

Elves Pitch In For Operation Santa Claus

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Texas HHS Seeks \$400-Million To Bolster Medicaid

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Sharks Swim Teams Hit The Water

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City holds final Council meeting of '24

BY MARICA ELLIS
Palacios Beacon

The Palacios City Council met last week for the final in 2024 and heard presentations, made appointments and consummated a new agreement.

City Manager Cindy Raleigh was a focal point of most of the meeting with her City Manager Update taking up the lion's share of activity.

She reported that the Bethany Park drainage plans were reviewed by engineering and would be sent to the Texas General Land Office and then sent out for bids, and the project would begin implementation very soon. Citywide drainage culvert work is being

done throughout the city and the Main Street drainage project will begin in January.

"The drainage culverts that we see them putting in, they're going to help drain our town when we have flooding," Raleigh said.

Progress on the proposed Palacios Marine Aquaculture Research (PMAR) oyster hatchery Raleigh stated that engineering is moving forward.

"They're just trying to work out some details of how it's going to be built." She continued on the Pearl of Palacios Planned Unit Development (PUD) where the proposed hatchery, pier, splash pad, the Veteran's Memorial, and fish cleaning station projects are to be located is moving forward.

"The pier is approved, the construction is underway, so we have all the permits, everything that we're supposed to do, that's all signed and filed away properly. The splash pad -- all permits have been pulled, the plan reviewed, and we're embarking on moving to have it open for spring and summer. And the Veterans Memorial and fish cleaning stations, we are on the design stage of the memorial, we did have the public forum, Tammy (McDonald) took all those notes, and she started sending those off to designers to try and get something back. Fish cleaning stations will be installed as soon as they're ready, they're being built right now."

According to Raleigh, "The pilot's lounge

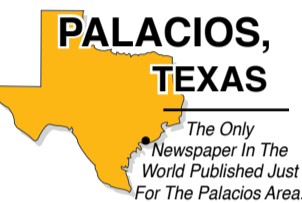
work is being done. Drywall's all up. They were painting yesterday, so it's looking really nice. I'll let you know the FAA equipment for their specs as soon as I get the information working with some people who are very close in the air in the aviation world and helping me out with that so we can get that done properly in FAA standards."

She reported having travelled to Austin for a meeting at TXDOT, along with Gary George of the Palacios Airport Committee.

"We met with Texas Department of Transportation, their aviation department. They were welcoming, helped us to unravel how this is all going to work, how we get the

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Palacios Beacon

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Local Wreaths Across America ceremony

THE Palacios Cemetery welcomed dozens of visitors for the Wreaths Across America ceremony last Saturday. A small ceremony was held at the Palacios Cemetery Amphitheater was led by emcee and retired Coast Guard veteran, Karen Bothyl. Following her remarks and those of Matagorda Co. Judge Bobby Seiferman, local veterans placed wreaths on stands in front of flags representing each of the branches of the armed forces. Attendees then helped place wreaths on the over 600 veterans interred at the Cemetery. (Above) Ted Riccio places a wreath beside the flag for servicemembers who are prisoners of war or are missing in action. (Below) Calhoun Co. VFW members provide a 21 gun salute. (Beacon Photos by Ryan West)



Seawall gets \$15k request from City for trash, RR's

BY RYAN WEST
Palacios Beacon-Publisher

The Commissioners of the Matagorda Co. - Palacios Seawall Commission wrapped up the 2024 calendar with last week's regular monthly meeting.

While updates on projects and maintenance items were on the agenda, it was a request received from the City of Palacios that made the most waves.

Commissioner Joe Kana reported having a phone conversation with City Manager for the City of Palacios, Cindy Raleigh, on the possibility of the Seawall picking up the tab for the City's weekend picking up of the bayfront.

According to Kana, the City's trash pickup and restroom washouts on the weekend along East Bay Park and South Bay Park are at risk of coming to an end due to City budget constraints and the weekend tasks coming in the form of overtime for the City employees.

Commissioner Erwin Jansen voiced a request for the breakdown of hours the City workers put in doing the weekend tasks, and also a request for assurances that trash be picked up from the cans twice per weekend.

(See SEAWALL, Page 2)

PISD daycare services in jeopardy

BY BRIENN PANIAGUA
Palacios Beacon

The December board meeting brought the anticipated security updates, score reports and an unexpected proverbial bomb that caused a wedge amongst board members.

Since the inception of the new Palacios Elementary development, the district announced it would be providing its own daycare to staff members. This incentive brought new teachers to the district, a significant increase of morale and most importantly provided an affordable child care option for teachers who would otherwise be unable to work. This daycare option is independent of Rainbowlnd, consists of four childcare providers and is headed up by director Traci Gonzales. Gonzales is a mother and passionate about early child education and providing quality care for the children of our community, something she has done for nearly seventeen years.

The school's day care is located in the old Central Elementary, which is now owned by the Ed Rachal Foundation. Since it changed owners, it was subjected to inspections from the city to ensure it met its building code. However, several requirements were not met by the daycare, resulting in a failure to pass.

This serves as an encumbering, high-price ticket for renovations that would be required to bring it up to code, a burden that is not feasible for the district.

Superintendent Dr. Duncum, along with Gonzalez and the support of several parents planned to create a new building for the child care center. Additionally, Gonzalez cited the inspection failing as only part of the issue, adding that lack of security was a big component.

"We are just four women there with fifteen children and sometimes, it almost feels like we're sitting ducks. And I hate to say that, I don't want to, like, push that image, but if any injuries happen, or anything happens, it's on my watch. It's disheartening, you can't be there after dark, you don't know who is around or along the fence." She further praised the district, reminding the room that PISD is the only school in Matagorda county that provides this service.

"We are setting stepping stones for others. Nobody else in Matagorda can say, hey, we take care of our children, the way that we do."

This issue garnered support from most of the board and even Dr Brian Williams, who stated:

(See PISD, Page 4)



PHS NHS Bell Ringers recently collected over \$1,200 from generous Lowes' customers and employees to benefit Palacios Area Fund's Operation Santa Claus. Pictured are NHS members: (left to right) Teagan Duke, Ansley Kubecka, Maria Pham and Caleb Malone were some of the 40 students who solicited donations and provided holiday music and cheer during the first week of December.

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