



THE STAFFORD NEWSLETTER

NOVEMBER 2018

CITY OF STAFFORD, TEXAS

VOL 39 ISSUE 4

BUDGET ADOPTED FOR FY2018-19

By a razor thin margin of 4-3, City Council voted to adopt the Fiscal Year 2018-2019 Budget for the City and Stafford Economic Development Corporation. This approval occurred after numerous workshops to amend the required budget presented by Mayor Leonard Scarcella.

This budget provides for \$41 million in expenditures including construction of a new Fire Station on Mula Road, a two story Annex adjoining the Police Station on North Main Street, and the completion of the drainage projects for Missouri City Estates, Vaccaro Manor Section 4 and Sugar Creek. Additionally, there are 13 street projects to refurbish many of our existing roadways. Most important this budget preserves the **zero property tax** rate which has been in effect for 24 years, is a highly acclaimed benefit for all of our residents and businesses and is emblematic of this City.

A strong and unmistakable component of this year's expenditures is the \$16 million allocated for salaries and benefits for our 165 full time, 9 part-time employees and 39 part-time volunteer firefighters. Specifically addressed are 3 most important aspects of this budget, the Grid – substantially supported by the SEDC, expenditures to support SMSD, and the contribution of the HCC to not only the education but the economic development of the City. Other endeavors funded are the Stafford Centre, Civic Center, Swimming Pool and Parks. In view of turbulent economic conditions in the U.S as well as worldwide, the budget will be most carefully monitored.

THE GRID INITIATED BY GROUND BREAKING



Patti Worfe, Lawrence Vaccaro, Councilmember Ken Mathew, Councilmember Wen Guerra, Felicia Evans Smith, Mayor Leonard Scarcella and Brian Murphy of Street Level Investments at the groundbreaking of the GRID development.



Rendering of a portion of The Grid development

Street Level Investments held its long awaited ground breaking on September 24, 2018.

The Grid, as the project is known is highly touted to as a vibrant community and gathering place for local residents, workers and visitors from a large swath of neighboring communities.

The developers will focus on sustainability by emphasizing the historical aspects of the property.

The Grid is represented as a transformational feature in the life and character of our City, with a bevy of enticements to make it a point of destination.

In-N-Out Burger: quick, simple, delicious burger chain, (which excited all the TV stations).

Drive Shack: A premier golf entertainment center.

Whiskey Cake: Local sourced farm fresh foods and Craft beers.

Luma Grove: A unique illuminated outdoor dining destination.

Aloft Hotels/Element by Westin: A co-branded hotel. A 1st of its kind concept in the Houston area.

JLB: Urban residences with fresh interior design, luxurious finishes and high end amenities.

CBRE: A 500,000 sq. ft. eloquent office space area.

CITY NEWSLETTER – your choice.

For decades, the City has mailed all residents and businesses a Newsletter. With the growing popularity of the internet, City Council is desirous of transitioning to communicating with all citizens and businesses by emphasizing our website: <http://www.staffordtx.gov/newsletter/city-newsletter.html> and information available on it.

The City Newsletter will continue to be mailed to your address. It will also be available in a digital format on the City's website. However, we welcome all of those who prefer to utilize exclusively the City's website for their newsletter, and to inform us so we can stop mailing you a printed copy. For us to remove you from the mailing list, please call: 281-261-3903 or email: nbrowe@staffordtx.gov and let us know your name and address.

STAFFORD POLICE DEPARTMENT LAUDED



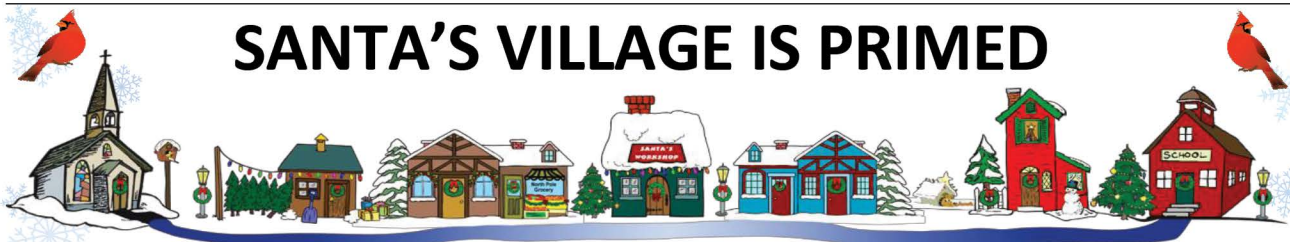
*Texas Police Chiefs
Association Foundation, Inc.*

The City of Stafford Police Department was the recipient of an award only few could wish for, let alone receive. The Texas Police Chiefs Association (TPCA) presented Chief Richard Ramirez with a framed Certificate of Recognition for compliance with Texas Law Enforcement Best Practices Recognition Program.

