

Sales tax results mixed

BY GAIL LOWE
DISPATCH RECORD

Local sales tax allocations this month were 4% more across the state than in November 2018. The city of Lampasas doubled that return with an 8% gain this period, while Lometa and Kempner saw their payments drop 4% and 17%, respectively.

Lampasas took in \$168,296 in November, giving it an 11-month total of close to \$1.75 million – up 5% for the year.

With one month left in 2019, Lometa has earned cumulative sales taxes of \$72,197 for a 1% annual increase. Last year, the city had a total of \$71,271 at this point. Its rebate for November came to \$6,823.

In Kempner, the monthly sales tax payment dropped this period after nine consecutive months of gains. On the strength of those earlier

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JEFF LOWE | DISPATCH RECORD

Badgers repeat bi-district title over Brazosport

Jack Jerome (22) hurdles over the leading tackler in Class 4A, Kevin Davis (20), in the Badgers' 42-14 bi-district playoff victory over Brazosport Friday. See pages 6-7 for details on the game and the upcoming area playoff round.

Proposals presented to boost downtown

BY DAVID LOWE
DISPATCH RECORD

City and county officials are working with business owners on multiple proposals for beautification and attractions in Lampasas' downtown area.

Last week, the Lampasas City Council unanimously approved a request to have a train mural painted on the north end of the historic Santa Fe train depot, which is located at East Second and South Live Oak streets. Austin artist Bill Tavis will paint the mural, which Economic Development Director Mandy Walsh said will be funded by Santa Fe depot owner Richard Hardin.

In another item, city officials are considering using beautification grants to fund a colorful metal sign with 6-foot-tall three-dimensional letters, where people could pose for photos downtown. The exact design had not

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Council approves permit for offices behind Cauthen House

BY DAVID LOWE
DISPATCH RECORD

In a meeting last week, the Lampasas City Council unanimously approved a specific-use permit to allow for professional offices in a two-story accessory building behind the historic Cauthen House.

The 206 S. Walnut St. property has been used in the past for business or office purposes, City Manager Finley deGraffenried said.

Juan Esparza, who bought the property Oct. 1, told the council he plans to have two office units on the bottom floor of the accessory building and possibly two on the top floor. Esparza said he is considering having small one- or two-room offices for professionals such as counselors and attorneys.

Esparza, a registered nurse who owns a staffing company, said he also is considering having a home health office in the accessory building.

In a letter to city officials, Esparza wrote that the Cauthen House is "a vital part of the local history" in Lampasas.

"The historical integrity of the house has been maintained for years and will continue to be preserved," he wrote.

Although he plans to have small offices in the accessory building behind the Cauthen House, Esparza said he plans to use the house as his primary residence.

The council approved the specific-use permit, with the condition that Esparza provide the number of off-street parking spaces required by ordinance.

There are no marked parking spots at the property, Esparza said, but he told the council he can make space at the north end of the property. Esparza said 12-14 cars can fit on the lot, off the street.

The Planning & Zoning Commission recommended approval of the specific-use permit. The two surrounding property representatives who responded to a city notification about the SUP request also expressed approval.

In other business, the City Council unanimously approved a preliminary plat for a 12-lot residential subdivision planned on FM 1478 across from the



DAVID LOWE | DISPATCH RECORD

The new owner of the historic Cauthen House, at 206 S. Walnut St., obtained city permission to have professional offices in the two-story accessory building behind the house.

Diamond Ridge neighborhood.

David and Jan Brister of Brister Construction plan to develop a 4-acre property into Hidden Oaks Subdivision, which will include 12 houses. The preliminary plat for the proposed subdivision shows 12 lots around a cul-de-sac called Dragonfly Drive.

The Bristers plan to seek annexation of the 4 acres into the city limits, according to a written summary prepared for the City Council.

P&Z unanimously recommended approval, and the council followed that recommendation.

"I would remind you that this is [the] preliminary plat," deGraffenried told the council, "so you will see much more information, [and] there will be much more due diligence prior to the final plat being submitted."

