

## County picks firm to provide services for redistricting

BY DAVID LOWE  
DISPATCH RECORD

The Lampasas County Commissioners Court voted unanimously Monday to approve a contract for professional services related to setting precinct boundaries. Redistricting of precincts for commissioners, justices of the peace and constables will take place after county officials receive the results of the 2020 U.S. Census.

The court voted to contract with the Austin-based firm of Allison, Bass & Magee for the redistricting services. The same firm prepared Lampasas County's precinct maps after the 2010 census, County Judge Randy Hoyer said.

Allison, Bass & Magee will charge an initial assessment fee of \$5,000. That will be all the county owes if precinct boundary lines do not need to change, Hoyer said.

If it is necessary to redraw precinct lines to achieve population balance in each type of precinct, the county would pay not only the initial \$5,000, but also two separate installments

of \$6,750. That would result in a total cost of \$18,500.

"Not that I want to get on a political platform, but here again is another unfunded mandate by the state and by our federal government," Hoyer said. "Because our hands are tied. We're required to do this. We either do it ourselves or we contract for the service."

If the county needs new precinct boundaries, it can spread out its payments to Allison, Bass & Magee over three years, Hoyer said. That would mean the final payment would not be due until October 2022, the judge said.

On another matter, the court voted unanimously to request bids for lawn care and grounds maintenance at several county properties. Those sites, Hoyer said, are the current jail property on East Fourth Street, the new jail site at 1210 Barnes St., the courthouse grounds and the area behind the county annex buildings on South Pecan Street.

The Commissioners Court is considering paying for

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FILE PHOTO

## Grant could fund new trails at Cooper Spring Nature Park

Cooper Spring Nature Park Foundation board member Harrell Clary, right -- shown on a walking tour at the park -- has asked the city for help administering a grant for proposed trails. See page 2 for related story.

## Library beautification project moves forward

BY DAVID LOWE  
DISPATCH RECORD

Plans continue for an outdoor seating area and playscape at the Lampasas Public Library.

The Lampasas City Council voted unanimously last week to allocate a maximum of \$50,000 of privately donated funds toward the library project -- which will include metal benches, picnic tables and trash receptacles, as well as a landscaped walkway and a two-level tree house. The money will come from funds the late Tracy Guthrie bequeathed to the library.

Guthrie loved not only the library but also the outdoors, said Sheryl Hausmann, vice president of the Library Foundation of Lampasas, Texas.

"She loved the fact that the library had an outdoor space ... to use, and she had often mentioned that she would love to see it beautified," Hausmann said.

As part of the beautification project, the library foundation will pay for concrete work that M.W.

Hail Construction Inc. will do at the entrance to the library park, Hausmann said. The foundation also will fund miscellaneous items including irrigation and lighting, she said.

The city recently had new curb, gutter and sidewalks installed around the library to replace sidewalks that were cracked.

"We are so thankful and so pleased to have that work done," Hausmann said.

The money from the Guthrie bequest will reimburse the library foundation for payments it made for the tree house -- which complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act -- eight outdoor tables -- two of which will be accessible for people who have disabilities -- three trash receptacles and two benches.

The benches will be bolted to the ground, but the tables will be movable, Hausmann said.

The library park entrance that M.W. Hail will construct will include concrete benches, pavers

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## Man charged with cattle theft

BY JIM LOWE  
DISPATCH RECORD

A Lometa man charged with two offenses of theft of livestock sold as many as 88 head of cattle, estimated to be worth more than \$65,000, authorities said.

Williams Derroll "Bill" Watson, 63, was arrested Wednesday morning at a local cattle auction, where he worked part time, Special

Ranger Marvin Wills with the Texas and Southwestern Cattle Raisers Association said. Wills and Investigator David Thorp with the Lampasas County Sheriff's Office made the arrest.

Watson allegedly stole as many as 62 head of cattle over the

last three years from an absentee landowner who has a Lampasas County ranch, Wills told the Lampasas Dispatch Record. Watson worked for the landowner -- a woman who does not live in the county, Wills said.

In addition, the Lometa man allegedly was involved over the last year in the thefts of another 26 head of cattle that belonged to a separate person -- a

Lampasas County cattle producer, Wills said. The cattle producer believed Watson had permission from the absentee landowner to run the producer's cattle on the local ranch, the special ranger said.

A third cattle producer, also from Lampasas County, had livestock on the same ranch in the county, but all

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## City extends trash contract

BY DAVID LOWE  
DISPATCH RECORD

The Lampasas City Council voted unanimously Feb. 10 to renew the city's trash collection contract with Waste Connections for another five years.

City Manager Finley deGraffenried said the recommendation to the council to extend the contract is because of the company's good performance and the potential disruption in service if the city sought a different provider.

Terms of the contract will remain the same

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DAVID LOWE | DISPATCH RECORD

## Fire destroys Lometa house

Lometa Volunteer Fire Department Capt. Stephen Hamilton sprays what remains of a 207 E. Olive St. house that was destroyed in a fire Monday morning. See related story on page 8.

### WEATHER

| Date    | High | Low | Rain |
|---------|------|-----|------|
| Feb. 13 | 48   | 33  | 0    |
| Feb. 14 | 55   | 28  | 0    |
| Feb. 15 | 61   | 39  | 0    |
| Feb. 16 | 78   | 49  | 0    |

Total rainfall for 2020: 4.75 in.

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

### BRIEFLY

#### CHANGE IN DISINFECTANT

Kempner Water Supply Corp. and the city of Lampasas, have temporarily converted the disinfectant used in the water distribution system from chloramine to free chlorine. The conversion began Saturday and will continue through March 15.

During this period, users may experience taste and odor changes, officials said.

A temporary conversion to

free chlorine, in conjunction with flushing activities, helps to rid distribution pipes of organic matter that may have built up and improve the quality of water overall, officials said.

Anyone with questions about this process may contact Kempner Water Supply General Manager Delores Coberley at 512-932-3701 or 254-547-9430; or Rickie Roy, director of public works for the city of Lampasas, at 512-556-6831.

#### KEMPNER CITY COUNCIL

The Kempner City Council is scheduled to meet Feb. 18 at 6 p.m. in City Council Chambers at City Hall, 12288 East U.S. Highway 190.

Action items listed on the agenda include approval of an agreement for tax abatement and incentives for The Shoppes at Kempner and Rock River Homes Inc. The council also is set to consider approval of \$2,500 to the Kempner Volunteer Fire Department for wall lockers.

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