CITY OF BELLAIRE
CITY COUNCIL

Minutes of Meeting
Monday, February 5, 2007

REGULAR SESSION (TOWN MEETING) – 7:00 P.M.

A. CALL TO ORDER AND ANNOUNCEMENT OF A QUORUM – Mayor Cindy Siegel.

Mayor Cindy Siegel called the City Council of the City of Bellaire, Texas, to order at 7:00 p.m. on Monday, February 5, 2007. The Bellaire City Council met at that time and on that date in Regular Session (Town Meeting) in the Civic Center, First Floor of City Hall, 7008 South Rice Avenue, Bellaire, Texas. Mayor Siegel announced that a quorum was present consisting of herself and the following members of City Council:

Councilman John F. Monday, Position No. 2;
Councilwoman Debra Marz Davison, Position No. 4;
Councilman Pat McLaughlan, Position No. 5; and
Councilman John Jeffery, Position No. 6.

Councilman Will Hickman, Position No. 1, and Mayor Pro Tem Peggy Faulk, Position No. 3, were absent. Other officials present were City Manager Bernard M. Satterwhite, Jr., City Attorney Alan P. Petrov, and City Clerk Tracy L. Dutton.

B. INSPIRATIONAL READING AND/OR INVOCATION – Councilwoman Debra Marz Davison.

Councilwoman Debra Marz Davison presented the inspirational reading for the evening by reading an excerpt entitled "The Big Rocks" by Dr. Neil Chadwick as follows:

One day an expert in time management was speaking to a group of business students and, to drive home a point, used an illustration those students will never forget.

As he stood in front of the group of high-powered over achievers he said, "Okay, time for a quiz." Then he pulled a out a one-gallon, wide mouthed Mason jar and set it on the table in front of him. Then he produced about a dozen fist-sized rocks and carefully placed them, one at a time, into the jar.

When the jar was filled to the top and no more rocks would fit inside, he asked, "Is this jar full?"

Everyone in the class said, "Yes."
Then he said, “Really?” He reached under the table and pulled out a bucket of gravel. Then he dumped some gravel in and shook the jar causing pieces of gravel to work themselves down in the space between the big rocks.

He then asked the group once more, “Is the jar full?”

By this time the class was on to him. “Probably not,” one of them answered.

“Good!” he replied. He reached under the table and brought out a bucket of sand. He started dumping the sand in the jar and it went into all of the spaces left between the rocks and the gravel.

Once more he asked the question, “Is this jar full?” “No!” the class shouted.

Once again he said, “Good.” Then he grabbed a pitcher of water and began to pour it in until the jar was filled to the brim. Then he looked at the class and asked, “What is the point of this illustration?”

One eager beaver raised his hand and said, “The point is, no matter how full your schedule is, if you try really hard you can always fit some more things in it!”

“No,” the speaker replied, “that’s not the point. The truth this illustration teaches us is: If you don’t put the big rocks in first, you’ll never get them in at all.”

What are the ‘big rocks’ in your life?

- Your relationship with God?
- Your husband or wife?
- Your children?
- Your loved ones?
- Your health?
- Your education?
- Your dreams?
- A worthy cause?
- Teaching or mentoring others?
- Doing things that you love?
• **Time for yourself?**

Remember to put these BIG ROCKS in first or you’ll never get them in at all. If you sweat the little stuff (the gravel, the sand) then you’ll fill your life with little things you worry about that don’t really matter, and you’ll never have the real quality time you need to spend on the big, important stuff (the big rocks).

So, tonight, or in the morning, when you are reflecting on this short story, ask yourself this question: What are the ‘big rocks’ in my life? Then, put those in your jar first.

C. **PLEDGES TO THE FLAGS – Councilwoman Debra Marz Davison.**

1. **U.S. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE.**

2. **PLEDGE TO THE TEXAS FLAG.**

   Councilwoman Debra Marz Davison led the audience and City Council in the U.S. Pledge of Allegiance and the Pledge to the Texas Flag.

D. **APPROVAL OR CORRECTION OF MINUTES:**

1. **APPROVAL of minutes of the Special Session (Interviews) and Regular Session of the City Council of the City of Bellaire, Texas, held Monday, January 15, 2007 – Action by Members of City Council (Item submitted by City Clerk Tracy L. Dutton).**

   **MOTION TO APPROVE MINUTES:**

   A motion was made by Councilman John Jeffery and seconded by Councilman Pat McLaughlan to approve the minutes of the Special Session (Interviews) and Regular Session of the City Council of the City of Bellaire, Texas, held Monday, January 15, 2007.

   **VOTE ON MOTION TO APPROVE MINUTES:**

   Motion carried unanimously on a 5-0 vote as follows:

   **FOR:**
   
   Siegel, Cindy  
   Monday, John F.  
   Davison, Debra Marz  
   McLaughlan, Pat  
   Jeffery, John

   **OPPOSED:** None
ABSENT: Hickman, Will
                Faulk, Peggy

2. APPROVAL of minutes of the Special Session of the City Council of the City of Bellaire, Texas, held Monday, January 22, 2007 – Action by Members of City Council (Item submitted by City Clerk Tracy L. Dutton).

MOTION TO APPROVE MINUTES:

A motion was made by Councilwoman Debra Marz Davison and seconded by Councilman John F. Monday to approve the minutes of the Special Session of the City Council of the City of Bellaire, Texas, held Monday, January 22, 2007.

VOTE ON MOTION TO APPROVE MINUTES:

Motion carried on a vote of 4-0-1 as follows:

FOR: Siegel, Cindy
        Davison, Debra Marz
        McLaughlan, Pat
        Jeffery, John

OPPOSED: None

ABSTAIN: Monday, John F.*

ABSENT: Hickman, Will
                Faulk, Peggy

*Councilman John F. Monday abstained from voting on the minutes of the Special Session of the City Council of the City of Bellaire, Texas, dated January 22, 2007, due to his absence from that meeting.

E. PERSONAL/AUDIENCE COMMENTS.

Dan Sebesta, 5209 Jessamine Street, Bellaire, Texas:

Mr. Sebesta addressed City Council and advised that he had previously sent an email to City Council with respect to the super-sized sidewalks on Jessamine Street, noting that he could not understand why the City could not build sidewalks that were four feet in width.

He continued and stated that he wished to speak this evening with regard to the intrusiveness of construction on trees along Jessamine Street. The trees in the area were very mature and with the removal of dirt, the roots of these trees had been exposed.
Lynn McBee, 5314 Evergreen Street, Bellaire, Texas:

Ms. McBee addressed City Council regarding the evening's Town Meeting. She presented a written statement of her public comments for the record as follows:

Good evening Mayor, Council, Citizens, and Staff:

I know this is a Town Meeting and I want to ensure that the conversation tonight is two-way and not totally monopolized by the presenters. Such evenings as this are usually much hype about accomplishments and many omissions and mistakes. My purpose is to challenge those others of you who are part of “The Governed” to be heard to responsibly participate with your views. My inspiration is that of recently deceased Molly Ivins. She was one of the few “truthsayers” whose skills included responsible research, caustic opinions and down home humor. I wish I could do that!

Last fall was to me the height of Bellaire governmental irresponsible action based on a “wished we had more money” perspective. On October 16, 2006, a unanimous Council voted to alter the FY 2007 City of Bellaire Budget shortly after its public hearing and formal adoption. The Council that night voted to amend it to cover the shortfall of an unsuccessful fund raising effort by the Patrons of Bellaire Parks to raise $3 million to pay for the “Taj Mahal” excessive Bellaire Aquatics Facility. That is, three pools, a two-story community building/pool house, a 6-lap pool, a diving well, and assorted expensive shade and play items. The ordinance was duly passed that allowed a transfer of $1 million for essentially budget contingency funds to the “Revenues from Other Sources” portion of the budget to cover the missing funds for Town Square promised by the Patrons for Bellaire Parks, described as “to be received.”

