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College Station takes bids on ambulance

By DAVE TEWES

Battalion Staff

College Station will take bids on the cost of an ambulance to be added to the city's ambulance service, City Manager North Bardell said yesterday.

The city is working on the ambulance's specifications to give bidders an idea of the cost, he said. If the City Council approves a bid, there will be a 45-to-90 day waiting period before the ambulance can be delivered.

The College Station Fire Department took over the ambulance service for the city and southern Brazos County on March 6, when Sherrill Ambulance Service went out of business.

The fire department operates two ambulances, but only one belongs to the city. The other belongs to Brazos County.

Brazos County Commissioners voted last week to lend the city's ambulance to the city until at least June 30, the end of the city's fiscal year. The commissioners then have the option of renewing or relinquishing the agreement.

Walter Wilcox, county commissioner of Precinct 2, was the

only commissioner to vote against lending the county's ambulance to College Station. He said Tuesday that lending the ambulance was not in the best interest of the county's citizens.

"I don't feel like the county should assist a government entity that is going against private enterprise," he said. "I'm not for subsidizing College Station in any way when you have a private enterprise willing to handle the service."

Bill Thornal, owner of Mid-Tex Ambulance Service in Bryan, Tuesday said his company is one such private company that wishes to take over College Station's ambulance service.

"I'd kind of like College Station's business. I'm a private enterprise and if the city government goes into business, that is taking business away from me," Thornal said.

Mid-Tex Ambulance Service began taking emergency calls for Bryan and northern Brazos County one day after Sherrill Ambulance went out of business.

Anne Hazen, a College Station City Councilwoman, Tuesday said the College Station Fire Department is capable of handling the ambulance service.

"What I'm interested in is having the best possible service

for the citizens," Hazen said. "I am confident the College Station Fire Department is going to be able to do that."

Douglas W. Landua, College Station Fire Chief, said the fire department has three full-time and two part-time emergency medical technicians (EMTs) to handle emergency calls. At least one EMT accompanies each call, he said.

Hazen said the city plans to hire nine more EMTs, some of which will function as firemen.

Mid-Tex Ambulance has seven EMTs and two usually go on each call, Thornal said.

Hazen said she thinks the citizens of College Station want their own ambulance service. But a county-run ambulance service based at a hospital would be more economical, she added.

"For instance, an EMT could be working in an emergency ward as an orderly," she said. "When a call came, he could grab another EMT or a nurse and run the ambulance."

This way an EMT would be working rather than waiting between calls, Hazen said.

She said the ambulance would also be driven fewer miles

because the emergency run would begin and end at the hospital. This way the ambulance wouldn't have to be driven from the hospital back to its base of operation, Hazen said.

Madisonville and Grimes Memorial Hospitals are already using this system, she said. Madisonville has one of the largest community hospitals in the state, Hazen added.

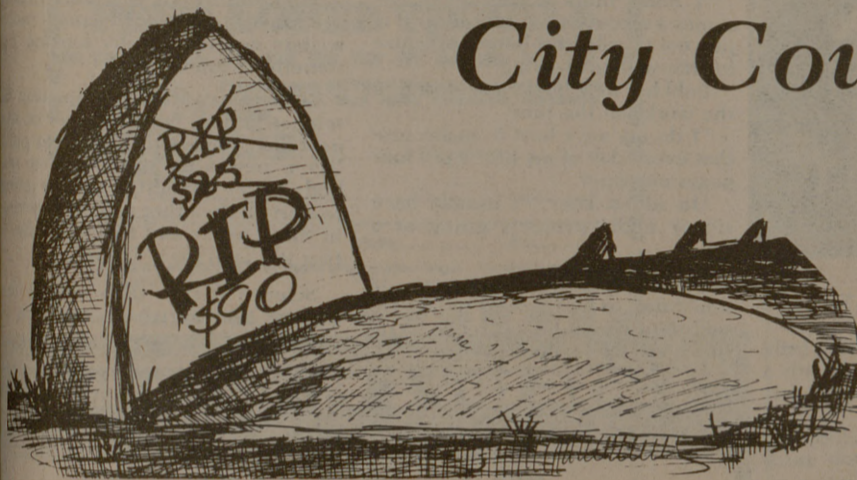
Thornal said a county-subsidized ambulance service means the citizens of that county would have to pay for the service with tax money. He said a private ambulance service would charge only those using the service.

