

...Bronte City Council meeting

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If she wants the permit, she can come up with a plan with what she can do and if the Council will accept the plan. The Council recommends that Ricky Royall talk to Ms. Harendt and re-address this permit at the next council meeting.

Regarding Juan DeLaRosa's property, Ms. DeLaRosa reported that they have been trying to keep the area clean, but that they have had family health matters going on. The Council recommends giving them 60 days to clean up the property and review again at the March meeting.

The roping arena needs to remove the pig from the property and from the permit request.

Mayor Gohman is looking for a motion with no commercial pigs at the roping arena; 60 day temporary at 210 Lombard; tabling for 30 days at 515 S. Franklin; and 60 days at 108 Driftwood with notice of restrictions. Stormy Vaughn made a motion to approve all of the livestock permits with the exceptions of the temporary permits and was seconded by Santiago Rodriguez. The motion passed with a vote of 5 - 0.

Building Permits

Arnold Carper - 214 S. Franklin - RV - Permanent. The Council discussed the ordinance and all agreed not to approve the permit. David Bedford made a motion not to approve the permit and was seconded by Stormy Vaughn. The motion passed with a vote of 5 - 0.

Arnold Carper - 214. S. Franklin - enclosed trailer. The Council approves the permit. Lee Wommack made a motion to approve the enclosed trailer and was seconded by Stormy Vaughn. The motion passed with a vote of 5 - 0.

Arnold Carper - 214 S. Franklin - fence three sides. The council approves the fence. David Bedford made a motion to approve the fence and was seconded by Steve Hines. The motion passed with a vote of 5 - 0.

Cowboy Church - 210 W. Main - Used Building - Temporary. Council members discussed that the building has been temporary for a while. Ricky Royall has asked for a site plan for the whole area but they have not sent one. Ricky Royall recommends tabling until they get a site plan. Stormy Vaughn made a motion not to approve the permit and was seconded by David Bedford. The motion passed with a vote of 5 - 0.

There are two vacant positions on the Economic Development Corporation Board 4A. It was considered to add Mikka Davidson to the EDC4A as a board member. Stormy Vaughn made a motion to accept Mikka Davidson as a board member to EDC4A and was seconded by Santiago Rodriguez. The motion passed

with a vote of 5 - 0.

Discussion was also held to add Ryan Webb to EDC4A as a board member. David Bedford made a motion to accept Ryan Webb to EDC4A and was seconded by Stormy Vaughn. The motion passed with a vote of 5 - 0.

Depot Update

Ricky Royall reached out to Ms. Prather but found out that she travels a lot. Mr. Bobby Blaylock and others will come take a look at the depot to see what can be done. No action was taken.

Mayor Gohman gave an update on the land behind the depot. He wants to leave this item on the agenda so as not to forget about it. There are some ideas out there but they will be addressed once other items are off of the Council's plate.

A resolution was considered authorizing the Mayor to amend the City of Robert Lee, Texas, water use rates. Lee Wommack made a motion to authorize the Mayor to amend the City of Robert Lee water use rates and was seconded by Stormy Vaughn. The motion passed with a vote of 5 - 0.

It was considered sending a letter to Robert Lee for water usage exceeding 200,000 gallons per day and First Amendment

on Water Supply Contract with Robert Lee. Santiago Rodriguez made a motion to have the Mayor send a letter and amend Water Supply Contract with Robert Lee and was seconded by Stormy Vaughn. The motion passed with a vote of 5 - 0.

The second public hearing on amending/archiving Curfew Ordinance #298 and adopting new Curfew Ordinance #18-08 was held. Mayor Gohman opened the public hearing for the curfew ordinance at 7:51 pm.

Citizens asked what the curfew times were.

Mayor Gohman closed the public hearing for the curfew ordinance at 7:54 pm.

The second reading of the new curfew ordinance was held. It reads as follows:

"An ordinance of the City of Bronte, Texas, repealing and replacing Ordinance No. 298; adopting 'Curfew Hours for Minors'; defining terms; creating hours for curfew for minors; creating offenses for minors, parents of minors, and business establishments violating curfew regulations; providing for enforcement; providing for penalty of up to \$500 for each offense; making various findings and provisions related to the

subject; containing a severability clause; repealing all other ordinances in conflict herewith; providing for publication and providing that this ordinance shall be effective from and after January 31, 2019."

Stormy Vaughn made a motion to accept and adopt new Curfew Ordinance #18-08 and was seconded by Santiago Rodriguez. The motion passed with a vote of 5 - 0. The next task is to publish it in the newspaper, effective January 31, 2019.