- The $3 million contract for the pool construction was that night approved with all alternates to be authorized.

- The $250,000 pledged by Harris County Precinct 3 Commissioner Radack to the City of Bellaire toward pool construction was rejected by the Council, so that Council could also reject future equal pool fees for those not Bellaire residents;

- The budget amendment ordinance stated that the $1 million reflected an appropriation to be received from the Patrons for Bellaire Parks—essentially a promise to pay—unsecured by the City—and could be viewed as an unbudgeted amendment, perhaps even considered deficit financing because the funds anticipated were not delivered timely, if at all nor did there exist a filed report nor an Audit by this Patrons of Bellaire Parks. The Council designated the Patrons as an “agent of the City.” Wonder how the IRS would view that City relationship with a non-profit status entity—gaining tax-free funds for municipal purposes.
• Coincidentally, by the end of 2006 the City Finance Director announced her departure for greener pastures, as did recently the City Facilities Director and further coincidentally, the disappearance of both the Chair and Treasurer of the Patrons for Bellaire Parks. We did read that a new recruit to lead the Patrons was announced: Mandy Nathan who led the original Parks Advisory Board that formulated the Taj Mahal Aquatics Facility and Town Square park improvements; and Mr. Bill Thorogood has also been recruited by Mayor Siegel to serve as Treasurer. Cleaning up the Patrons’ chaos will be their largest charge.

So what is my point? Citizens think about this and be heard! Do you really approve of--

• Poor Council/management judgment by wanting more recreation facility than needed nor appropriate for this small city and wanted immediately without waiting.

• A marked lack of prudent fiscal management of public funds by accepting the promise of funds in the future and by not ensuring a “hands length” distance by the City from the Patrons.

• A refusal to step back until and if promised donations were actually turned over – cash in hand.

• A questionable series of ethical improprieties.

In the good name of and to paraphrase Molly Ivins, I will continue to carry on as she urged that we do: Every day, every one of us needs to step outside and take some action to improve our world. As one tribute to Molly stated: “There is no one else like her and I will miss her insight, her wit, and her ability to shoot from the hip with accuracy and truth.”

{The allotted speaker time ended at this point}

F. STATE OF THE CITY ADDRESS - Mayor Cindy Siegel.

Mayor Cindy Siegel welcomed everyone to the Town Meeting this evening. She noted that this was the annual time to talk about the state of the City. It was the time we took to reflect on what was accomplished over the past year, the status of projects and initiatives that were underway, and the goals and challenges of the upcoming year.

The year 2006 was another good year for Bellaire. The City and economy were strong. Bellaire continued to thrive and to prosper. The tax base grew by 196,804,100 over the prior year. The year 2006 was one of the best years for the redevelopment of the residential area. The City also saw the completion of some major commercial development. As a result of the
increase in the City’s tax base, City Council was able to reduce the tax rate by three cents.

The City continued its strong financial position. Bellaire’s bond rating was one of the best for a City of its size. This was maintained through responsible fiscal oversight and management. The City continued to place a top priority on ensuring that its debt obligations were met without increasing the tax rate. The City continued to keep its operating expenditures in line and ensured that every extra dollar was invested back into capital improvements that would benefit the citizens in the long term or City Council would reduce the tax rate.

2006

Mayor Siegel next touched on a few highlights from 2006 as follows:

- Upgrades were made to the City’s emergency operations center to improve the City’s responsiveness during a disaster.

- The City worked to get residents with special needs registered with the State of Texas through the 2-1-1 phone number. This information was kept confidential and was used to identify those who might have special needs during a disaster or emergency.

- Additionally, the City sent an in-depth mailer to every household with information on emergency hurricane preparation and steps a citizen needed to take during a widespread emergency in Bellaire.

- The first “Citizen Emergency Response Team” (i.e., CERT) class graduated. This was a group of citizens that had been trained in first aid and other first responder tools that could be used to assist City emergency personnel during a citywide disaster.

- City Council passed an ordinance that made it more difficult for registered sex offenders to live in Bellaire. Registered sex offenders could not legally reside in Bellaire within 1,000 feet of any school or place where children might be (i.e., playground, park, etc.).

- A quiet zone along the railroad track was approved by the Federal Government greatly improving the quality of life for those who lived close to the track. The quiet zone was implemented through a partnership with the City of Houston and the City of West University Place.

- Curbside recycling was finally brought to Bellaire and was an overwhelming success.

- Construction of the new Aquatic Facility started with a tentative opening phase this July. The City continued to be partners with the
Patrons for Bellaire Parks to raise donations to help complete a large part of Bellaire Town Square in time for Bellaire’s Centennial next year. As an aside, Mayor Siegel noted that the Patrons for Bellaire Parks had almost $750,000 in pledges and donations. The City was working with them on the Wortham Challenge Grant from The Wortham Foundation, which would bring an additional $250,000 in grant money for Bellaire Town Square if donors gave $500,000 in pledges by June 30th of this year.

- The City Charter was amended and brought up to date to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the City’s operations. It was noted that the last time the Charter was amended was in 1987.

- The City was successful in obtaining $8.5 million in grants from other agencies. This included a grant of over $8 million from the Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County (METRO) to reconstruct Baldwin Avenue and Newcastle Drive. This meant that more of the City’s bond money could be used for storm water drainage improvements in that area.

- In addition to other grants to various City departments, a $50,000 grant was obtained from the Texas Parks & Wildlife Department for Bellaire Town Square.

- The City started the last phase of the 2000 bond referendum (i.e., Bellaire Millennium Renewal Program) and started the first phase of the 2005 bond referendum (i.e., Rebuild Bellaire Program). Mayor Siegel noted that one could drive through all of Bellaire and see the results of the Bellaire Millennium Renewal Program and the beginnings of the Rebuild Bellaire Program.

2007

On the schedule for 2007 was the completion of a comprehensive plan for building a new Fire Station, moving the Municipal Court, and remodeling the Police Station and Bellaire City Library. In addition, the City was addressing how to best and most responsibly address the serious foundation problem the City had with City Hall. The City Council would be holding a Workshop Session on Monday, February 12, 2007, to discuss that very problem.

The City would continue work on a plan for the downtown revitalization with the Planning and Zoning Commission and the business community. The City wanted to improve pedestrian and vehicular mobility, beautify the downtown, and encourage commercial development that would increase the tax base while supporting the Bellaire community. The City wanted to develop a comprehensive sidewalk policy that encouraged pedestrian mobility in the City and took into account the citizen concerns expressed over the past few months. Additionally, the City needed to prepare for Bellaire’s Centennial in
2008. A Centennial Planning Committee was being formed now. Mayor Siegel encouraged interested individuals to contact the City or email her if they were interested in serving.

Challenges

Mayor Siegel presented some of the challenges the City would have to face as 2006 was closed out and 2007 begun as follows:

- The City would need to ensure that the building and remodeling of City facilities met not only the current needs, but also the changing needs and desires of the residents in the future.

- The design and construction of the new Fire Station, the remodeling work in the Police Station and Bellaire City Library, and the structural problems in City Hall would have to be done in a way that provided flexibility in usage, provided for longevity, and got the biggest bang for every dollar spent.

- Additionally, the City would need to develop a comprehensive plan of action for the downtown area that supported Bellaire’s citizens and had the support of the residential and commercial communities. Downtown was redeveloping currently; however, if the City did not act quickly, the opportunity for influencing the direction of that redevelopment would be lost. It was important for the City to develop in a way that enhanced the residents’ quality of life, while increasing the City’s commercial tax base.