College Station has been considering a single ambulance service paid for by Bryan, College Station and Brazos County since 1973, Bardell said. But no feasible subsidy method has been worked out he added.

"I think the problem is that none of us want to pay the dollars that are necessary to operate a municipal ambulance service," Bardell said.

College Station is moving closer to a decision to pay part of the cost of operating a single ambulance service for the area, he said.

City Council votes for increase in burial costs



The College Station City Council voted last night to increase the cost of burials.

The council approved a city cemetery committee recommendation to increase the cost of opening and closing a grave from the present \$25 to \$90. The base cost of a burial plot will be increased also. It did cost \$70, now it will be \$100.

"We haven't adjusted the rates for many, many years," said City Manager North Bardell.

Councilman Jim Dozier said that with the increase the city will no longer suffer

losses in cemetery operations.

"This is not a profit-making operation," he said.

In other action, the council voted to rezone two tracts of land, thus allowing apartments to be built on a section of land west of Dartmouth Avenue.

The rezoning came after Frank Kahan, a local businessman, accused the council of dictating building policy.

Kahan and a partner, Joseph Osoba, want to develop the land. Osoba owns a narrow tract of land on which they want to build apartments. L.J. Kirkpatrick owns

adjacent property and also wants to build apartments.

Councilman Jim Gardner termed the land "unsuitable" for apartment houses because of residential housing nearby.

After a lengthy discussion, the council voted to rezone the parts of the land the landowners wanted changed.

The council also held a public hearing on possible revisions of the Comprehensive Plan, a city plan of future projects and goals.

One citizen complained that the hearing had not been publicized adequately. He

also said he was opposed to city zoning policies.

The council then voted to reschedule the hearing on the next agenda.

The council decided to let the Planning and Zoning Commission consider revisions in a housing density chart.

The council also approved a request by the Raintree Developments to rezone a 107-acre tract located 5,000 feet south of the intersection of Harvey Road and the east bypass. The area will now be a single family residential district.

Sidewalk construction set for May

Three and one-half miles of sidewalks will be built on campus sometime in May. The \$251,000 contract was awarded to Marcal, Inc., of Bryan, by the Texas A&M University Board of Regents Tuesday.

Construction of the 19,000 feet of sidewalk will begin around May 1, 1977, said Paul W. Stephens, manager of the facilities planning division. Stephens said yesterday, Marcal will construct 16,000 feet of new sidewalks and replace 3,000 feet of old sidewalks.

Stephens said the sidewalks along Old Main Drive will be replaced. All sidewalks will have handicap ramps at strategic points.

One of the new sidewalks will be located along Ross Street from the Chemistry building to the Architecture building.

"The bids are in and the Board has approved it, now all we have to do is get the paper work in," Stephens said.

Congress upset over minimum wage proposal

WASHINGTON — Organized labor and congressional Democrats are outraged by President Carter's proposed minimum wage formula, charging the plan would keep millions of workers "permanently locked into poverty."

Labor Secretary Ray Marshall told a House subcommittee yesterday the administration wanted an immediate 20 cent increase, which would raise the nation's minimum wage to \$2.50 an hour.

Marshall also outlined a system of automatic future increases to bring the minimum wage to \$2.73 on July 1, 1978, and \$2.95 a year later. The system was much less generous than labor leaders and House Democrats were expecting.

Labor wants an immediate increase to \$3, and the House subcommittee has been considering a formula to increase the minimum to \$2.85 an hour with subsequent automatic increases surpassing \$3 next Jan. 1.

The administration acknowledged its program would benefit only 4 million low-wage workers, while the House version provides increases for 8 million.

Marshall said he had argued for a more generous administration proposal but was overruled by other Carter economists. He noted the President never threatened to veto a larger increase and denied the plan would be inflationary.