On another matter related to residential development, the council voted unanimously for a city crew to extend a 2-inch water line from the corner of Hetherly and Bridge streets to two other lots on Hetherly, as well as provide a sewer tap off Bridge Street.

RKJ Construction plans to build houses on three lots it owns on Hetherly Street. Water and sewer

service is available for the lot at the corner of Hetherly and Bridge, and the water line extension the council approved will serve the other two lots.

Public Works Director Rickie Roy said in accordance with city policy, the city will provide the first 50 feet of water and sewer line at no charge. RKJ will pay for the rest of the line extensions and will pay for the sewer tap, Roy said. The company will pay \$1,536 plus labor for the water line extension, according to city estimates.

RKJ obtained a quote of \$24,400 to extend sewer service from the corner lot to the other two lots, but the council declined to provide funding for that extension.

On another agenda item, after several minutes of discussion about bids, the council voted to pay All Seasons Service Inc. to replace a 5-ton heating, ventilation and air-conditioning unit at the Hancock Springs Hostess House.

The city received quotes of \$4,800 from TexAir HVAC Inc., \$5,298 from Miller's Service Co. and \$5,850 from All Seasons Service Inc. Those are all Lampasas companies.

Councilman Mike White said he does not think the bids are comparable, as he said All Seasons' quote is much more detailed than the others.

When Mayor Pro Tem TJ Monroe asked White what questions he wants resolved, White said he wants to be sure city officials are "comparing apples to apples," particularly in regard to the electrical phase and Seasonal Energy Efficiency Ratio rating.

White also noted All Seasons' warranty -- listed on the quote sheet as 10 years for the compressor, two years for labor and seven years for parts, with online registration. TexAir's quote listed a five-year parts warranty, and Miller's bid does not contain warranty information.

White said the Hostess House has had extensive air-conditioning problems, and he alluded to multiple service calls in recent years.

"So there's [about] a thousand dollars' difference between the most expensive and the

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Kempner councilman resigns

BY ALEXANDRIA RANDOLPH
DISPATCH RECORD

Kempner City Councilman Bob Crane announced his resignation from the position on Nov. 12.

Crane submitted his letter of resignation to fellow council members at the end of a meeting last week. His resignation was effective immediately.

"Service on this city council has become a futile act for me, and I choose not to deal with that any longer," he wrote.

In his letter, Crane cited administrative issues in City Hall as his reason for stepping down.

"Currently, meeting minutes contain incomplete thoughts and do not always properly reflect what the motion was that was made," he wrote. "The disrespect shown to the

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WEATHER

Date	High	Low	Rain
Nov. 14	54	38	0.08
Nov. 15	60	33	0
Nov. 16	63	41	0
Nov. 17	67	43	0

Rainfall so far this year: 23.11 in.

Data from the Lower Colorado River Authority (site 11 miles west-northwest of Lampasas, near Nix).

BRIEFLY

HOLIDAY OPEN HOUSE

The First State Bank of Burnet Lampasas branch, located at 800 S. Key Ave., will hold an open house Friday from 11-2 p.m. Holiday refreshments will be served.

BURN BAN LIFTED

County Judge Randy Hoyer has suspended the county burn ban until today at 5 p.m. As a result, outdoor fires are allowed outside incorporated city limits.

Officials urge people to use caution when burning. Officials also ask people to notify the Lampasas County Sheriff's Office of fire plans in advance by calling 512-556-8255.

LOMETA SCHOOL BOARD

The Lometa Independent School District Board of Trustees will meet Thursday at 7 p.m. in the school library at Eighth and Main streets.

Agenda items include recognition of students and staff members, as well as

consideration of a 2018-2019 financial audit and a resolution to cast votes for directors for the Lampasas Central Appraisal District board. The agenda also includes various administrators' reports, a time for community input and a personnel item.

BRUSH COLLECTION

The city's free curbside brush collection service is in effect this week on the southeast side of town -- east of Key Avenue and south of First Street.

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