- The City also needed to continue to improve the emergency response and disaster recovery plan. Unfortunately in the world today, this was a very real concern. The City needed to always be looking for ways to improve its response during a disaster and its recovery plan in the aftermath. Any city located where Bellaire was would be foolish not to do that.

- The City needed to continue to look for grants and other sources of funding to help relieve the tax burden of its taxpayers. Funds raised through grants and user fees helped with that burden; however, nothing had a greater impact on the tax burden than the continued, strong residential and commercial redevelopment in Bellaire.

- The City needed to work with its State Representatives to prevent unfunded state mandates on City resources. A few months ago the City Council was forced to raise the water rates that had not changed in ten years due to the increasing price that Bellaire had to pay the City of Houston for surface water. This was required for the City of Bellaire and other cities in this area by the State of Texas. Since the City first starting purchasing water from the City of Houston, the rates
had increased three times. This represented an additional $1 million
cost that Bellaire residents had to pay due to a state unfunded
mandate regarding subsidence. This was why it was important that
Bellaire’s voice continued to be heard with the legislators—both by the
City and by the City’s residents.

- The City needed to look for ways to enhance the quality of life in
Bellaire in a responsible manner. This meant a better library,
improved parks, more playing fields, improved City services and easier
access to those services through the Internet, continued infrastructure
and facility improvements, and overall improvements that increased
the safety of Bellaire’s residents and enhanced the beauty of Bellaire.
Just like the company that continued to look for ways to improve its
product, the City must continue to look for ways to make Bellaire a
better community and look for ways to improve what the City provided
to residents. This must be done in a way that would not sacrifice the
exceptional City services and still met the quality of life that the
residents expected and demanded.

- Lastly, the biggest challenge that Mayor Siegel believed the City faced
was safeguarding the uniqueness of Bellaire and the best City in Texas
to live in. This was the spirit of community—it was the parents that
volunteered at Bellaire schools and coached youth sports, and it was
the volunteers of the Bellaire churches and synagogues and service
and charitable organizations that worked hard to make the community
an even better place to live. It was the seniors who had given of their
time and effort for 50 years and served as a link to Bellaire’s history.
It was the City board and commission members who spent what Mayor
Siegel estimated to be over 5,000 hours this past year serving Bellaire
residents. It was the staff that spent evenings, vacation, and holidays,
in addition to their regular workdays, to serve Bellaire residents to the
highest standard possible. It was the neighbor who organized a block
party, or helped a neighbor in need, or just kept an eye on the
children in the block who were playing outside in the streets.

Mayor Siegel noted that everyone was very busy with family, work, and
his or her every day lives. She asked each of those present to give some
of their time back to the City. The spirit of community was what had
made Bellaire the place it was for the past 100 years. She believed it
would take everyone to preserve that spirit of community as everyone
looked forward to the exciting possibilities and the challenges of the next
100 years of Bellaire’s history.
G. **FINANCIAL PRESENTATION – Councilman John Jeffery, Facilitator of the Bellaire Audit/Finance Committee.**

Councilman John Jeffery, Facilitator of the Bellaire Audit/Finance Committee, presented the financial presentation for the City of Bellaire, Texas.

**Budget Goals**

Councilman Jeffery noted that the Bellaire City Council adopted and/or reviewed their goals and objectives on an annual basis. Those goals and objectives were considered within the context of a strategic framework that incorporated long-term financial planning and policy analysis. Items considered were noted to be:

- Optimization of the City’s annual budget;
- Consideration to the provision of tax relief, when possible;
- Financial obligations of the City’s bond programs, the Bellaire Millennium Renewal Program and the Rebuild Bellaire Program;
- Service expectations; and
- Provision of a stable employment structure.

**2006 Highlights**

Councilman Jeffery referred to fiscal year 2006 highlights and identified them as follows:

- The City decreased the property tax rate for fiscal year 2007 from $0.47 per $100 property valuation to $0.44 per $100 property valuation. Of that $0.44 tax rate, $0.29 was allocated to the General Operating Fund and $0.14 was allocated to the Debt Service Fund.

- The City continued to provide funding reserves for future capital improvements and vehicle, equipment, and technology needs;

- The City budgeted reserves for two months of emergency operating cash;

- A new utility rate structure was implemented to alleviate the Enterprise Fund shortfalls and encourage water conservation;

- The City maintained a sound personnel salary and benefits package for City employees;

- Construction and operation of the new Bellaire Town Square Aquatics Facility was provided for. The anticipated opening of the facility was noted to be during the summer of 2007; and
The City issued the first $5 million of General Obligation Bonds for the Rebuild Bellaire Program. These funds were obtained through a $50 million bond referendum authorized by the Bellaire citizens in 2005.

**Fiscal Year 2007 Budget**

Councilman Jeffery noted that the fiscal year for the City of Bellaire, Texas, ran from October 1 through September 30. The budget process consisted of City Staff presenting their individual departmental budgets to the City Manager, and the City Manager forwarding the full City budget to City Council for review. After a review of the budget by City Council, a public hearing would be called to receive input from the citizens of Bellaire. At the conclusion of the public hearing, the budget would be brought forward to City Council for possible revision based on input received and then for approval.

The Bellaire City Council approved the fiscal year 2007 budget on September 11, 2006. It was noted that expenditures increased by 8% in the fiscal year 2007 budget due to the following:

- Personnel costs (i.e., salaries, benefits, cost of living increases, raises, etc.);
- Anticipation of further increases in fuel and energy costs;
- Operation of the Aquatics Facility (i.e., more staff and operational needs would be required);
- Facility maintenance upgrades; and
- Emergency management upgrades.

Alternatively, the City’s revenues increased due largely to new construction in Bellaire. Councilman Jeffery showed a graph that depicted the number of new construction permits issued.

**Revenue Sources for Fiscal Year 2007**

Councilman Jeffery reviewed the sources of the City’s revenues for fiscal year 2007 as follows:

- Property taxes represented 48.2% of the City’s total revenues;
- Water and sewer collections represented 24.0% of the City’s total revenues; and
- Sales taxes represented 9.0% of the City’s total revenues.

Other sources of revenues for the City were identified as other taxes (5.0%), court fees (4.5%), permits and license fees (3.5%), other (3.1%), and recreation fees (2.7%).
Budget Allocations within the General Fund for Fiscal Year 2007

The budget within the City’s General Fund for fiscal year 2007 was allocated among the City’s service areas as follows:

- Public safety, such as police, fire, and emergency medical service, received 47% of the budgeted funds;
- General government received 23% of the budgeted funds;
- Recreation and culture received 16% of the budgeted funds; and
- Community development and public works received 14% of the budgeted funds.

Bellaire Bond Programs

Councilman Jeffery indicated that the City of Bellaire’s sound fiscal management was reflected in its strong bond rating. In order to receive a favorable bond rating, the City implemented many sound fiscal management policies, such as following a strict budget plan, anticipating marked conditions very conservatively, re-evaluating the budget at mid-year for corrections, and using current revenues to fund future capital needs.

According to bond raters, Bellaire was known as a stable, well-managed entity. The City’s current bond ratings were noted to be:

Moody’s Investor Services: Aa2
Standard and Poor’s: AA+

These ratings indicated a favorable and stable financial outlook for the City of Bellaire. The ratings also allowed the City to receive lower bond interest rates resulting in less cost to the taxpayers.

Fiscal Year 2005 Audit

Councilman Jeffery referred to the Bellaire Audit/Finance Committee of which he was the Facilitator and noted that one of their functions was to review the audit of the City of Bellaire, Texas, each year. An independent, third party certified public accounting firm performed the City’s audit each year and presented it to the Audit/Finance Committee for review usually during the month of March.