Pursuit of the award is voluntary. However, in applying for this recognition, a department must demonstrate elevating the practices of the department to a very demanding level and fulfill a multitude of mandatory requirements. It is with great honor that we congratulate the Chief and all Stafford Police Department employees for attaining this most distinguished recognition.

Chief Richard Ramirez receives the award from Police Chief Mike Berezin of Missouri City.

SANTA'S VILLAGE IS PRIMED



The annual experience provided by the City of Stafford known as Santa's Village is primed to thoroughly entertain the children of our community for each Holiday Season. This event is looked forward to by many of our citizen's as the commencement of this very special time of year.

On Tuesday, November 27th, the Stafford Centre will once again host, the wildly popular Santa's Village series of activities. It all **begins at 5:30 p.m. and ends 8:00 p.m.** Most enticing of the many activities which appeal to the entire family, is the serving to the attendees of hotdogs, cookies and drinks. All of these are **FREE OF CHARGE**, compliments of the City.

By making the Santa's Village the start of the Holiday Season, we attempt to bring everyone into the Holiday spirit. Mayor Leonard Scarcella gets as excited about this event as the children and employs it as a unique opportunity to surprise the audience with a new delightful costume each year. He addresses the children, who are entertained by the choirs of SMSD before his arrival. His favorite activity is reading the classic "T'was the Night Before Christmas" story and telling of other stories of the season.

Santa arrives with great fanfare, escorted by the Stafford Fire Department with glaring sirens and flashing lights. The Firefighters as well as the audience becomes enthralled in this highly touted arrival of Santa. We invite all to come to the "Village" and to especially bring the children, who can play, make decorations, write a personal letter to Santa, frost cookies and participate in these many activities to their hearts delight. See you and the children on November 27th at 5:30 p.m.



STUFF THE PATROL CAR

The Stafford Police Department will once again host "STUFF THE PATROL CAR" program. This project is designed to help the less fortunate in our City. We encourage everyone to bring non-perishable food items and load them into the police cruiser. These items will then be distributed to needy Stafford families.





SPOTLIGHT

"Best little school district in Texas"

Fall 2018



FROM THE DESK OF SUPERINTENDENT BOSTIC

The 2018-19 School Year has been underway for more than two months, and we have already achieved several accomplishments.

We unanimously passed a balanced budget for the fifth consecutive year and now have an extra Stafford Police Department Officer serving as a School Resource Officer to keep our campus safe.

The Texas Education Agency rated Stafford MSD with a "B." While we are proud of that grade, we will not be satisfied until we receive an "A." While many area districts received TEA exemptions due to Hurricane Harvey, we did not (even though we were affected by it). We recently started a new program, titled "#You" which honors Stafford MSD educators every six weeks.

We are proud to announce that construction on the 2017 Bond Project will begin this winter. That includes the new state-of-the-art Stafford Middle School and a new Administration Building that will create additional learning space on our campuses. When those projects are complete, we will begin creating the one-of-a-kind Stafford MSD Science, Technology, Engineering & Math (STEM) Magnet Campus.

Our Stafford College & Career Center Programs continue to grow. The Culinary Arts Program was recently featured in the Houston Chronicle as it has grown from 25 students to more than 200. The Welding Program created a BBQ Pit for our Homecoming Game, and our Agriculture Program continued to excel at the Fort Bend Fair earlier this month.

Our Child Nutrition Department continues to emphasize healthy lifestyles with a new program, "the Vegetable/Fruit of the Week" for our students to try each Friday, with the opportunity to win games and prizes.

Academically, we continue to move closer to our Stafford 20/20 Vision goals. They include having all third graders reading at or above grade level, 100 percent of seventh graders taking the ACT Exam, 100 percent of eighth graders taking the SAT Exam, and 100 percent of eighth graders passing Algebra I.

