "Everything we tested looked great and we didn't have to report anything," Younts concluded. The year end audit was approved and will be submitted to the Texas Education Agency.

Principal Lacy Freeman presented a State of the Campus report on Buffalo Junior High. Enrollment is steady. Reading and writing TAKS are coming up March 3. Spring ARDS will be done next week. Sixty students will participate in UIL competition on January 21 and 24.

The Board approved the consent agenda items as pre-

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Mark Ivey

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Jimmy Hill, Glenda Osborn, Jennifer McGill, Susan Pugh, Scott Serafin, Janie Richmond, Ernie Moore, George Holleman, Brian Hill, Dan Courmier, Jimmy Hill and Tommy and Wendy Neyland. "We're going to need all resources to get this project off the ground," Neyland concluded. The court approved the committee list.

Gary Maples reported on the first year of the Adopt-A-Unit program. They have successfully paired ten units with organizations. The county donated a lot of toys for children of troops, and these were distributed at a Christmas party in December. Next, a "baby shower" is being planned to give formula, diapers, baby wipes, etc. to the families of military personnel. The shower will be at Fort Hood on January 31st and donations may be taken to Judge Ryder's office. There are 186 babies ages 0-2.

The Veteran's Services Officers announced that they will no longer be going to Buffalo and Jewett on a regular basis due to lack of response. Veterans are welcome to set up appointments and the Maples will be glad to meet with them. Call them at 903-536-2331, 903-536-1251 or 979-450-8891. "We are not abandoning the veterans in the far ends of the county, but we don't know your needs unless you contact us," Maples concluded.

In other routine business, a "Sick Leave Pool Committee" was created, consisting of Joey Sullivan, Carla McEachern, Karen Broach and Judge Byron Ryder. Also, a parking agreement was approved between Leon County and the ESD #1.

Auditor Susan Pugh presented line item transfers totaling \$50,470 and was authorized to put surplus equipment inventory out for internet auction. Any money from the sales will go back into general funds. She was also authorized to go out for bids on track hoe and bull dozer services.

At the recommendation of Treasurer Phil Skelton, the commissioners released two pledged securities from Citizens State Bank.



Precinct 3 Commissioner Mark Ivey joins Dean Player in the pledge at the opening ceremonies of his first Commissioners Court meeting. *Van 'Go' photo*

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2801 S. Loop 256 • Palestine, TX
dogwood_tractors1@yahoo.com
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