

**NEWS RELEASE**

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**Township Board of Directors discusses Homestead Exemption, HB 5311 impact**

THE WOODLANDS, TEXAS (June 23, 2023) – The Woodlands Township Board of Directors held a regular meeting on Thursday, June 22, 2023, wherein they discussed Homestead Exemption and tax exemptions for 65 and older/Disabled, issued a proclamation declaring July as Parks and Recreation Month, and reflected on the positive impact of HB 5311, along with other Township business.

On the Regular Agenda, the Board discussed the recent passage of HB 5311 in the Texas Legislature. Director of Intergovernmental Relations/Assistant to the President Todd Stephens provided the update. Authored and supported by Rep. Steve Toth and Sen. Brandon Creighton, the bill directs the Comptroller of Public Accounts to treat the Township as an incorporated municipality regarding the distribution of mixed beverage tax proceeds received on or after October 1, 2023. The legislation also allows the Township to create a hotel-related economic development zone for the purposes of hotel marketing and promotion. The passage of this bill, which amends the Township’s enabling legislation, will yield an estimated \$860,000 to the Township in 2024 with a projection of as much as \$1,417,000 by 2028.

The passage of HB5311 represents a significant milestone for the Township as it was accomplished within a very short time span. Without the focused efforts of the Board of Directors, sponsoring legislators and other supporters, the measure would have been delayed to the Texas Legislature’s next session in 2025. The bill becomes state law on September 1, 2023. [View the HB 5311 Update.](#)

“This shows what a collaborative effort can do,” said Township Chairman Dr. Ann K. Snyder. “It also shows the Board’s vision on moving forward and looking at alternatives on behalf of our residents.”

Chairman Snyder also credited the lobbying efforts of Schwartz, Page & Harding, the law firm who wrote the Township’s enabling legislation, as well as former Texas Sen. Tommy Williams.

Also on the Regular Agenda, the Board received a briefing regarding Homestead and 65 and older/Disabled exemptions from taxation. After discussion, the Board instructed staff to prepare a resolution to increase the exemption for residents 65 and older/Disabled from \$40,000 to \$50,000. The Board will vote on that resolution at their meeting on Wednesday, June 28, 2023. [View the Homestead Exemption Presentation.](#)



Under The Woodlands Fire Department's Administrative Report, Fire Chief Palmer Buck gave an update regarding the recovery efforts following the overnight storms that impacted The Woodlands on Wednesday, June 21, 2023. WFD and multiple other Township departments are working alongside Montgomery and Harris Counties and other utility service providers to ensure that clean-up and service restoration efforts progress quickly in the community.

President/CEO Monique Sharp introduced the Township's new Director of Communications, LeaAnn Petersen, who joined the team on June 19, 2023. Ms. Petersen previously served as the Director of Public Affairs for the City of Seabrook for 11 years. She holds a Master of Science in E-Media from Quinnipiac University in Connecticut, and a Bachelor of Arts in Communication from UT Permian Basin. Petersen is a Certified Public Communicator (CPC) and a Certified Public Manager (CPM).

The Board also discussed a proposal from Director Richard Franks for the purchase of ad space in local monthly newspaper, Community Impact. The Board approved a budget amendment of \$40,000 for the purchase of ad space through the remainder of 2023.

The Board approved Resolution No. 008-23 nominating Arthur Bredehoft as a Candidate for the Election of the Montgomery Central Appraisal District's Board of Directors.

On the Consent Agenda, the Board approved meeting minutes for May, received a report from Community Services, approved Task Order #9 from Halff Associates, Inc., for Civil Engineering Services for the Parks Department operation facility Master Plan, adopted Resolution No. 007-23 approving the Annual Report on Financial Information and Operating Data for the year ended December 31, 2022, and approved the Federal Transit Administration-required The Woodlands Township 2023 Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan.

Members of the public were able to address the Board at the start of the meeting.

The Woodlands Township Board Meetings may be attended in person, watched live online, or viewed later via recording at [www.thewoodlandstownship-tx.gov/meetingvideos](http://www.thewoodlandstownship-tx.gov/meetingvideos). The agenda and attachments may be viewed at [www.thewoodlandstownship-tx.gov/991/Agendas-Minutes-and-More](http://www.thewoodlandstownship-tx.gov/991/Agendas-Minutes-and-More).



*The Woodlands Township Board of Directors proclaimed July as Parks and Recreation Month in The Woodlands. The Board encourages all citizens of The Woodlands to celebrate by participating in their choice of leisure activities available via the Township's 150 parks, 14 pools, two recreation centers, five spraygrounds and 220+ miles of pathways. From left, Vice Chairman Kyle Watson, Secretary Linda Nelson, Director Brad Bailey, Chairman Dr. Ann K. Snyder, Assistant Directors of Parks and Recreation Mitch Hall and Pamela Woods, Treasurer Richard Franks and Director Dr. Shelley Sekula-Gibbs.*