

***Council Calendar:***

September 1 – Regular City Council Meeting - Virtual Meeting - 5:30 p.m.  
September 8 – Special City Council Meeting – Public Meeting (Recreation Center) – 5:30 p.m.  
September 15 – Special City Council Meeting – Public Meeting (Recreation Center) – 5:30 p.m.  
September 22 - Regular City Council Meeting - Virtual Meeting - 5:30 p.m.

**PLANNING DEPARTMENT**

City Staff is continuing to work with the community to promote the 2020 Census and encourage our residents to self-respond to make Nacogdoches count! Below is a summary of the 2020 Census timeline changes and local outreach efforts as we try to maintain momentum through the COVID-19 crisis.

Census field operations - To accelerate the completion of data collection and deliver the apportionment counts to the President by the statutory deadline of December 31, 2020, the Census Bureau will end field data collection and self-response options by **September 30, 2020**.

Census employees have already begun conducting in-person Non-Response Follow-Up starting **August 11<sup>th</sup>**. Census employees will be equipped with PPE (masks, gloves, etc.), hand sanitizer and will practice social distancing.

The **City is currently at a 53% response rate**, compared to 51% for the County and 59% state wide. This is compared to a 62% response rate in the 2010 Census.

Local outreach efforts - The COVID-19 pandemic halted several of the City's planned in-person outreach efforts, and has required Staff to pivot our outreach efforts to primarily digital and social media campaigns, with limited in-person events and continued distribution of Census materials throughout the community.

City Staff is working with local news media outlets to promote the Census, and distributing Census material through our website and social media outlets. Efforts also include working with the local school district, community groups like '21/7', and other non-profits to distribute Census literature throughout the community.

Have you seen our Census website lately? We recently updated it with lots of free downloadable promotional materials you can share with your networks! Just visit the link below:

<https://www.ci.nacogdoches.tx.us/census2020>.

## **POLICE DEPARTMENT**

Nacogdoches Police Chief Jim Sevey has been elected to the Executive Board of the Texas Police Chiefs Association (TPCA) as the 3rd Vice President. TPCA is one of the largest police chief associations in the country and seeks to increase professionalism at all levels of police work.

Police Officer Miles Greenberg has been nominated to receive a Life Saving award from the Texas Commission on Law Enforcement. Officer Greenberg responded to a call where an individual had a large cut to his leg. Officer Greenberg arrived on-scene quickly and realized the individual was suffering from severe blood loss. Greenberg applied a tourniquet to the individual and facilitated transport to an emergency room. The attending physician stated that the patient would have likely succumbed to his wound had Greenberg not immediately attended to the wound. The Nacogdoches Police Department only recently undertook a new training concept called Stop the Bleed recognizing blood loss as a major contributor to traumatic death. The patient is doing well and is expected to fully recover.

## **COMMUNITY SERVICES**

Cemetery Department is overseeing projects in Sunset Memorial Park to increase the number of plots available for purchase. Two new sections, including an infant section and Section S, have been added at the rear of the cemetery; local contractors completed the dirt work to level these sections and planted grass seed. As Cemetery Supervisor Clinton Layton put it, staff is “watching the grass grow” in the new sections until the area can be surveyed and plotted. We will also be advertising for bids to install a fence around the infant section. A similar project will soon kick off at Pine Grove Cemetery.

Historic Sites Department made and distributed 150 Junior Engineer Boxes this summer. These boxes were created as an alternative to our very popular Junior Engineer Days at the Nacogdoches Railroad Depot which were cancelled this summer due to COVID-19. The Junior Engineer Boxes were filled with coloring pages, book suggestions, train themed snack recipes, a toy as well as a craft and all the supplies needed for that craft. Parents seemed very excited about this alternative and posted pictures of their kids and the completed crafts to our Nac Historic Sites Facebook page.

Recreation Department staff made the difficult decision this week to cancel fall youth sports, including Basketball and Girls’ Volleyball; they have not yet made a decision on Adult Softball or Adult Soccer. Staff is looking for ways to bring the community back to the Recreation Center with socially distanced classes such as Zumba and gymnastics. September brings a new schedule of programs; don’t forget that City employees have free access to the Recreation Center and its programs!

Nacogdoches Library staff partnered with 21/7, a local grassroots organization serving the neighborhoods between Highways 7 and 21, to distribute 300 information bags to residents of three apartment complexes. These bags contained information about the census, COVID-19 safety tips, voting information, and information about social service agencies. With funds from the American Library Association Census Minigrant and NEDCO, the library was able to provide 300 census-themed cloth masks. Other local organizations also provided masks for the bags. Many organizations, including the library, have found that getting information about services they provide is more difficult since many of them offer limited contact hours. This was a wonderful opportunity to get valuable information to a large group of people in our community.