Dr. Robert Bostic, Superintendent of Schools



MARK YOUR CALENDAR

Thanksgiving Break
(District Closed)..... Nov. 19-23

Dads and Donuts,
Stafford Elementary...Nov. 29-30

Spartan Basketball Tournaments
.....Nov. 29-Dec. 1

Super Senior 55+ Breakfast,
8:30 a.m..... Nov. 30

Door Decorating Contest,
Stafford Middle School..... Dec. 3

Spelling Bee,
Stafford Elementary..... Dec. 4

Holiday Band Concert,
Stafford HS/Stafford Middle
School, 6 p.m. (Stafford Centre)
.....Dec. 4

Kickstart Belt Ceremony,
6 p.m..... Dec. 5

Stafford Elementary
Christmas Program..... Dec. 6

Please visit www.staffordmsd.org for
an updated calendar of events.





Spartans in Action

STAFFORD MSD PROUD MONTH

Stafford MSD Proud Month is a great SMSD Tradition.

We celebrated Stafford MSD Proud Month with banners, buttons, yard signs, car flags, T-Shirts and more.

It started off with an SMSD Night at Best Burger, followed by the official Stafford MSD Proud Event inside the Stafford High Competition Gym that featured performances by the SHS Cheerleaders and Dance Team, Facepainting and a bouncehouse.



Several businesses participated in Stafford MSD Proud Month, including Best Burger, Dairy Queen, Marco's Pizza, Infinite Fitness, Joyce Wilkins Photography, Uncle Honey's Homemade Desserts, The Ogle School and The Stafford Sentinel Newspaper.



SPARTAN VICTORIES



The Stafford High Football Team defeated Class 5A Katy Paetow to open the 2018 season.

The Stafford High Volleyball Team earned a thrilling 3-2 victory over Wharton High.

To keep track of all Stafford High Athletic News, log on to www.facebook.com/SMSD82 or www.twitter.com/Stafford_Sports



Stafford MSD Trustees, City Council approve 2018-19 Budget



By Stafford MSD Communications

The Stafford Municipal School District Board of Trustees and the Stafford City Council voted unanimously, 14-0, to pass a \$32.1 Million 2018-19 balanced budget at the annual Joint Budget Meeting in August at the Stafford Civic Center.

The Joint Action was a historic one because it represented the fifth consecutive balanced budget without a single "no" vote. ✨

Leonard Scarcella, Stafford's Mayor since 1969, didn't allow the significance of the moment to pass as he complimented Stafford MSD Superintendent Dr. Robert Bostic on going "5-for-5" since he arrived in 2014.

Stafford's longtime chief executive noted that such a feat had never been accomplished under any previous SMSD Superintendent.

The Joint Body also voted 14-0 to approve the new Maintenance & Operations tax rate of \$1.05330 and the \$0.27 Interest & Sinking Tax Rate for the 2018-19 school year. 🍁



SMS



Chris Caldwell
President



Xavier Herrera
Vice-President



Alicia Lacy-Castille
Secretary



Jacqueline Jean Baptiste
Trustee



Auturo Jackson
Trustee



Greg Holsapple
Trustee



Manuel Hinojosa
Trustee

The Board meets monthly on the second Monday at 6:30 PM in the SMSD Administration Building Board Room. School Board meetings are open to the public. Upcoming scheduled meetings are: November 12 and December 10. Meeting agenda, information about each agenda item, and past meeting videos are linked to the district website under the "About Us" tab.

SHS SENIOR ACCEPTED INTO ELITE CULINARY SCHOOL

The Stafford Culinary Arts Program changed TeKylah's Simpson life and gave her the opportunity to travel around the world.

Simpson's studied at Stafford MSD since Middle School and enrolled in Chef Courtney Ralls' Culinary Arts Program as a sophomore.



Simpson, a Stafford High senior, was recently accepted to the Auguste Escoffier School of Culinary Arts in Austin.

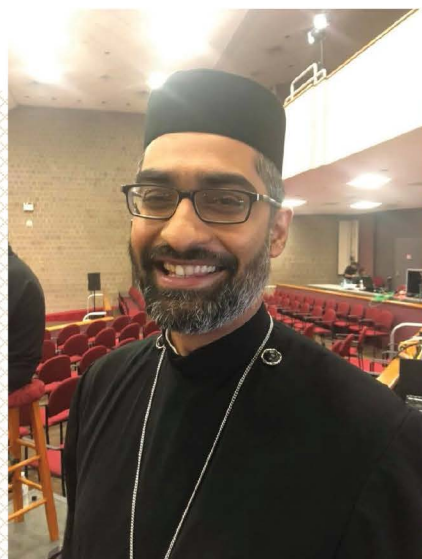
"Chef Ralls helped me a lot and encouraged my dream of owning my own bakery one day," Simpson said.

