



Lakewood Village Update

September 16, 2014

Hello Everyone,

A few quick community announcements: Pet Day is September 27th at Town Hall; details are available on the Town website. I want to thank everyone for a noticeable improvement in our animal control - complaints have been dramatically reduced. On the long-range horizon: the Halloween Hayride will be coming up next month on October 31st. As in past years, we appreciate Gary Newsome for organizing the event, and we will give you more information next month. This event is my favorite of the whole year. For one night it is all about little kids running house to house with their friends getting candy - they don't care about ISIS or Obamacare. It's about the CANDY. Just CANDY.

Road Update. Lakecrest is the first road to be substantially complete - the sod went down late last week and now you can see the finished product. I think it really looks good. As the landscaping goes in, please try to stay off the grass and don't park on the shoulder until we get the grass established. The next road scheduled to be completely paved is Hillside. Peninsula is currently being milled and will be next. Paving the first side of our streets is easy. However, because the concrete trucks have to drive on the new concrete when we pave the *other side* of the street, we have to wait about 28 days to get the road to maximum strength. That's why there is such a time delay between pouring one side of the street and the other. So you will see Jagoe's crews hop to another street instead of finishing the one that is half done. I must say, I am really impressed with the relaxed attitude everyone has shown in the construction zone. I know it can be inconvenient at times (especially moving the bus stops), but everyone is keeping a positive view and focusing on the great benefits. At the start of the job, I didn't know how people would handle it, but it is good to see everyone rising to the occasion.

Lakecrest was unique in that we put in the new water main and had to do extensive work on the shoulder of the road just prior to the road project. As we progress down the other streets, you may notice that some shrubs and small trees are going to be removed to make way for the road. Many of you probably do not know that legally, our roads are actually 60 feet wide. The pavement is 22 feet, and the right-of-way (used for drainage and Town utilities) is another 38 feet. So, if you stand at the edge of the road, the first 19 feet of grass you see when you look toward your house is Town property. I know what you are thinking, and yes, you do have to mow it (we did let you put your driveway through our property; your car isn't going to hop the 19 feet to get to the road). So, what does this mean from a practical standpoint? First, it means that if you plant anything in the drainage ditch you will have to remove it - you can't disrupt the flow of water. Second, if you plant bushes or shrubs near the street, especially at the edges of your driveway, they can be removed **if necessary**, since they are on Town property. So, as the new streets go in, please don't plant anything near the road. Under no circumstances can you plant anything between the street and the drainage ditch. On several streets, the old "road" was only about 17-18 feet wide, and shrubs were not in play because people drove more toward the centerline. **The new road is the full 22 foot width.** Now, we aren't going to go out and just destroy everything within 19 feet of the street for no reason, but be aware if you plant it on Town property, it is risky.

As many of you noticed last Sunday, we had a major water leak as the 8 inch main line running down Highridge broke. The problem was in our largest steel water line and it blew out a softball-sized hole when it failed. How did it happen? I think the pipe couldn't take another Cowboy's loss. Actually, we really don't have an explanation, these things just happen (I think Tony Romo said the same thing). However, it does bring up an important issue. While most of us would quickly see a water leak in our own yards, we have several areas of town that are more remote like Green Meadow and Highridge. Curtis Cooper saw the leak and called me. I was out of LWV, so I called Ken Guthrie, and he had Sam Morgan on site within the hour to begin repairs. So, when you are out walking the dog (under control), biking or just driving home, if you see water on Highridge please let us know. You should not observe running water in any ditches or culverts anywhere. If you see puddles in front of your own house in the ditch - look and see where your water meter is. The water main runs along the street and your service line is in a straight line between your meter box and the street. If you see water collecting between your meter and the street, that is a strong indication that your line is leaking. Ninety percent of our leaks are on this service line to your house. But if you see running water anywhere, give us a call.

I bet you didn't notice. For the last six weeks, we have been doing a total end-to-end rehabilitation on the wastewater plant. The entire plant was emptied, cleaned and pressure washed, all rust was removed, and we applied a special anti-corrosion epoxy coating on the entire plant. If you are curious, we have lots of photographs showing the various parts of



the process on our website. In addition, we took the opportunity to rebuild the clarifier (in stainless steel), add a new pre-treatment chamber with new bar screen, and re-plumb and replace various pipes and pumps. The plant is now in better shape than when it was first built almost 20 years ago. Based on that, we should be relatively maintenance free for another twenty years. The budgeted cost of the project was \$62,000. The project has been completed and the final cost of \$49,700 has been **paid-in-full** using our capital reserve fund. And, by the way, the current cost to build an identically sized new plant is about \$1.8 million or almost the same amount as we are spending on our concrete roads.