Library staff is currently working on a schedule of programs for the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) Big Read Nacogdoches that celebrates the book, *Circe* by Madeline Miller. Events will take place during the month of October with several City departments assisting with the project, including Parks, Recreation Center, Historic Sites, Animal Services and the CVB. The grant award

from NEA and Arts Midwest for \$10,948 will go toward the purchase of give-away copies of the book and advertising. This is the fourth year the library has held a city-wide reading initiative and its third year receiving this NEA Big Read Grant. With concerns about COVID-19, the library staff has had to rethink some of its previously planned in-person activities, but with the help of its partner organizations and NEA, the library will incorporate virtual and outdoor events. Programs will include book discussions, a virtual marathon, a pet-adoption drive, and outdoor art that will celebrate Greek mythology, the basis of the book. To encourage family reading, the library will apply for the Humanities Texas Mini-grant to purchase multiple copies of children's Greek mythology-themed books to give away in a corresponding Little Read Nacogdoches.

City of Nacogdoches coordinated with County Judge Greg Sowell to reopen the swim areas at Lakes Nacogdoches and Naconiche. The beaches at both lakes closed at the onset of COVID-19 to discourage large gatherings of people.

Humane Society of Nacogdoches County (HSNC) is sponsoring fees on all approved adoptions this week. Normally this type of event will generate 3-4 times more adoptions than normal. The week started off strong, but abruptly slowed on Tuesday due to Hurricane Laura. HSNC will host another adoption event October 12th-16th to coincide with the Library's Big Read Event. Their event features Artemis, the goddess of animals. What better time for both departments to work together with the HSNC to promote both events?

A Stephen F. Austin State University Biology student contacted the Animal Shelter this week to gain permission to do an animal observation/behavioral study for a research paper for Dr. Brent Burt. He will be observing cat behaviors at the Shelter and comparing their behaviors to those of other cats in a variety of locations and situations.

Ashley Butler is making great progress on the Shelter's new mural (see below). Visitors and staff love the mural and are already enjoying the colorful addition to the office.



*Hurricane Laura* - With facilities closed to the public on Thursday, Community Services Division staff stepped into various roles to assist the Incident Management Team for Hurricane Laura. Historic Sites Manager Jessica Sowell served as Public Information Officer and streamlined communication to the community. Community Services Director Brian Bray served as Branch Director for Operations. Community Services Assistant Director Hanna Andersen served as Situation Unit Leader for the Planning Section and ran the hurricane call center.

Recreation and Library Department staff prepared their building for possible sheltering operations and manned the hurricane call center on Wednesday and Thursday. The Recreation Center served as a Red Cross Shelter following Hurricane Harvey evacuations in 2017, but this year the building would have sheltered Nacogdoches County residents only. Fortunately, the shelter was not activated but staff was prepared with sleeping cots, blankets, and other supplies. Over 160 residents and evacuees contacted the hurricane call center to ask about everything from shelter options to garbage pickup schedule, as well as to report storm damage as it happened.

Sterne-Hoya House Museum & Library, Durst-Taylor Historic House & Gardens and Nacogdoches Railroad Depot Museums were closed on Thursday during Hurricane Laura. Thankfully these historic buildings made it through the bad weather without any damage.

Parks and Cemetery crews prepared for severe weather conditions by securing facilities and sports complexes and checking and stocking equipment. Staff removed 38 hanging baskets from downtown light poles and stored them at the Nacogdoches Farmers Market. They ensured availability of fuel for trucks and equipment and checked chainsaws for proper function in case of downed trees and other debris.

## **ENGINEERING**

While Hurricane Laura spared Nacogdoches much of the damage that was expected, Public Works, Water Utilities and Utility Construction staff did an excellent job of preparing for the worst leading up to the event, executing repairs and responses quickly and effectively in the aftermath of the storm. GIS staff worked diligently to prepare maps for use during the preparation effort, as well. The City is lucky to have such dedicated and mindful staff.

This week, Utility Construction crews repaired several breaks on water lines throughout the City, including on Mimms Street at Fredonia Street, on South Street at Pilar Street, on Dennis Street at Durst Street, in front of Banita Hall on W. Main Street, on Virginia Street and on Houston Street. With landfall of Hurricane Laura on August 27, Public Works crews removed several trees that had fallen across roads throughout the City, as well as low-hanging limbs that impeded traffic.

Water Utilities staff completed the quarterly Bio-Monitoring Report for the Wastewater Treatment Plant as part of the Texas Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (TPDES) Permit that the City holds through TCEQ. For this report, staff takes and tests effluent samples to ensure that the treatment process is adequate in limiting discharge of contaminants such as Total Dissolved Solids and E. Coli to Lanana Creek. Water Utilities staff also completed the Annual Sludge Report for the Wastewater Treatment Plant which is also part of the City's TPDES Permit. This report accounts for how much sludge is sent to the City landfill. A total of 1,034.3 dry metric tons of sludge was taken to the landfill in the past year.