Results of the fiscal year 2005 audit indicated that the City was in compliance with Governmental Accounting Standards Board Statement 34 (“GASB 34”) and that the financial statements represented an accurate portrayal of the financial condition of the City. The economic factors used to analyze the fiscal health of the City of Bellaire for fiscal year 2005 indicated that the City was very strong financially.
Additionally, the City received the Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting for its Comprehensive Annual Financial Report for the year ended September 30, 2006.

In closing, Councilman Jeffery congratulated the City for its excellent financial management policies.

H. FACILITIES AND INFRASTRUCTURE PRESENTATION – Councilman John F. Monday, Facilitator of the Bellaire Facilities Committee.

Councilman John F. Monday, Facilitator of the Bellaire Facilities Committee, presented a facilities and infrastructure overview for the City of Bellaire. He noted that the Bellaire Facilities Committee ("Committee") was responsible for working with City Staff to develop a comprehensive, cost-effective rehabilitation/replacement of key facilities. The Committee, consisting of Councilman Monday, Councilman John Jeffery, and Councilman Pat McLaughlan, was charged with bringing recommendations and alternatives to City Council for approval regarding some of the City's essential facilities that had significant issues associated with them. Those facilities were noted to be the City Hall, Bellaire Fire Station, Bellaire City Library, and Police and Municipal Court Building.

In order to arrive at a recommendation for City Council, the Committee met with the Directors of each of the City facilities and reviewed the deficiencies from a structural, mechanical, and programmatic standpoint, including compliance issues under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The Committee conducted an extensive onsite walk-through with each Department Director. The Committee also reviewed and re-validated the facility condition report prepared by the firm 3D International (3DI). It was noted that the report had been prepared approximately one and one-half years ago.

**Bellaire Fire Station**

The Committee had not made a complete decision regarding the Bellaire Fire Station. A presentation would be made to City Council on February 12, 2007, regarding the City facilities.

The Bellaire Fire Station was originally built in 1955 for $162,000. It was remodeled in 1984-1985. The 3DI facility condition report and the walk-through conducted by the Committee resulted in the identification of 21+ significant deficiencies.

One of the key questions addressed with respect to the Bellaire Fire Station was the optimal location for it. The Committee believed that the current location was probably the most optimal location for a new fire station. The recommendation from the Committee would more than likely be to rebuild in place.
**Bellaire City Library**

Councilman Monday indicated that the City had already placed some funds in the budget to address some of the Bellaire City Library’s needs (“Library”). The Library facility was a relatively easy facility to resolve. Director Mary Alford was very helpful to the Committee during the walk-through. Again, the Committee looked at mechanical and structural issues, as well as issues related to access under the ADA and a variety of other issues that were somewhat programmatic.

It was noted that there was only one restroom facility in the Library. Other cosmetic changes were related to the circulation desk, study area, ceiling, wall covering, and carpet.

**City Hall**

Councilman Monday advised that it did not take much of a walk-through in City Hall to understand where there were some pretty significant issues. At the same time, the Committee did not wish to recommend pouring huge amounts of money into City Hall and not get a payback with respect to the life of the building.

There were significant slab movement issues, security issues, and compliance issues with respect to the ADA.

The Committee felt that their recommendation to City Council would hopefully require less operational disruption; however, it would be somewhat disruptive.

**Police and Municipal Court Building**

The Committee met with the Police Chief, Municipal Court Judges, and Prosecutor to get a better understanding of the space needs, security issues, and functional issues in their facility. The Committee had not reached a resolution as to whether the departments should be split into two separate buildings or kept in place and expanded.

It was noted that the Municipal Court Judges and Prosecutor indicated that there was a need for them to be connected to the City’s jail (i.e., for court appearances).

**Next Steps for City Facilities**

Councilman Monday advised that within the Committee and among City Staff, the expertise needed to prepare a conceptual design for the facilities was not there. The Committee, therefore, decided that outside expertise was needed to approach this facility rebuilding effort and to maximize the dollars allocated for the project.
The Committee issued a “Request for Proposal” (RFP) for a conceptual design. Fourteen (14) vendors participated in a walk-through of the facilities in late January. Proposals were due in mid-February, and nine (9) vendors submitted a proposal.

With respect to City Hall, it was noted that engineering assistance was needed to validate the technique and method the Committee thought was appropriate for the rehabilitation of the slab to extend the building’s life at the lowest dollars possible. This recommendation would be presented to City Council in a workshop on February 12, 2007.

Finally, there was a proposal in progress related to the Bellaire City Library.

**Bellaire Bond Program**

Councilman Monday advised that Mayor Siegel had asked him to give an update on the City’s bond programs as such programs related to infrastructure improvements.

Under the Bellaire Millennium Renewal Program for the years 2001-2006, 4.9 miles of concrete streets had been addressed at a cost of $17 million. For the year 2007 under that same program, 0.8 miles of concrete streets would be addressed at a cost of $5.5 million. The totals for the program were 5.7 miles of concrete street reconstruction at a cost of $22.5 million.

Under the Rebuild Bellaire Program for 2007, 1.4 miles of concrete streets would be addressed at a cost of $5.7 million.

With respect to sidewalk construction, 20,000 feet of sidewalks were constructed under the Bellaire Millennium Renewal Program at a cost of $675,000. Additional sidewalk repair projects addressed 15,300 feet of sidewalks at a cost of $700,000.

Councilman Monday closed and noted that this would be his last “State of the City Address” as a member of City Council. He advised that it had been a pleasure to serve the public and was grateful for the opportunity to do so.

I. **STRATEGIC PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT PRESENTATION – Bill Thorogood, Vice Chair of the Planning and Zoning Commission and Member of the Bellaire Strategic Planning and Development Committee.**

Bill Thorogood, Vice Chair of the Planning and Zoning Commission and Member of the Bellaire Strategic Planning and Development Committee, presented an update of the activities of the Strategic Planning and Development Committee (“SPDC”).
Mr. Thorogood advised that he had been asked to provide an update of the activities of the SPDC on behalf of Mayor Pro Tem Peggy Faulk who was out of the country on business. The SPDC was an entity derived by the City Council for the purpose of looking at the City Center District (i.e., CCD-1 and CCD-2 zoning districts) or downtown Bellaire.

He noted that there were minor differences between the zoning districts CCD-1 and CCD-2, which were primarily related to the height of a structure (i.e., four stories versus two stories). Most of the City Center District was edged by the City of Houston.

Over the last 18 months there had been three committees, each of which were independently established for the purpose of reviewing certain areas of the City Center District. Each committee had its own elements of focus, but the same intent—how could Bellaire’s City Center District be redeveloped to reflect the values and lifestyles of the residents of Bellaire?

In 2005, City Manager Bernard M. Satterwhite, Jr., engaged the business community in Bellaire in order to receive their input with respect to the redevelopment of the City Center District. The group became known as the “Bellaire Business Discussion Group” and their efforts were very successful. City Manager Satterwhite laid out for the group 12-15 different studies that had been conducted with respect to the City Center District. Due to the costs involved, none of the studies had been implemented.

What was important today was to look at the City Center District area and to try to determine what could be done in there. City Manager Satterwhite indicated that planning without implementation did not do the City any service whatsoever. The City of Sugar Land’s Economic Development Director attended one of the meetings to talk about the relocation of Sugar Land’s downtown from one side of Highway 90 to the other side. City Manager Satterwhite also brought in the City of Houston’s Downtown Management District Director.

During the last year, the Bellaire Planning and Zoning Commission took a more active planning approach to focus on planning and zoning issues related to the redevelopment of the City Center District, including land use, mobility, zoning boundaries, and structural landscape design.