I have had a couple of people ask me what I am doing so late at town hall sometimes. Well, besides writing these masterpieces, and keeping track of the town's 12 bank accounts, I also like to put on my old engineering hat and do research on the latest water and sewer plant designs. My hand twitches each month when I see the CoServ bill for the water wells and sewer plant, fortunately, I hand that bill to Ken and he authorizes payment. We can't go off the grid, yet, but we can minimize our bills by getting more efficient. Two winters ago, I

ran an experiment where I manually sequenced the smaller and larger wells turning them off and on depending on the water demand. From December to February, we pumped six percent more water while using 22 percent less kilowatt-hours than the previous year. When we get our next ground storage tank (I will talk more about that next month), we will design and implement a fully automated system. By dynamically adjusting the well production, I think we should achieve a 25% reduction in energy consumption. Looking at the sewer plant, we have blower motors that run continuously providing oxygen to the digester chamber for the bacteria to consume "the product". This uses a lot of energy; our CoServ bill for just these motors is \$1500 per month, every month, year round. As part of the sewer plant rehab, we have removed the old aeration lines and installed fine air diffusion bubblers. Sounds technical, but what it does is use millions of micro bubbles to carry the oxygen rather than the conventional bubbler. Although smaller, the larger numbers of micro bubbles have a greater total surface area, which allow for higher efficiency in delivering the oxygen. This new technology means we don't need to run the blowers 24/7. We are currently in the process of installing timers, which will allow us, for the first time ever, to turn off the blowers for part of the day. I am hopeful that we can reduce our energy consumption by 30 %. Between the water and sewer, I think we should be able to meet a goal of at least \$10,000 in permanent energy savings next year. Maybe if we save enough, I can read the entire CoServ bill without wanting to put it in the shredder. Oh, and we have expanded the use of recycled water at the sewer plant. Last year we installed recirculating pumps to use the clean recycled water in the chlorine contact chamber to disinfect the water before discharging it into the lake. As part of the just completed sewer plant rehab, we are now also recycling some of the chlorinated water to spray on the inside of the clarifier to control and eliminate algae formation. Algae control was something that TCEQ was mildly concerned about in our latest inspection, so I think we are solving that problem in a clever way. Prior to last year, when we implemented the recycled water use, the Town used approximately 3 million gallons of well water at the sewer plant each year. Our current consumption is zero. I like that.

Facilities Building Last month, the Town Council had preliminary discussions about constructing a new building. Next month I will be formally presenting to Council plans for a new ~ 1000 square foot building located inside the fence at the water plant. The building will contain a much larger storage area allowing us to increase our spare parts supply and set up a formal inventory tracking system. It is extremely important that we have a full complement of repair parts available for water and sewer problems that arise. As part of the 2015 budget, I proposed, and the Town Council approved that we take town mowing "in-house". Thus, we will purchase our own equipment and, starting next year, under our new contract with Little Elm Services we will pay for mowing labor only. Currently we spend \$9,000 annually on mowing town property. By taking it in house, I expect that under our agreement with LES we will be able to perform the service for less than \$3,000. The first year savings will more than pay for the equipment. However, we need a place to store the equipment - which is another reason we need the building. Third, the building will have a workshop so we

can service our pumps and lift-station motors here on site, rather than sending them out. Finally, the building will have an office and a bathroom so we can begin moving toward having maintenance staff positioned here in LWV.

We have not made a final determination on what we will do with our existing wooden storage building at the water plant. However, in looking through the building we have found many of the original street signs for Lakewood Village. Dave Getka has cleaned all of them and taken pictures. Rather than give them to a scrap metal dealer, Dave's idea is to sell the signs to the highest bidder. Proceeds will be used for the park, Christmas festivities, or maybe CANDY for Halloween. The list of signs and their pictures are being put on the town website. Alternatively, all of the signs are sorted and are on display in Linda's office, so you can stop by and take a look. We have old signs from every street, as well as a couple of the first Eldorado Parkway signs. The starting bid is \$10. I don't think we have the IT technology to run a silent auction on the Town webpage, so we will have a hardcopy-updated list with bids in Linda's office. We will scan it and upload it to the webpage periodically if there is some action. Otherwise, you can email me, Linda, or Clint with your bid or any question, or stop by the office, Linda has CANDY on her desk. Have some fun with it.

When teaching my class, sometimes a student would ask me a question and after answering them, I would forget what I was previously talking about, so I would ask the students what I was saying before. They would answer, 'you were just saying "in conclusion...". **So, in conclusion**, many people contacted Jagoe about doing extra flatwork. Unfortunately, Jagoe's pricing was not competitive. I was not happy about that, but it was additional, optional work, not part of their official contract with the Town. In response, the Town Council has approved extending the flatwork permit waiver to all driveway flatwork performed in the construction zone, no matter who performs the work. You must still obtain a permit, and there is still a pre-pour and post-pour inspection, however, the fee is waived. I have talked with two companies that are doing flatwork now in LWV, or have done it in the last week or so. I will try to find some others and post it on the Town website. You may choose anyone you wish. I have talked to the following two companies and they want the jobs, and they have agreed that the general pricing should be in the \$5-\$5.50 per square foot range (maybe lower) depending on the job complexity. If the old driveway needs to be demolished, the additional cost may be \$1-\$2 more, but I am trying to get that price down by allowing them to stockpile the concrete before we make one big run to the recycling plant. Make the best deal you can. I am just giving you two options to get you started if you want to comparison shop. The Town is not party to any agreement - it is between you and the contractor. Again, you can use anyone you wish.

Freedom Concrete Services 940-367-5381
Freeman Construction 214-789-9551

Lastly, you may have noticed the markings on Eldorado, near our entrance. Denton County has contracted with The Town of Little Elm to repair the failed concrete road construction. Watch for lane closures as that repair work happens.

Our concrete roads are smooth. Our town is *Lakewood Village*



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