Public Hearing - Community Development

Mayor Gohman opened a public hearing for applying for a Texas Community Development Block Grant (TxCDBG) grant application at 7:55 pm.

Councilman Bedford read the following:

The City is considering applying for a Texas Community Development Block Grant application. Approximately nine million (\$9,000,000.00) dollars are available through the Texas Department of Agriculture. The main objective of this program is to improve public facilities/infrastructure in order to meet basic human needs, principally for low and moderate-income persons.

Eligible activities include water system improvements, sewer system improvements, community service centers, affordable housing, road and street improvements, drainage improvements, fire protection, handicapped accessibility, and solid waste disposal. The City has been funded in the past through the TxCDBG program in order to make significant infrastructure repairs.

There were no citizens comments.

Mayor Gohman closed the public hearing for applying for a Texas Community Development Block Grant (TxCDBG) grant application at 7:56 pm.

Stormy Vaughn made a motion to submit a water application to the Texas Community Development Block Grant and was seconded by Santiago Rodriguez. The motion passed with a vote of 5 - 0.

The Council considered purchasing a drone for city staff to service waterlines more effectively. Lee Wommack added more information regarding the rules of drone use and the drone user must be certified. Stormy Vaughn also presented documents and read the reply from TML.

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The Past, The Future, and the Green Book

by James M. Decker

I'm not big on the Academy Awards, or awards shows in general. For the most part, whether for movies, television, music, or sports, I find these shows to be overly self-serving, wasteful mutual admiration societies. I usually have better things to do with my time than watch them. Beyond that, my taste in movies rarely coincides with those who select the awards. Of all the Best Picture winners in the last 20 years, I can count on one hand the number that I've seen. I still think "Tombstone" was robbed in 1993.

However, this past week, we had the chance to screen "Green Book" at the Grand Theatre in Stamford. As you may know, "Green Book" won the 2019 Academy Award for Best Picture

and has been widely acclaimed. I figured it would at least be worth an evening at the movies with a box of Junior Mints (clearly the best movie candy, but that's an essay for another day).

I left the Grand absolutely blown away by the movie. The Academy Award Winners did right on this one. It's an entertaining movie, but one that merits further societal discussion.

"Green Book" is based on the true story of pianist Don Shirley's 1962 concert tour through the Midwest and Deep South. Shirley is accompanied by Tony Vallelonga, a driver and bodyguard hired by Shirley's record label. Shirley is an African-American, classically trained pianist. He lives in a spectacularly adorned apartment above Carnegie Hall in New York City and moves in Manhattan's sophisticated circles. Vallelonga is an Italian-American from the Bronx. He lives in a rough-and-tumble neighborhood near all his family, and previously spent time as a trash truck driver and a bouncer at the famed Copacabana nightclub. It is a vast understatement to call these men an odd fit to spend eight weeks driving cross-country together.

The film's title is a reference to the Green Book, a travel guide created and published by Victor Hugo Green from 1936 to 1966. The book provided information about hotels, restaurants, filling stations, and other travel establishments that would welcome African-American travelers at the peak of America's Jim Crow era. Vallelonga uses the Green Book to guide their travels through territories unfamiliar to him and unwelcoming to Shirley.

I won't give any spoilers, but Vallelonga opens the film with a dim view of African Americans, despite the chip on his own shoulder from his own experiences with discrimination as a man of Italian heritage. As Shirley and Vallelonga travel together, they connect personally, but also reveal themselves as imperfect humans. They deal with some awful, appalling instances of racial discrimination. Like imperfect humans, they don't always respond well.

"Green Book" should make us think uncomfortably about American society. After it ended, a friend walked over, an older gentlemen in Stamford. He shook his head a little and said, "sometimes it's hard to think that wasn't very many years ago." It wasn't. 1962

seems like a lifetime ago in some respects, but many generations who experienced the discrimination of the 1960s, especially as children, are alive and well.

As I've written on this topic in the past, our society has advanced far past where it was in 1962, but that doesn't mean we're perfect. Overt segregation and discrimination are harder to find, but ingrained, subconscious societal prejudices still exist. No matter our skin color, we've probably both experienced and propagated a few prejudices, even if subtle ones, and even if we didn't intend to.

Sometimes, it's good to be challenged to think about our society. It's good to be uncomfortable as we think about the unsavory pieces of our past, so that we can ensure we don't repeat the mistakes of our forefathers. If you get the chance, go see "Green Box" or get it on DVD in the near future. Remember: we can't change our society's past, but we can do our part to make society's future better for all.

James Decker is a lawyer, farmer, and mayor in Stamford, Texas, and the creator of the forthcoming "West of 98" podcast and website. He may be contacted through Facebook at facebook.com/james.decker.

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