The City Council, through a previous committee known as the “Community Development Committee” under the leadership of Councilman John Monday, started the process through a recommendation for the University of Houston and Rice University Masters in Business Administration (MBA) Programs to conduct studies related to the City Center District and quality of life issues for Bellaire. Mr. Thorogood noted that these reports served as the foundation upon which a great deal of work would be done.
In 2006, City Council adopted a goal to encourage economic development. Mr. Thorogood read a portion of the priority initiatives associated with that goal as follows:

- How to revitalize older buildings;
- How to have a better mix of retail offerings;
- How to improve traffic flow;
- How to bring walkways to certain areas;
- How to provide more green areas for pedestrian seating;
- The possibility of architectural standards that are uniform, but unique; and
- Mixed usage residential and commercial.

The SPDC, appointed in 2006, was now charged with looking at the City Council goals and trying to get them implemented within the City Center District. Mayor Pro Tem Peggy Faulk chaired the SPDC. Voting members were noted to be Mayor Cindy Siegel, Councilman Will Hickman, Chair of the Bellaire Planning and Zoning Commission Bruce Volkert, and Bill Thorogood, Vice Chair of the Bellaire Planning and Zoning Commission. The SPDC functionally included City Manager Bernard M. Satterwhite, Jr., and Director of Community Development Derhyl Hebert. Bellaire citizens and members of the Bellaire business community had attended the meetings as well.

Mr. Thorogood noted that this was a key committee, which was looking at the City Center District development. The Bellaire Business Discussion Group had a role in the SPDC as well. He continued and referred to the fact that spot redevelopment was currently ongoing in the City Center District (i.e., a new Burger King and a proposal for a new bank). In the last five-seven years, approximately 25% of the City Center District had been redeveloped. This was an amazing amount of spot redevelopment without any real, true direction or coordination. He also referred to one of the City’s recent major developments, the First Street Surgical Center, and the Bellaire Town Square area. Effectively, a wonderful community center (Bellaire Town Square) could be linked with a wonderful downtown.

Mr. Thorogood continued and referred to new redevelopment just outside of Bellaire, such as a condominium complex on Mapleridge, Meyerland, Rice Village, expansion of the Galleria, and a new Wal-Mart. Bellaire had a very strong need for an actionable City Center District redevelopment plan which would benefit the interests of all affected parties and would bring the City Center District to a level of community standards similar to what the residential redevelopment had already brought to Bellaire.

Some discussion topics for the City Center District included the following: architectural standards, mobility and pedestrian standards, and lighting standards for downtown. Redevelopment of the City Center District could ensure that the commercial area shared in the burden with the residential area with respect to property taxes. Property values in the last five years in
the City Center District had been flat. He noted that the residential property values had not been flat over the last five years. Holly Street from Interstate Highway 610 to Bellaire High School was valued using only new properties at $11 million—this was one-fourth of the entire City Center District. The City Center District could help pay the way for some of the needed City facilities.

Some of the questions that the SPDC was looking at with respect to the City Center District were noted as follows:

- How did the property owners, retailers, and retail developers, view the City Center District?
- Who were the customers in the City Center District?
- What did the City Center District have to offer?
- What could the City Center District be?
- What were the constraints, barriers, and benefits for any City Center District developer?
- What were the risks and rewards and potential outcomes from any City Center District development plan?
- Did the current hands off, piecemeal, and spot redevelopment approaches get Bellaire the City Center District that it really wanted?
- What had and had not worked in enclave cities, similar to Bellaire, in their downtown areas?
- Were there any financial or management bids that would be valuable for Bellaire to employ?
- Were there better approaches to utilization of City rights-of-way?
- Did the Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County (METRO) or Harris County fit into any of the likely modifications?
- What were the alternatives to any Bellaire solution to the City Center District?
- What were the actionable tools, processes, and methods that the City could use to obtain the City’s goals within the City Center District?

Mr. Thorogood noted that the City Center District had seen its initial life cycle over the last 50 years. The City had a once in a lifetime opportunity to see a significant improvement in the City Center District. Bellaire was totally surrounded by the largest non-zoned city in the United States. It was easier
to go someplace else and easier to build in Houston than it was in Bellaire. Bellaire could still bring in what it wanted, but needed help. The help would come through the SPDC.

In closing, Mr. Thorogood read a portion of the conclusion of the Rice University study he referred to earlier as follows:

_The future of Bellaire’s City Center District represents the unique challenge against achievable, desirable growth. Without intervention, City leadership should not expect significant improvement in the City Center District property values or desirability as a City business district with Bellaire residents. In fact, the City Center District could very well continue into decline._

The Rice University team believed the time was right for City action. The SPDC had gone forward to see what could be done with the City Center District.

J. CITY SERVICES/CITY MANAGEMENT PRESENTATION – City Manager Bernard M. Satterwhite, Jr.

City Manager Bernard M. Satterwhite, Jr., presented a report regarding City services and management. He noted that the City Staff made the 2006 highlights that he wished to present on a slide possible.

He introduced staff as follows:

City Clerk
Tracy L. Dutton

Library Director
Mary A. Alford

City Attorney
Alan P. Petrov

Public Works Director
Joe Keene

Chief of Police
Randall C. Mack

Human Resources Director
Roberta Murray

Fire Chief
Darrell Anderson

Receptionist
Tillie Wiedemann

Community Development Director
Derhyl Hebert

Administrative Assistant to the City Manager
Patte McGuire

Assistant City Manager
Diane K. White

Communications Technology Services Director
Larry Parks

Parks & Recreation Director
Jane L. Dembski

Facilities Director
Colin Miller
2006 Highlights

Highlights for 2006 included the following:

- Staff changes;
- Staff reorganization (introduction of an Assistant City Manager and Facilities Director);
- Health insurance options for employees;
- State Energy Conservation Award;
- Implementation of a revised utility rate structure;
- Dialogue with the Bellaire business community;
- Beginning of the final Bellaire Millennium Renewal Program project and the initial Rebuild Bellaire Program project;
- Staff strategic planning; and
- Emergency management/response.

2007 Challenges

- Infrastructure projects;
- Aquatic Facility opening;
- Continued development of Bellaire Town Square;
- Planning for the 2008 Bellaire Centennial Celebration;
- Filling of vacancies in key positions;
- Facilities maintenance; and
- Floodplain implementation.

With respect to crime in Bellaire, City Manager Satterwhite indicated that crime was down 17.27% for 2006. He urged everyone to continue making the efforts they had to help Bellaire control its crime rate.

The City was blessed with a small size and a very efficient police force, which arrived at a scene very quickly. The Bellaire Police Department made 2,470 custodial arrests during 2006 and responded to 731 motor vehicle accidents. Four new police officers were hired in 2006 and another should be hired shortly.

Emergency medical service responses had remained steady over the last five years (i.e., between 1,370 and 1,450). Fire responses were much less than that, with approximately 10 structural fires occurring on an annual basis. The Bellaire Fire Department focused on a continual basis on fire prevention and provided many public education classes and information for schools, businesses, and residents.

K. BOARD/COMMISSION/COMMITTEE REPORTS FOR THE PERIOD JANUARY 1, 2006, THROUGH DECEMBER 31, 2006:

1. BELLAIRE ARTS COMMISSION – Chair Cindy Cozewith.
Chair Cindy Cozewith, Bellaire Arts Commission (“BAC”), presented the annual report for the BAC for the period beginning January 1, 2006, and ending December 31, 2006. The following members currently served on the BAC: Jamie Allen, Kathy Biddle, Don Goodell (Vice Chair), Kathryn Hardin, Charlene O’Shea, and Carol B. Smith. The Council Liaison to the BAC was noted to be Debra Marz Davison and the Staff Liaison was Library Director Mary A. Alford.