Art works, but he had to 'suck it up'

The Off Main delicatessen in Kerrville may have been missing a few straws, but they were not wasted. Tim Howard, 7-year-old son of Dr. and Mrs. Dennis Howard of College Station, used the straws to satisfy a creative urge while pic-

nicking at Kerrville State Park with his parents. Tim's sculptured straw really did work, but he was tuckered out by the time he had finished the drink.

Battalion photo by Linda Howard



Moore measure to affect small town

Bill could give recall ability

AUSTIN — Some residents of Piney Point Village who apparently have enough influence to stop the city from putting a police station in an affluent residential section apparently also have enough power in the legislature to get even with whoever thought up the idea.

A bill by Sen. William Moore, D-Bryan, was passed by the Senate yesterday, giving Piney Point Village residents initiative, referendum and recall powers, with authority to oust their mayor and city council members at any time.

Piney Point Village leaders antagonized some residents recently with a plan — now discarded — to build a new police station in an affluent area.

"Police stations are about like garbage dumps," said Sen. Jack Ogg, D-Houston. "Everybody wants it but nobody wants it next door." Ogg said Moore's bill was vindictive and violated state constitution bans against special statutes.

"The four or five people that lived nearby got all up in arms and got the city to void the contract," Ogg said. "It's punitive now."

Ogg said he abstained from voting

against the bill because he owns property in a community affected by the Piney Point controversy.

There was no debate on the bill before the Senate vote. It now goes to the House.

The bill sets provisions for voters to adopt recall, initiative and referendum powers in cities with populations between 2,540 and 2,560.

Census figures indicate in addition to Piney Point Village the bill could cover Hooks in Bowie County, San Saba, Lacy Lakeview in McLennan County and Kirby in Bexar County.

Walks should be thicker, Prairie Film report says

The thickness of the Prairie Film sidewalks on the Texas A&M University campus may be a contributing factor to their deterioration.

Kent Besley, a landscape architect with Schrickel, Rollins & Associates of Arlington, Tex., received a report from the Prairie Company of Urbana, Ill., suggesting possible causes for the deterioration.

"The report generally said that the samples they had tested should be thicker," Besley said Wednesday. "We have two-inch sections and they said it ought to be two and three-fourths inches."

Besley's firm was commissioned to design the area extending from the Chemistry building westward to the Academic, Bolton and Fermier buildings.

Besley said his firm needed a material that would provide wider sidewalks for the heavy pedestrian traffic while preventing damage to trees in the areas. Prairie Film seemed to be the best answer at that time, Besley said. You can walk on it, yet water and air still get through to the roots of the trees, he said.

When the Prairie Film was originally installed, the manufacturer agreed to the two-inch sections, Besley said. "Now they seem to think that it should be thicker sections because of the size of the stones."

"With the bigger stones there aren't

enough contact points for the material (epoxy) to adhere to the stones," Besley said. "Also, they think the base material ought to be different."

Besley said the material was used according to the manufacturer's instructions. "They (the Prairie Film Company) said it could have been wet at the time of installation."

"We had an inspector on the job; and it wasn't wet when we installed it," Besley said, "so that wasn't the problem."

"That spot by the Academic building seems to be the worst spot on campus," Besley said. "That was the first placement of the material, and my particular theory is that everyone didn't know exactly what they were doing."

Cars and trucks have been seen parked on the Prairie Film areas, he said. "It's not designed for trucks, it's designed for people. We have a service area designed around the mall area. The service vehicles should not be driving on anything other than the service area."

"That's another contributing factor," he said, "and all these things aren't helping the situation."

Besley said he will send copies of the report to University officials within a few days.

Weather

Early morning fog and low cloudiness today, otherwise mostly cloudy and mild through Saturday. Chance of showers or thunderstorms Saturday. Highs today near 70 degrees, lows tonight low 60s, and high Saturday mid 70s. South-southeasterly winds 8-16 m.p.h. today. Probability of precipitation Saturday is 30 per cent.