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Eagle Lake Headlight

April 10, 1986
EJSPS 163-760
Vol. 83, No. 2
Eagle Publishing, Inc.
P.O. Box 67
Eagle Lake, Texas 77434-0067
(409) 234-6521
35-CENTS PER COPY
(33-CENTS PLUS TAX)

Increases winning margin in recount

Powers sworn in as Mayor

Lanny D. Powers was seated as Mayor of Eagle Lake on Tuesday night after waiting three days to see if a recount of the votes made any difference in last Saturday's city election results.

As it turned out, Powers upheld his lead over challenger, councilman Roy D. Van Nort by three votes, giving him a six-vote victory margin.

Case Hlubab was added to council, elected to the vacancy created when Van Nort sought to become mayor. Council incumbent Vic Corman was sworn in for his second term. The other councilmen, Mike Duarte, Joe Duncan and Alvin Kohleffel have another year to serve before they must seek re-election again.

Long vote count

Just after the 7 p.m. polling place close at the Municipal Building Saturday night, a small crowd began gathering to await the results.

However, due to the length of the ballot, and the record number of votes cast, results were not posted until shortly after midnight. Most of the 50 or so interested citizens held a five-hour social event on the municipal square until they knew the results. Traffic around the square was constant as drivers and passengers looked at the empty sign-board on the square.

When city manager Robert Klockman read the results about 12:15 a.m. Sunday morning, it became clear that Powers wasn't a clear cut winner.

The results announced at that time showed Powers leading by three votes with 291 votes, Van Nort had 288 votes, and former mayor Elmer Struss pulled 205 write-in votes.

Recount called

Monday Van Nort submitted a letter to council requesting a recount. Then mayor Struss called a special session of council and a recount was

approved. City secretary Lucille Perry was appointed to oversee the recount, and she asked voters Bill Appelt, Kate Spangler and Roy Marshall to do the counting.

According to Klockman, the issue raised by Van Nort only concerned the number of votes tallied for each mayor candidate, and could not, under Texas law, challenge the legality of any voters. Should Van Nort challenge that, he would have to do so with a suit in State District Court.

The recount changed the totals, officially giving Powers 290 votes, down one vote from Saturday's count; Van Nort 284, down four, and Struss 194, down 11. The difference is that in the recount, 17 ballots were not counted, since some included votes for the late A.J. Struss, some just for Struss (not explicit enough), and some with more than one person marked. Also seven other people received one write-

in vote each: Joe Zapalac, Chuck Stephens, Gene Baker, Jeff Pesnell, Robert Cook Jr., Georgia McKee and Mike Duarte.

At Tuesday's council meeting where Powers was sworn in, Van Nort said he had no comment on whether he planned to file that district court challenge. He did say, however, that he felt there were problems with Saturday's election. In remarks to council and the public, when called on by mayor Powers, Van Nort suggested that in future elections, judges should be better

trained. He said there is evidence that an election judge was instructing a voter, in a voting booth, that "this is the line" you can write in Struss' name. He also said that some registered voters were turned away, and that at least ten people voted who were not city residents.

Unless a voting judge knows where a person lives, the roll of voters from the county tax-assessor's office does not indicate whether they are city residents or not, since the voting precinct that Eagle Lake is in also includes a large area of

southeastern Colorado County. Election activity leading to the Saturday vote was heavy, with both Powers and Struss calling voters seeking support. Powers and his wife Claudette established a group of supporters to do the calling, while Struss himself called, asking for voters to vote no on the bond issues and to write him in as a candidate.

Van Nort also was busy seeking support, and Saturday had several large political signs posted on vehicles around the municipal building.

Corman, Hlubab council winners; ballot counting long

Incumbent councilman Vic Corman drew the most votes in Saturday's city election, and while Case Hlubab received enough to be seated to replace Roy Van Nort, challenger Candy McCreary was not far behind. The fourth candidate, Peggy Bym was a distant last.

Corman received 526 votes, almost as many as all the votes in any single city election until last Saturday. Hlubab drew 388 votes, and McCreary had 360. Bym tallied 78.

Until last Saturday the most votes cast in any single election was 576, according to microfilm copies, of the Eagle Lake Headlight at the Winterman Library dating back more than 30 years. Saturday, according to election judge Robert McIntire, there were 794 voters, including 26 absentee ballots.