**BAC 2006 Goals**

The BAC had a busy and productive year in 2006. The BAC set specific goals for the year and met and exceeded those goals. Noted goals were as follows:

- **Benches for Bellaire Project**

The BAC sent out a call to Texas artists to create drawings for bench designs. In March of 2006, the BAC held a jury to select finalists for the “Benches for Bellaire” project based on the designs that were submitted. Eight designs from seventeen entries were selected. Those designs were presented to the Bellaire City Council. The Bellaire City Council agreed to fund four benches at cost of $5,000 per bench. Suggestions for locations of the benches were presented to City Council.

The BAC also met with the Parks & Recreation Advisory Board to obtain their approval for the locations of those benches destined for placement in Bellaire Parks.

Bench designs were shown to the audience and identified as follows: MEDSU (Multi-Element Disc Seating Unit) designed by Artist David Hickman (i.e., State Sculptor for the State of Texas) and destined to be placed in Paseo Park; Magic Carpet designed by Artist Julie Richey and destined for Feld Park; Polka Dot by two artists, Laura Garunzuay and Elena Eidelberg, destined for Evergreen Park (near the pool); and the Lamp by Artist Kirk Baxter destined for the front of the Bellaire City Library.

The BAC and the City developed contracts with the artists, which were signed and returned to the City. This was a very lengthy process, and the BAC learned a great deal from that process.

At present, the artists were completing the designs and the first of the benches would be installed very soon. All of the benches should be in place by early spring of 2007. The BAC wished to thank Director of Public Works Joe Keene, Deputy Director of
Public Works David Ritz, and all of the Public Works Department for their help in preparing the sites for the benches.

Chair Cozewith also displayed the four other designs that were approved by the BAC, but not yet funded by the City.

- **Gateway Markers Project**

  In May of 2006, the BAC presented proposed designs for gateway markers to the City Council. The markers would be installed at the east-west entrances to the City of Bellaire along Bellaire Boulevard. City Council endorsed the designs, which had also been reviewed and supported by the Parks & Recreation Advisory Board. The design featured a triangular obelisk with a script “B” on the front and ribbon motif incorporating leaves and cardinals on the other two sides. The BAC felt the designs could be incorporated in other areas of the City, such as parks and the business district.

  The markers to be installed along Bellaire Boulevard would serve as gateway markers, and were 16 feet in height and made of powder-coated steel with translucent Plexiglas panels. These gateway markers would be internally lit. Smaller or shorter markers could be applied to other uses as noted previously, such as park entrances or downtown sites.

  At present, fabricators were reviewing the design and would be preparing cost proposals. The BAC thanked City Manager Bernard M. Satterwhite, Jr., for his assistance in finding suitable fabricators. Subject to City Council approval of the final costs, the BAC hoped that the gateway markers could be installed in 2007 in plenty of time to mark Bellaire’s Centennial celebrations.

- **Bellaire Town Square**

  The BAC had been working closely with the Parks & Recreation Advisory Board and had offered them assistance with styling elements for the new Bellaire Town Square. Together, both groups hoped to develop a cohesive plan for styling Bellaire Town Square and Bellaire’s other City Parks.

- **Trash Receptacle Cover Project**

  The BAC also received City Council approval in May of 2006 for the fabrication of a prototype for an artistic trash barrel container cover. The prototype was completed for $500 and had been installed on the esplanade on Holly Street near
Bellaire High School. Additional trash covers could be fabricated pending endorsement by the Parks & Recreation Department. The Parks & Recreation Department was currently evaluating the ease of emptying the trash containers with the cover in place.

- **Plan for Bellaire History Walk and Sculpture Garden in Paseo Park**

The BAC also began work on the creation of a Bellaire History Walk in Paseo Park. The BAC intended to work with the Bellaire Historical Society on the project. Pending City Council approval, it was hoped that the walk could be in place in time for the 2008 Bellaire Centennial celebrations. Input with respect to this project was also obtained from the Bellaire Parks & Recreation Advisory Board. The proposed location for the Bellaire History Walk was noted to be between South Rice Avenue and Third Street (between the Trolley and Third Street).

The BAC had also discussed development of a sculpture garden in Paseo Park with the Parks & Recreation Advisory Board and received their conceptual approval depending on the design of the sculptures and how those would be integrated into the existing park. It was hoped that the installation of several sculptures could be placed in Paseo Park between Second and Third Streets. These sculptures could be enjoyed by people driving through Bellaire and would provide pleasure for Bellaire citizens as they strolled or sat in Paseo Park. The BAC was exploring options for funding through grants or tax-exempt donations for implementation of the concept design and acquisition of the sculptures.

**2007 BAC Activities**

Chair Cozewith advised that activities to be undertaken by the BAC in 2007 included work with the Bellaire Facilities Committee to explore ways that public art could be implemented at the planning and conceptual stage for the purpose of new and remodeled City facilities, work on a citizen-interactive art project to coincide with the opening celebration of the new Bellaire Aquatic Facility, and work on an art project that would involve children and adults to celebrate the 2008 Bellaire Centennial celebrations.

The BAC also began work on a comprehensive Master Plan that would document past BAC endeavors, would serve as a guide for future BAC members, and would provide information about the BAC and the City...
The BAC was investigating mechanisms for permanent funding for installing public art in Bellaire. The BAC had obtained information from several cities of the approximate size of Bellaire to learn how those cities funded art. The BAC hoped to hold a workshop with City Council soon to discuss the possibilities for permanent funding.

In an effort to provide art opportunities in the City without using taxpayer dollars, the BAC had also begun work on the possibility of establishing a 501c3 adjunct to enable them to receive grant money from tax-exempt donations similar to the Patrons for Bellaire Parks. The BAC was continuing to investigate that possibility.

Additionally, the BAC began investigating the possibility of hiring a professional grant writer to help the BAC to obtain grant monies to further their goals. Four grant writers were interviewed so that the BAC could learn what they could do for them. The BAC would seek City Council’s approval for the hiring of a grant writer on a trial basis at a future date.

In conclusion, the BAC wished to express their thanks to two very special people who had been a tremendous help to them—Staff Liaison and Library Director Mary Alford, who had been a tireless worker, helped shepherd the BAC’s projects through City channels, and prepared their detailed, voluminous minutes, and Council Liaison Debra Marz Davison who had provided very good advice and was a strong source of support and information.

2. BELLAIRE L.I.F.E. ADVISORY BOARD – Chair Pat Westwood.

Chair Pat Westwood presented the annual report for the Bellaire L.I.F.E. Advisory Board (“BLIFE”) for the period beginning January 1, 2006, and ending December 31, 2006. The following members currently served on the BLIFE: Betty Byrd, Francis Freeman, William Lamont, Patricia Layton, Patricia McGinty, Pauline McRae (Vice Chair), Jeanne Taylor (Alternate Member), Henry Ware, and Faye Warley. The Council Liaison to the BLIFE was noted to be Cindy Siegel and the Staff Liaison was noted to be Recreation Superintendent Cheryl Bright-West.

Chair Westwood noted that a couple of big changes had occurred during the year for her Board. First was the change of their name to indicate a broader scope of their activities. Their new name was Bellaire L.I.F.E. Advisory Board. The acronym L.I.F.E. stood for living, information, fun, and enrichment. The group lowered their “age” to 50, which should enlarge their membership.
Many activities occurred in the BLIFE Center on an ongoing basis. Weekly activities included bridge, walking and talking, point–counterpoint, and craft and conversation. Monthly activities included The Men’s Club (i.e., most of the members were actually women), bingo, bunko, and bus trips. Some of the places visited on bus trips included Huntsville, Gonzalez, Austin, and La Grange. Quarterly activities consisted of a dance with live music sponsored by one of the local newspapers, the *Southwest News*, drivers’ training, movies, symphony concerts, and computer training.