Last March, Simpson traveled to Italy on a Culinary Arts Field Trip, and in March 2019, she will travel with the group to Spain.

ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT: REVEREND FATHER CHRIS MATHEW

Reverend Father Chris Mathew, a 1998 Stafford High School graduate, is the Reverend at St. Thomas Orthodox Church in Stafford. He is also a Stafford resident.

Mathew was kind enough to deliver the invocation at the Stafford MSD-City of Stafford Joint Budget Meeting in August.





STAFFORD MSD FOOD DRIVE

The Stafford Municipal School District partnered with the Houston Food Bank to organize a Food Drive on Friday, Sept. 21 — the day of the Spartans’ Senior Night Football Game with St. Thomas High.

Stafford MSD was able to make a formidable donation to the Houston Food Bank, thanks to the generosity of our community and those who attended the Sept. 21 Football Game.

STAFFORD DADS CLUB



Stafford MSD Board President Christopher Caldwell, Stafford Elementary Assistant Principal Jeffery Williams, and Stafford City Council Member Don Jones organized the first meeting of the new Stafford Elementary School Dads Club. Jones, a former Principal in Stafford MSD, had a Dads Club during his time with the District. Caldwell has helped create one at the secondary level. If you're interested in joining, e-mail Mr. Williams at jwilliams@staffordmsd.org

NATIONAL NIGHT OUT

Stafford Municipal School District was proud to partner with the City of Stafford and the Stafford Police Department for National Night Out on Tuesday, October 2.

National Night Out is an excellent opportunity for neighbors to get to know one another, and for elected officials to interact with the citizens that they serve.

The 2018 edition of National Night Out was a great success for Stafford residents, and we were proud to see several neighborhoods participate in the event this year.



Drivers Education Offered Online

The Stafford MSD Education Foundation sponsors an online Driver’s Education program which benefits students. The Driver’s Education Course for Teens ages 15-17 is approved by the Texas Education Agency (TEA) and the Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS) and is the only 32-hour online education course that includes an online instructor who answers student’s technical and course material questions. The total cost of the online driving program is \$129.95 and a portion of the fee is

donated to the SMSD Education Foundation.

A Driver’s Education course is available for ages 18-25 years old and also Online Defensive Driving courses. Successful completion of the online Defensive Driving course can dismiss tickets or reduce insurance premiums. All courses can be accessed at smsd.drivethefoundation.com. Call 800-227-7509 for more information.



SUPER SENIOR 55+ BREAKFAST

The Stafford College & Career Center Culinary Program prepares a delicious breakfast each month at the College & Career Center for the Senior 55+ Community.



Attendees have the chance to listen to speeches and information from various clubs and organizations at Stafford MSD.

Upcoming Dates for the Breakfasts are:
Nov. 30 and Dec. 14

NOW HIRING BUS DRIVERS AND CUSTODIANS

Stafford MSD is looking for Bus Drivers and Custodians.

Log on to www.staffordmsd.org or call Director of Personnel Services Teresa Sazedj at 281-261-9250.



Stafford MSD is extremely proud of its Transportation Department. Students have the opportunity to travel to and from school in air-conditioned, well-maintained buses. Each bus has a camera on it.

The buses stop on each child’s street near their home, with drop off and pick up locations at the school monitored by SMSD teachers and staff.

All of our bus drivers go through Comprehensive Background Checks, as do all of our employees.

For more information on SMSD Transportation, log on to <http://www.staffordmsd.org/departments/transportation/>



Stafford Municipal School District

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281-261-9200 • www.staffordmsd.org • twitter.com/StaffordMSD



STAFFORD CENTRE EVENTS

NOVEMBER			
Peter Cincotti	11-29-18	Children's Christmas Spirit Festival	11-27-18
DECEMBER			
Fort Bend Symphony – "Deck the Halls"	12-2-18	Stafford MSD Band Concert	12-4-18
Ballet Forte "Nutcracker"	12-7 thru 12-9-18	Grady Prestage "Commissioners Black Tie Gala"	12-14-18
Oriental Arts Education Center – Cultural event City of Stafford – "Rockin New Years Eve Bash"	12-14 thru 12-15-18	Iranian Cultural Foundation – Yalda Concert	12-29-18
	12-31-18		

