

CS City Council approves parking meter purchase

By CYRA GATLING
The Battalion

The purchasing of electronic parking meters was approved at the College Station City Council meeting Thursday. MacKay Parking Meters will be responsible for the installation, which will cost \$71,135. Funding for the meters will come from the Northgate Parking Fund.

In other news, the city council approved an ad valorem, in proportion to the value, tax rate. The rate will change to \$0.4293 per \$100 valuation.

The tax rate must be adopted by Sept. 30; the

council is scheduled to meet on Sept. 28 to consider adopting the tax rate.

The council increased the city of College Station 1999-2000 budget by \$5,944,219. The Business Park II land acquisition of \$4,000,000; freeman property acquisition of \$1,600,000; the internal service fund of \$107,260; the utility funds of \$216,959; and the court technology and court security fund of \$20,000, were added to the budget.

The city council also approved an ordinance that will rezone land located at 200 Greens Prairie Road. The 46.46 acres of land,

which were originally general commercial, are now single-family residential.

The rezoning created some controversy because a resident in the Pebble Creek neighborhood was concerned that adding another neighborhood would decrease the value of the Pebble Creek area.

The resident said Pebble Creek residents have invested effort in the area and that he does not think another neighborhood that is not of equal quality should be added.

Councilman Dennis Maloney reminded the council that it was not there to discuss the planning of

the area, but to decide on the zoning.

He also said that if the land was going to be developed, he would prefer to see a residential development than a commercial development.

The council required that a fence, which will surround the area, be added to the rezoning ordinance before it approved unanimously.

Additionally, the council approved changing the intersection at Rock Prairie Road and Longmire Drive from a two-way stop to a temporary four-way stop until a traffic signal can be installed.

MHMR

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door to more understanding for mentally impaired actors, adding that many television directors were reluctant to cast mentally impaired actors because they feared that the actors would forget their lines or that they would not be able to come to work for medical reasons.

"Chris never had to slow down

production for medical reasons or because he had forgotten his lines," John DeMasi said.

Students from the Bryan-College Station area and beyond the Brazos County attended the concert. Several members of the audience were brought onto the stage by the trio to sing along with the songs.

Burke said that it is important that the audience believe in themselves.

"Work hard and take care of each other, and have self-determination,"

Burke said, adding that people should be "known for their abilities, not their disabilities."

When the group left the stage, Janie Velasquez, director of volunteer services and public information for MHMR, presented the trio with A&M caps.

Gov. George W. Bush declared September 2000 Destination Dignity Month to increase awareness about the contributions people with disabilities have made in their communities.

GIFT

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time, and the time necessary to get electricity and wiring to the clocks.

"Texas A&M is a true family," Hanselka said. "Our class year signifies a united spirit we all feel. Each person is proud to wear their class ring, and as a former student now, it gives me great pride to say that I am a part of this family."

The clocks will be installed by June 2001, Hanselka said.

"Giving something larger than yourself is a consistent theme here at Texas A&M," Hanselka said. "Class gifts are one avenue that each individual has the opportunity to contribute, giving back to this University."

Class of '00 historian Summer Harbert visited a university in Washington, D.C., and noticed clocks around the campus. She brought the idea back to the class council, and class gift chairwoman Stacy Hargrave lead the committee in choosing the gifts that would be placed on the spring ballot.

Students are able to say they have left their mark by purchasing class merchandise and attending the events each class hosts, said Hanselka.

Profit earned from each fundraising project — from selling T-shirts to admission to special events — went into a fund labeled specifically for the class gift.

"I'm looking forward to the opportunity I'll have to bring my family back and show them proudly what our class gave to the University," Hanselka said.

Drunken-driving laws under fire

AUSTIN (AP) — Texas leads the nation in alcohol-related traffic deaths and will lose \$96 million in federal highway construction funds over the next two years because state law is not tough enough on drunken drivers, a state official says.

Mark Cross, a spokesman for the Texas Department of Transportation, said federal law requires the state to divert the money from construction to traffic-safety efforts because Texas does not ban open containers of alcohol in vehicles or automatically jail repeat drunken drivers.

"It's money that we would have used for construction and traffic congestion and mobility" projects, Cross told The Dallas Morning News in Thursday's editions.

State Rep. Fred Hill, R-Richardson, who has tried five times to pass legislation banning open containers in vehicles, said he would try again when the Legislature convenes in January. But it will not be easy to

overcome what he called traditional opposition from the liquor industry and from lawyers who defend people charged in drunken driving.

"We have an element in the Legislature that thinks it is an inalienable right of a Texan to drink a beer on the way home from work and throw the empty can in the back of a pickup truck," Hill said. "Every time the Texas Legislature fails to pass this, people die."

Fifteen other states also will lose some of their federal highway construction funds by Oct. 1 under a

1998 federal law that holds back money unless states strongly punish people who are convicted of drunken driving more than once.

Texas will lose the most, however, at \$48 million a year and the federal penalty soon will escalate to \$60 million a year, Hill said.

Instead of road construction, money can still be used for road safety projects such as widening intersections.

"It doesn't mean the money will go to the state of Texas," Hill said, "it means that we will be capable of developing the best billboard campaign against drunk driving in the world. We will not be addressing the problem of getting drunk drivers off the road."

Texas leads the nation in alcohol-related traffic deaths. In 1999, Texas had 1,734 alcohol-related traffic fatalities, about half of all driving deaths in the state that year, according to figures from the U.S. Department of Transportation.

"Every time the Texas Legislature fails to pass this, people die."

— Fred Hill
state representative

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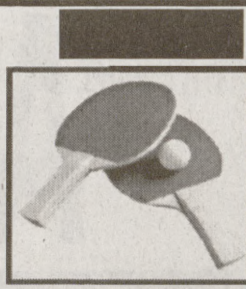
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.. CORRECTION ..

Friday - SUPER JAM

w/ Imaginary Friend, Sustain, Fallout
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