Chair Westwood also noted that there had been a change in personnel during the year. Shirley Painter retired and the group’s new coordinator was Barbara Guillory.

3. BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT – *Chair Michael J. Darlow.*

Chair Michael J. Darlow presented the annual report for the Board of Adjustment of the City of Bellaire, Texas, ("BOA"), for the period beginning January 1, 2006, and ending December 31, 2006. The following members currently served on the BOA: James P. Avioli, Todd L. Blitzer, Bill Borden, David Middleman, Amanda Nathan (Vice Chair), and Hal Sharp. The Council Liaison to the BOA was noted to be John Jeffery and the Staff Liaison was Director of Community Development Derhyl Hebert.

Chair Darlow stated that the BOA was sometimes known as the “Stealth Committee.” They met when and as necessary, and oftentimes it was not at all.

In 2006, the BOA met five times and heard six matters. The BOA was responsible for the consideration of variances to the *Code of Ordinances of the City of Bellaire, Texas*, such as setbacks and permeable versus non-permeable systems.

Chair Darlow noted that the BOA had a great relationship with the Community Development Department. He noted further that City Staff tried very hard to handle everything ahead of time and did a great job.

4. BUILDING AND STANDARDS COMMISSION – *Chair Trisha Pollard.*

Chair Trisha Pollard was unable to attend the evening’s Town Meeting. The Building and Standards Commission ("BSC") did submit a written report for the year to City Council. Current members serving on the BSC were noted to be: Wayne Alderman, Gayle Davies, Dirk Stiggins (Vice Chair), Greg Travis, Jim Willis, and Elias Zinn. The Council Liaison to the BSC was noted to be Pat McLaughlan and the Staff Liaison was Building Official Lee Cabello.
5. PARKS & RECREATION ADVISORY BOARD – Chair Sharon Veldman.

Chair Sharon Veldman presented the annual report for the Parks & Recreation Advisory Board of the City of Bellaire, Texas, ("PRAB"), for the period beginning January 1, 2006, and ending December 31, 2006. The following members currently served on the PRAB: Steven Grubbs (Vice Chair), Casey Johnson, Leslie Little, Teri Prats, Randi Rubenstein, Richard Sanders, David Schlosberg, and Chris Sizemore. The Council Liaison to the PRAB was noted to John Monday and the Staff Liaison was noted to be Director of Parks & Recreation Jane L. Dembski.

Chair Veldman noted that the PRAB had a very good year in 2006. Various details were addressed toward the completion of the Aquatic Facility and Bellaire Town Square. Although the PRAB’s activities were often focused on Bellaire Town Square, the PRAB had begun concentrating on addressing all parks as prescribed in the Parks Master Plan.

Parks Master Plan

- A new format was adopted to help facilitate the monitoring and addressing of ongoing needs of all the parks in Bellaire.
- The need for continuity throughout the park system in its aesthetic representation in Bellaire through the exploration of a unified “styling” was addressed.
- Ongoing oversight of park system improvements as outlined in the Parks Master Plan was provided. Such oversight included Evergreen Park improvements, Jaquet Park improvements, re-plastering of Evergreen Pool, poles and netting at Feld Park, and beginning construction of the Aquatic Facility.

Bellaire Town Square

The PRAB submitted an order of priorities to be addressed for future amenities in Bellaire Town Square. A list of those amenities in order of priority were noted as follows:

- Playground;
- Trails on the north side of Bellaire Town Square (i.e., Loftin Park);
- Splash pad and donor wall;
- Great Lawn;
- Pavilion;
- Skate park; and
- Trails on the south side of Bellaire Town Square.
With respect to the Aquatic Facility, the PRAB recommended the following prioritization of amenities:

- Leisure pool and bathhouse with upstairs meeting room;
- Pool heaters and six-lane lap pool;
- Water slide; and
- Diving well.

The PRAB met in a joint session with the Bellaire City Council on April 10, 2006. During that session, Kimley-Horn and Associates, Aquatic Facility design consultants, presented various design elements and costs for those elements.

During monthly meetings, the PRAB heard many questions and concerns from citizens regarding the Aquatic Facility placement, location, costs, demolition of trees, and parking concerns.

To ensure due diligence, the PRAB held a special meeting on April 24, 2006, to address specific questions with Kimley-Horn and Associates. The meeting was a success and the PRAB was satisfied that all steps were taken to ensure the success of the new Aquatic Facility as located in the master conceptual plan for Bellaire Town Square. Trees, underground utilities, staffing, and parking were researched.

The PRAB was beginning to plan for the grand opening of the Aquatic Facility, which was expected to occur in July.

**Officer Lucy Dog Park**

The PRAB reviewed updates on rules established for the Officer Lucy Dog Park located within Feld Park to ensure that the park continued to meet the needs and safety of citizens and dogs using the facility.

**Other City Boards and Commission**

The PRAB continued to meet with other City boards and commissions to ensure and facilitate open communication. Liaisons had been appointed to meet with the Bellaire Arts Commission and the Bellaire Recycling Committee. Richard Sanders was the liaison to the Bellaire Arts Commission, and Chris Sizemore was the liaison to the Bellaire Recycling Committee.

The PRAB had worked with and supported the Bellaire Arts Commission on various projects. Chair Sharon Veldman personally represented the PRAB by serving on a jury for the Bellaire Arts Commission as they worked to select artists for their “Benches for Bellaire” project. The PRAB accepted the Bellaire Arts Commission’s revised recommended location of the MEDSU bench in Paseo Park and
supported their request of a sculpture garden in Paseo Park. The gateway markers had also been discussed and the PRAB supported this project by the Bellaire Arts Commission.

**Board Procedures**

The PRAB spent a great deal of time viewing training videos on open meetings and open records in early June. Action was also taken to accept new Rules of Procedure for conducting the PRAB meetings.

**Fundraising**

The PRAB fulfilled their fundraising charge to assist the Patrons for Bellaire Parks with various activities and projects, which included a joint information booth at the Holiday in the Park event and the Last Splash Pool Party event to promote awareness of Bellaire Town Square with the citizens of Bellaire.

**Parks Department Programs**

With respect to Parks Department programs, a process had begun to survey residents and participants in Recreation Center programs to better identify community needs and interests. The survey would include questions related to current and future programs at the Recreation Center and at the proposed facilities in Bellaire Town Square.

**Acknowledgments**

Chair Veldman advised that the PRAB wished to acknowledge their appreciation to Council Liaison John Monday and noted that his presence had been invaluable. The PRAB was also most grateful to Director of Parks & Recreation Jane L. Dembski and her staff for their tremendous support throughout the year.

A special thanks was also given to PRAB members who left during the year as follows: Peter Boecher, Bryan Fleming, Kay Humphries, and Bob Lunn. New members were welcomed as follows: Casey Johnson, Richard Sanders, David Schlosberg, and Chris Sizemore.

6. **PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION – Chair Bruce Volkert.**

Chair Bruce Volkert presented the annual report for the Planning and Zoning Commission of the City of Bellaire, Texas (“PZC”), for the period beginning January 1, 2006, and ending December 31, 2006. The following members currently served on the PZC: James P. Avioli, Jr., Peter Boecher, Michael Doyle, Donna Rickenbacker, Deborah Sharp, and Bill Thorogood. The Council Liaison to the PZC was noted
to be Peggy Faulk and the Staff Liaison was Director of Community Development Derhyl Hebert.

Chair Volkert advised that City Staff did an excellent job and he wished to especially thank Community Development Director Derhyl Hebert, Administrative Secretary Rebecca Eppler, and Assistant Community Development Director Chris Magisano for their help during the year. He noted that the PZC also got great support from City Attorney Alan Petrov and Council Liaison Peggy Faulk.

