



the Breeze

Official news from the City of **portland**
of possibilities.

UPCOMING ACTIVITIES

Mystery Book Club

Thu., Feb. 2, 6:30 p.m.
Bell Whittington Library
For details, call 361.777.0921

Senior Dance

Fri., Feb. 3, 6:30 p.m.
Community Center
For detail, call 361.777.3301

Take Your Child to the Library Day

Sat., Feb. 4, 11:00 a.m.
Bell Whittington Library
For details, call 361.777.0921

Portland Opry

Thu., Feb. 9; Doors open at
6 p.m.; music starts at 7:00 p.m.
Community Center
For details, call 361.777.3301

Father/Daughter Dance

Fri., Feb. 10, 6:30 p.m.
Community Center
For tickets, call 361.777.3301

Adult Coloring

Wed., Feb. 15, 6:00 p.m.
Bell Whittington Library
For details, call 361.777.0921

San Patricio County Adult Literacy Council Scrabble Tournament

Fri., Feb. 24, 5:30 p.m.
Community Center
For details, call 361.777.0921

CITY COUNCIL REVIEWS RATE CHANGES TO PRESERVE AND MAINTAIN CITY WATER/WASTEWATER SYSTEM



One of Portland's biggest investments, and one of utmost importance to both residents and businesses, is seldom seen. Most of it lies underground. It's the city's water and wastewater system. When it works well, we take it for granted—when it doesn't, even a few hours without water has an impact.

In 2014, the City Council commissioned a utility rate study to ensure that the long-term integrity of the water/wastewater system is maintained and that adequate funding is available for upgrades when necessary. That study provided a rate model to enable City staff to review utility rates on an ongoing basis, and to make rate change recommendations.

To ensure the system can meet the

needs and demands of the community, City staff presented proposed changes to the rate structure the City currently charges for water and wastewater at the Jan. 17 City Council meeting. The current base rate for residential water is \$15.46 per month; the base rate for wastewater is \$31.09. The proposed rate structure changes include:

- An increase of \$0.56 per 1,000 gallons to \$16.02 per 1,000 gallons in the rate for residential water; this rate includes a rate increase from San Patricio Municipal Water District for water the City purchases, which will take effect with the February billing cycle.

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COMMUNITY CENTER OFFERS SLATE OF FITNESS AMENITIES

The Portland Community Center can help with those 2017 fitness goals. A multi-use facility, the community center offers a variety of programs and activities to keep Portland families active and healthy in 2017.

The fitness center includes: a full-size basketball court, indoor walking track, two racquetball courts, full-size locker rooms, a weight room that offers both free weights and weight ma-

chines, Jacob's ladder, spin bikes, Concept 2 rowing machines, and step mill.

The Community Center is open Monday through Friday, 5:30 a.m. to 9:30 p.m.; Saturday from 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.; and Sunday from noon to 4:00 p.m. It's located at 2000 Billy G. Webb Dr. behind City Hall. For more information, including membership rates, call 361.777.3301.

CITY OF PORTLAND

1900 Billy G. Webb Drive
Portland, Texas 78374

Phone: 361.777.4500

Comments or Questions:
webmaster@portlandtx.com

RATE CHANGES ...continued

- A \$1.87 increase per 1,000 gallons to \$32.96 in the rate for residential wastewater
- Commercial customers will also see rate changes; those rates will vary based on the size of their commercial meter

Since the City makes no profit from the service delivery of water and wastewater, it uses the utility rate model to set the lowest possible rates, yet still cover expenditures, such as water purchases, salaries, and capital expenditures like replacing pipes. The model uses historical information, including billing and consumption data; the Capital Improvement Program (CIP); drought data; debt service analysis, both current and future; and cost recovery analysis to determine if changes to utility rates are necessary.

The City Council will review and take a final vote on the proposed rate changes at the Feb. 7 City Council meeting. If approved, the new rates would take effect on March 1.

At the same City Council meeting on Jan. 17, City staff also presented a new contract from Republic Services, the trash and recycle provider for Portland. If the new contract is approved, the residential rate for trash and recycle services would be \$16.50 per month (excluding the standard \$2.50 administration fee), an increase of \$1.49 per month over the current rate of \$15.01. The proposed residential rate would still be the lowest trash and recycle rate of any city in the area.

Staff began negotiating a new contract with Republic Services last fall after other bids were rejected because they were not considered to be competitive. Republic Services initially offered a monthly rate of \$19.50, but after negotiations with staff, reduced their rate by \$3.00 per month.

The current contract expires on Feb. 28. If approved, the new contract would take effect March 1, and continue through Feb. 28, 2022, renewable for two additional five-year terms if both parties agree. The Jan. 17 meeting was a first reading of an ordinance regarding the contract; a second reading and final vote is scheduled Feb. 7.

OUTDOOR WORKOUT STATION DEBUTS



The City of Portland unveiled its newest outdoor workout station in January. The station contains an elliptical machine, incumbent bike, and a cardio walker, as well as a chest press and a leg press. It's located next to the soccer fields, adjacent to the Portland Community Center on Billy G. Webb Drive.

This is Portland's second outdoor workout station. The first, located at Simpson Park on Broadway Avenue, was installed in 2015 and funded as part of a service project for local teens in Cheniere's Youth Leadership Enrichment and Development (LEAD) program. Inspired by the efforts of its Youth LEAD group, Cheniere funded the latest station, and provided shade/weather covers for both workout areas as part of the company's commitment to improving health and education opportunities in the local area.

The newest workout station is located on a popular walking path, next to the soccer fields and adjacent to the skate park and aquatic center—all within the Portland Community Center complex. Based on the popularity of the Simpson Park station, officials expect the newest station to see lots of activity as a year-round, any-time option to helping Portland residents stay fit and healthy.

DEALING WITH SERVICE LINE ISSUES

As with all cities, trouble in a water service line from the meter to the house, and the sanitary sewer line from the City easement to the house, is the responsibility of the homeowner. But the same line or lines from the meter toward the street or from the easement to the street is the City's responsibility. Anyone experiencing an issue with water or wastewater service should first call the City of Portland's Public Works department.

Crews are available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. They can determine the location of the problem in the line to tell who is responsible for it. If it's on the City line, crews can make repairs. If the problem lies on the homeowner side, repairs are the responsibility of the homeowner.

For water or wastewater issues, call the Public Works department at 361.777.4601. For additional information regarding homeowner service line responsibilities, visit the City's website at PortlandTX.com and look for the link on the front page.