CITY HALL HOLIDAY CLOSURES THIS SEASON

STAFFORD CITY HALL WILL BE CLOSED IN OBSERVANCE OF THE FOLLOWING PUBLIC HOLIDAYS:

- THANKSGIVING** – Thursday, November 22, 2018 AND Friday, November 23, 2018
- CHRISTMAS EVE** – Monday, December 24, 2018
- CHRISTMAS DAY** – Tuesday, December 25, 2018
- NEW YEARS DAY** – Tuesday, January 1, 2019

FIRE AND BURGLAR ALARM FEES

<u>Burglar/Fire Alarm Fees</u>	<u>False Alarm Fees</u>
Residential Alarm Registration - \$30.00	Three (3) free allowed per calendar year
Commerical Burglar Alarm Registration - \$100.00	PD 4-7: \$50.00 each Fire: 4-7 \$175.00 each
Commercial Fire Alarm Registration - \$100.00	PD 8+: \$100.00 each Fire: 8+ \$250.00 each

Pet Registrations
City Ordinance No:1101 states that any dog or cat kept, over four months of age harbored or maintained by their owner in the City, shall be vaccinated and registred with a licensed vetinarian.
Fees: \$2.00 per dog or cat. Bring the animal's current vaccination certificate to City Hall. All pet registrations expire December 31st.

TRASH PICK UP AND TREE LIMB PICK UP

Tree Limb Pick-Up: **First Mondays of and January, April, July and October.**

Residential Trash Pick-Up: **Monday & Thursday or Tuesday & Friday.** There will be **NO TRASH PICK UP** on a Holiday. Your trash will be collected on your **next scheduled** pick up day.

A LETTER FROM THE MAYOR

As we enter the holiday season, we seek the spirit that comes at this time of year to help us obtain extraordinary achievements. Fortunately, we have just such a situation developing in our City. This is in large part to the excellent leadership of Chris Caldwell, the new President of the SMSD Board, and that of the school's Superintendent Dr. Robert Bostic. They head a committee composed of Mayor Pro Tem Virginia Rosas, Councilman Ken Mathew, Board member Manuel Hinojosa, Planning & Zoning Commissioner Alice Chen, Father Michael Mathew, Sadie Williams and myself. Its name: The SMSD Cultural Inclusion Diversity Committee. Its goal: Encourage and provide an enticing, comfortable school setting so that *all* Stafford primary and secondary students will enjoy attending. This will bring back a diverse student body resembling the near equal racial composition of our City, one of the most racially diverse cities in the nation.

The racial makeup of the district has reached critical disproportionality. Specifically, 7 out of 8 students at SMSD are Hispanic or Black, while in stark contrast, only 1 in every 14 children are of Asian ancestry, and even more dramatically, less than 1 out of every 25 students in the district are white.

Our focus must be on achieving this significant goal. It won't be easy or happen quickly, but if we are successful, we can do what we promised when we created the district: elevate SMSD to the status of one of the premier school districts in the state, thus providing the children of Stafford with the very best of educational opportunities. While the challenge is significant, the reward is truly worthy of the effort. We must not be deterred from aggressively pursuing this goal. Wishing you all a very Happy 2019.

Respectfully submitted,

Leonard Scarcella, Mayor



City of Stafford
2610 South Main
Stafford, TX 77477

STAFFORD ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION NEWS

Exciting things are coming to Stafford! With the announcement of several new tenants coming to The Grid such as Drive Shack, Whiskey Cake and In-and-Out Burger, we continue to work with the developer to bring even more exciting businesses to Stafford. The new center adjacent to Dairy Queen on Highway US.90A will house a Popeyes Louisiana Kitchen along with a couple of other tenants that have yet to be named. We are hopeful that the first quarter of 2019 will hold many more exciting announcements that will offer some wonderful opportunities for retail and dining for the residents of Stafford!

Another exciting change for Stafford will come in updated and revamped landscaping along Highway US.90A. Stafford is known for its commitment to keeping our city looking beautiful and this will only help to enhance our current beautification efforts in the city. We will also be working to clear out some of the overgrowth along Highway IH59/69 that is beginning to hide some of the signs along that route. We want travelers along this interchange to be able to not only enjoy the scenery and navigate safely, but see all the great new developments going on in the city.

We hope that you have a wonderful holiday season and a very Happy New Year. Here's looking to great things in 2019.

Respectfully submitted as the opinion of:

Wen Guerra, President