The PZC had a few functions, one of which was ministerial and the other of which was planning and advice to the City Council. The ministerial functions consisted of plats, re-plats, and amended plats. The PZC held 12 regular meetings, one special session, four public hearings, and 15 committee or commission workshops during 2006. Included in those workshops and/or meetings were the Comprehensive Plan review, lot combinations, non-residential site design standards, and downtown revitalization. The PZC also reviewed and addressed five amended plats and one re-plat during the year.

**Areas of Specific Focus During 2006**

Areas of specific focus during 2006 included planning for a revision of the City’s Comprehensive Plan. The PZC was very pleased that City Council had accepted their recommendation to secure the services of Kendig Keast Collaborative to establish the process for revising the City’s Comprehensive Plan.

Members of the PZC continued to participate with the City Council’s Strategic Planning and Development Committee and its efforts to revitalize the downtown area.

The PZC was nearing the completion of its work on a review of the City’s sign ordinance, with special emphasis on illuminated signs in residential areas. As soon as the PZC reached a consensus with City Staff on a few of the technicalities, the PZC would expect to bring their recommendation for revisions to City Council for action.

Another area of focus was the impact of re-plats. One of the trends that had been noticed was the combination of lots with a potential for negative consequences in the residential areas of Bellaire. The PZC was looking into how to mitigate those potential negative consequences.

**Identification of Priority Initiatives**

In general, the PZC had become much more proactive in the recent year. Priority initiatives were identified as follows:
• Revision of the Comprehensive Plan;
• Downtown revitalization;
• RDD District revitalization;
• Residential housing variation—a way to increase the variation of housing in the City to attract both older and younger residents;
• Non-residential site design and development standards; and
• Potential adoption of City of Houston storm drainage criteria.

Outlook for 2007

The PZC would continue to work on its priority initiatives and revision of the Comprehensive Plan.

Bellaire continued to redevelop as the original homes were replaced with larger homes and City’s infrastructure was rebuilt. In the past 15 years, approximately 45% of the homes had been replaced. Although the current population had not changed dramatically during the past 30 years, the demographics were very different. Trends in Bellaire that were emerging now were likely to continue as property values increased.

Chair Volkert indicated that the City should capitalize on the emerging knowledge of these trends to assure that the Comprehensive Plan and the redevelopment of the commercial sectors reflected the values of Bellaire’s current and future residents. The PZC was working to understand these issues and to act in a manner that improved the quality of residential life in the City of Homes.

Prevailing Objective

The prevailing objective that dominated the PZC’s thinking was to protect and improve the quality of residential life in the City of Homes.

7. RECYCLING COMMITTEE – Chair Craig Bello.

Chair Craig Bello presented the annual report for the Bellaire Recycling Committee (“BRC”), for the period beginning January 1, 2006, and ending December 31, 2006. The following members currently served on the BRC: C. J. Adkins, Patricia Atkins, Guyleene Ebersole, Sarah Ginsburg, Margaret Healy, Bonnie Parker (Vice Chair), Tami Sheena, and Arthur Talley. The Council Liaison to the BRC was noted to be Will Hickman and the Staff Liaison was Director of Public Works Joe Keene.

Chair Bello stated that over the course of the last year the BRC had been very busy. Almost everyone was well aware of the biggest focus—curbside recycling. Early in the fiscal year, fresh off of delivering the results of the curbside recycling survey, the BRC worked
with City Council and the Public Works Department in honing the details of a potential curbside program. In the spring, with City Council’s decision to move ahead with curbside recycling, a work group was created and committed to focusing on curbside recycling specifically.

The group applied for and was awarded a grant from the Houston-Galveston Area Council (H-GAC) for more than $20,000 to be dedicated to education and materials related to curbside implementation. The group assisted the Public Works Department in creating educational materials and press releases for the June and September program rollouts. In the later half of the year, the curbside recycling work group started putting the curbside grant to real use by purchasing promotional items to use in education events and producing education materials, most notably the refrigerator magnet postcard.

The curbside recycling program quickly reached surprising levels of participation and volume. So much so that the Public Works Department was challenged to tweak and re-tweak the program in order to start finishing their Wednesday collections during daylight hours. The City was recycling approximately 100 tons of recyclables per month, which was a real remarkable start for which the residents of Bellaire should be congratulated.

Over the next half of the year, citizens would begin to see the results of the efforts of the BRC in the groundwork laid thus far. The BRC would make appearances at local events, like the Spring Fling at The Nature Discovery Center and the City’s Fourth of July Festival, to educate and promote the curbside recycling program. Presentations had been prepared for groups of all ages.

The BRC expanded its contacts with other area cities and institutions by participating in area roundtable sessions with the H-GAC. The roundtables helped the BRC to network with other cities and keep abreast of significant issues and progress in the world of recycling and waste management.

The BRC, with the assistance of the Public Works Department, continued the first Saturday assisted drop-off and pick-up recycling programs which had been the staples of the BRC’s commitment to the City of Bellaire. As expected with the advent of curbside recycling, however, the demand for those programs had dwindled dramatically. Over the past year, the voucher-based hazardous waste program came to completion as residents used each and every voucher the BRC was able to buy with their grant from 2003. The BRC also sought out and published information related to area drop-off events. The Harris County Mobile Collection Unit was in the works and once finalized, the
BRC hoped to work with them to set up some events specifically for Bellaire residents.

In April 2006, the BRC hosted its best Earth Day Festival to date with The Nature Discovery Center. It was the best event in terms of attendance, as well as the quality of presenters. It was combined with the Mothers for Clean Air 5K Race and was quite a day for Bellaire and for the environment. This year, The Nature Discovery Center would be hosting their Spring Fling on April 14th. This would serve the same purpose as the Earth Days of the past. The BRC would be there in force to make their education presentation.

Last April, the BRC also promoted and arranged the annual citywide garage sale. It would be happening again this year on April 28th. The BRC also published its three informational newsletters this year. Those newsletters were delivered to residents by the Public Works Department along with their trash bag delivery. Plans were to keep the newsletter going.

The BRC was currently operating at full strength. The newest members were welcomed as follows: C. J. Adkins, Bonnie Parker, Tami Sheena, and Arthur Talley. The BRC lost two of its major contributors over the years due to term limitations. Chair Bello expressed a very sincere thanks to Patricia Ritter and Gayle Davies for their huge contributions over their respective six years of service. It was noted that both were continuing on with the BRC in an “ex-officio” capacity. In July, the BRC would lose another major contributor, Meg Healy, who would be term limited. In addition, he recently received notice that one of the current members, Guyleene Ebersole, would be moving out of the City of Bellaire. He encouraged any residents with an interest in the environment, household hazardous waste, recycling, solid waste, etc., to get their applications in to fill some slots on the BRC.

Mayor Cindy Siegel sincerely thanked all of the City Council Members, all of the Board and Commission Members, and City Staff for their time and efforts on behalf of the citizens of Bellaire and for making 2006 such a successful year.

L. ADJOURNMENT.

MOTION TO ADJOURN:

A motion was made by Councilwoman Debra Marz Davison and seconded by Councilman Pat McLaughlan to adjourn the Regular Session (Town Meeting) of the City Council of the City of Bellaire, Texas, at 9:03 p.m. on Monday, February 5, 2007.
VOTE ON MOTION TO ADJOURN:

Motion carried unanimously on a 5-0 vote as follows:

FOR: Siegel, Cindy
     Monday, John F.
     Davison, Debra Marz
     McLaughlan, Pat
     Jeffery, John

OPPOSED: None

ABSENT: Hickman, Will
        Faulk, Peggy

Respectfully submitted,

Tracy L. Dutton, TRMC
City Clerk
City of Bellaire, Texas

Approved:

Cynthia Siegel, Mayor
City of Bellaire, Texas