

Familiar face taking over as city manager

Written by By Betsy Blevins, Managing Editor
Thursday, 24 March 2011 13:34 -

March 17, 2011 - With the retirement of City Manager Butch Henderson looming, the Leonard City Council made a move last Tuesday that would keep a familiar face in the office, and allow ample training time before Henderson departs. Council members voted to hire Leonard native Allecia Booher to take over the city manager position, effective April 7. Booher is a BIL (Born in Leonard) and is thankful for the opportunity to work in Leonard again.

"I am looking forward to being able to be back home and serve my hometown again, and I'm most looking forward to the new challenge," Booher said.

Booher has lived in Leonard all but a few years of her life and most know her because of that, and many know her from American Bank of Texas where she was the Leonard branch manager for many years, and most recently was manager at the Bonham branch.

"I was the city banker for 26 years, so I know the ins and outs of that and my expertise in the banking industry will help in maintaining the budget and managing the finances of the city," stated Booher.

Booher is also on the 4B committee and will maintain that position.

"What will be new are the various state laws that municipalities have to adhere to," she added.

However, Henderson - who wasn't due to retire until the end of the year - has backed his leave date up to the end of city's year (Sept. 30/Oct. 1) and will work side-by-side with Booher to familiarize her with the new things.

"He's going to be my assistant - that's been our running joke," she said with a laugh. "He's going to show me the ropes."

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Booher was born and raised in Leonard and graduated high school in 1981. She has been married to her husband, Tim, since 1989 and they have raised three children in Leonard - twins Allison and Ashley who graduated from Leonard last May, and Alexa who is in the eighth grade.

In other business at last Tuesday's city council meeting, members voted to change four intersections on Cedar Street to improve the flow of traffic and make walking safer along the new sidewalk that was poured. The intersections of Cedar and Houston and Cedar and College will become four-way stops. The stop signs on Cedar Street at Bois d'Arc will be taken down and placed on Bois d'Arc Street. The stop signs on Poplar Street at the Grayson Street intersection will be flip-flopped and affect the traffic on Grayson Street instead.

Another traffic change in the city will be the removal of the school zone on Mulberry Street from Poplar Street east to U.S. Highway 69.

Other approved items include the following: special expense fee for deferred disposition with the Leonard municipal court; and. a funding request from Red River Groundwater Conservation District. The council took no action on item K from the agenda, which pertains to the purchase of property south of Kiwanis Park that is owned by the Blackerby family.