



Mayor's Letter

June 15, 2018

Hello Everyone,

AT OUR JUNE 14TH Council meeting our two newest Council members Serena Lepley and Darrell West were sworn in and took office. As the resident old-timer starting my seventh term, I offered them my views and perspective on what it means to be on the Lakewood Village Council. I would like to share my thoughts with you and further elaborate on my views. For those of you thinking about serving in the future, I hope you will find this useful.

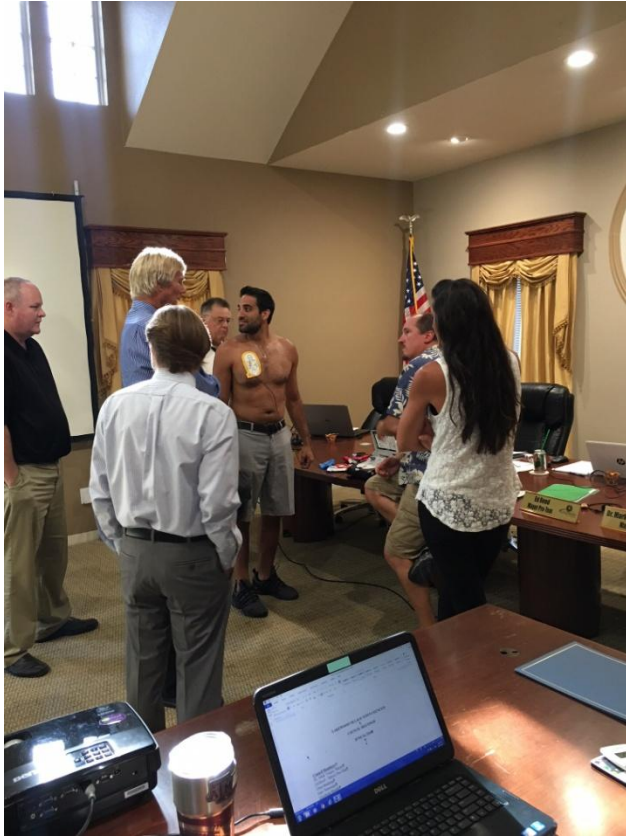
First, the primary objective of a council member is to get things done. We are not a board of directors overseeing an army of subordinates and devising some fluffy puffy mission statements or preening for the cameras. We don't spend time devising global intergalactic strategic counter measures. **We get things done.** Do you see any employees wearing a Lakewood Village uniform ? We do the work. That's what makes LWV unique. Clint handles our website, Ed is working hard on Dark Skies and coordinating with CoServ, I am meeting with developers and talking with our engineers on our sewer master plan. Think about it, we only have one full-time employee (Linda). Darrell West and I met on Saturday so he could look at **our white board with 33 tasks** that we are working on. Of course, he came up with two more tasks that he is taking the lead on. I have said it often, for many things, we either pay someone to do it (if we can find someone), we do it ourselves, or it doesn't get done. A case in point is the playground. We have money, we allocated funds in the budget, it needs a lot of work, yet nothing got done. This year, I am confident that Serena **will get it done.**

Second, Councilmembers are not politicians, you are a volunteer. Politicians get paid, they have benefits, they have expense accounts, they travel on taxpayer money, they often reap great financial rewards after their service ends. We get none of those, not even an employee discount. Councilmembers give their time to the Town, time that could be spent enjoying the lake or with the family at Six Flags or working overtime to make some additional money, lots of other things. Volunteering to make the town better is a very unselfish act.

Third, your obligation is to make decisions that you believe are best for the Town. It is not to do what the majority say in a poll. Politicians count votes because their job, their benefits, their aspirations and their future wealth are all tied to getting more votes than the next person. **Councilmembers are not politicians.** Now, some may say, "**majority rules**" you have to do what the majority want. If that's true then we don't need any councilmembers - we can just have a computer with a green and red light. We can have people phone in like American Idol and wait for the lights to blink . That's not how it works. The voters decide **who the decision makers will be.** Let me give you a couple of examples. In 2007 the Town was in very poor financial shape. After analyzing the data, the big reason was that they were spending **over \$50 per house, per month**, on sewer service, but only charging \$29 (or spending about \$50,000 more than they took in). After cutting expenses, the council agreed to my request that we raise the rates to \$40 per month. What do you think would have happened if we took a poll and asked people would you like to pay \$29 or \$40 a month for the same sewer service ? We had to raise the rates to create financial stability for our utilities.

In 2013 at the start of the engineers' design tasking for our concrete road reconstruction, we had to tell them which streets. We could only afford to do about one-third of the town. At the time, the Councilmembers were myself, Mike, Carl, Dave, Harold, and Ken. **Five of us lived in the Shores** and Ken lived on Meadowlake. Although we could have easily voted to concrete Melody, Stowe, and Carrie, **we didn't do what was best for us personally** we did what was best for the Town. We are one town. We all want our Town to be a great and wonderful place, but we can't simultaneously do everything, everywhere, for everyone.

OVER ↘



PRIOR TO THE MEETING the Council received training on the operation of our AED - **Automated External Defibrillator** that we have at Town Hall. Our village doctor, Carl Menckhoff, M.D. graciously provided the training for all of us. Given that most town events occur at Town Hall, several years ago, we purchased the device which is stored next to Linda's office. Since nearly every Town gathering typically has at least one member of the council in attendance, Ed, Clint, Darrell, Serena, and myself all received training.

Lakewood Village MDD President Eric Farage was kind enough to volunteer to be our test subject as we put the AED through its actual operation. And no, Eric didn't get shocked - we tried, but you can't override the machine's automation.

In other safety related news, with our lakeside location, everyone should be trained in basic CPR techniques. **The Town will be hosting a CPR training class on Saturday June 30th at 10am.** Children as young as 12 can participate in the training. Based on previous history our classes will fill up quickly. **Its free. It's here at Town Hall.** It can't be any easier. To reserve your spot, stop in the office, call us at 972-294-5555 or

email linda@lakewoodvillagetx.us. We all need to be able to save a life. I will see you there.

OUR SALES TAX COLLECTIONS have declined significantly. With many new residents moving in, it is important that everyone remember that when you shop, zip code 75068 is Lakewood Village, not Little Elm. Everyone needs to be vigilant, make sure that your cell phone provider, internet or cable providers, Amazon, etc. all bill you to Lakewood Village. Retailers will try and use Little Elm because it has the greatest population, and that's where the post office is located. You have to be persistent. If a company refuses to accept Lakewood Village and will not correct "Little Elm", then let us know at Town Hall. You have to pay the sales tax in any case, so make them pay it correctly. Sales taxes are an important revenue source that helps to keep our property taxes low. And, to our new residents, when you order checks, make sure and tell the bank you live in Lakewood Village. There's no reason they should say Little Elm.

KEY FIGURES: As a comparison to last year,

On June 15, 2017 the Town had \$242,822 in deposits at Point Bank.

Today, May 15, 2018, we have **\$372,855** in the bank.

There's never been a better time to be in Lakewood Village.

Dr. Mark E. Vargus
Mayor

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