When the results were delayed until midnight, there was speculation that McIntire and his assistants were going through the ballots more than

once, to make sure no errors were made. However, after he emerged from the polling place, he said they had counted them only one time.

The long-count, he said, was due to the long ballot, and record voter turnout. All told, there were nearly 4,000 items to count, since each voter could make a decision on five items.

Assisting McIntire were Lila Armstrong, Mrs. Mary Ballew and Lee Anna Austin.

Voters say 'yes' streets; 'no' airport

Voters have given permission to the city to spend \$350,000 to improve streets and drainage, but turned down the airport tax bond proposal.

In the municipal election Saturday, where a record number of votes were cast, the "yes" votes on the street question equaled the "no" votes for the airport question.

There were 422 yes votes cast on the street issue while 317 voters marked the no box. On the \$250,000 airport bond question, there were 320 yes votes cast and 422 no votes tallied.

The approval of the street improvement question allows council to proceed with plans to rebuild, repave and/or improve drainage on many streets, and at the same time use money it gets under the federal Revenue Sharing program for other items. In recent years council has used the federal funds for a street maintenance program. Last year, only several thousand dollars was budgeted for any street work at all.

And, since the issuance of revenue bonds for work at the airport

was turned down, council will have to make a decision whether to seek other channels to improve the economic viability of the community.

Tuesday at council meeting, Roy Van Nort urged council not to let the hard work that has been done to secure that land go to waste. He suggested the city buy the property while it is available. Bill Harrison Jr. echoed those comments. In the past, councilman Vic Corman has suggested that the city do at least that much, if nothing else.

Klockman said contact has been made with the legal firm that will prepare the paperwork involved with selling the \$350,000 in street bonds, but that it probably will be 60 to 90 days before they are offered for sale. In the meantime, council will be able to take a close look at which streets need the most work. In his parting remarks Tuesday evening, Elmer Struss said council should make sure to pave Hubbard Ferry Road, the creek crossing and "A" Street. That gives people in Kevin Courts and the new subdivision in that area a direct route to town.



Engstrom dancers to be featured at final Rockets game

Lyndia Engstrom's teenage dancers have been asked to perform at the halftime of the Houston Rockets basketball game Saturday night against Phoenix in the Summit. It is the team's last home game of the season before starting into the league playoffs as western division champs.

To prepare for their debut before

thousands of fans, the dancers will practice this Wednesday at 7 p.m. at the Columbus Elementary School. Mrs. Engstrom is asking as many people as possible to come to the school to simulate the large crowd the girls will face Saturday. There is no admis-

sion charge for the practice session.

The girls scheduled to dance are Tracy Walla, Valerie Perez, Melissa Engstrom, Cynthia Engstrom, Kelli Lanier, Stacy Causey, Renee Balas, Tess Taylor, Shari Payne and Mary Dell Wolfe.

Crime prevention seminar April 16

A crime prevention seminar, open free to the public, is scheduled next Wednesday night at the Eagle Lake Middle School, under the coordination of the Eagle Lake Police Department.

Various law and legal professionals will make presentations. Eagle Lake police officers have been attending various crime prevention and investigation short-courses over the past 12 months in preparation for this meeting.

Memorial services in Eagle Lake were held at 3 p.m. Sunday, April 6, at the First Baptist Church, with the Rev. Melvin Sibley officiating. Local arrangements were under the direction of Dalany Funeral Home.

Miss Foster was born February 17, 1970, in Pinedale, Texas. Additional survivors include her parents, James and Judy Foster of Pinedale; a brother, James E. Foster Jr., of Pinedale; and her grandparents, Audie Armstrong of Hemphill, E. C. Armstrong of Many, La., and Roy and Pat Sanders of Pinedale.

Funeral services were conducted at 4 p.m. Friday, April 4, at Star Funeral Home in Hemphill by Rev. L.W. Ferguson, and Rev. Wayne Alford. Burial followed in the Harpers Chapel Cemetery near Hemphill.

Struss adds remarks to council departure

With all the voting concerns out of the way, the new Eagle Lake city council got down to business Tuesday night and quickly whisked through a short agenda.

One of the agenda items did take up considerable time, however. New mayor Lanny Powers presented plaques of appreciation to 16-year-old veteran Elmer Struss and 10-year-old councilman Roy Van Nort. He then called on each man for remarks, and added some of his own.

Struss had a page or two of rough remarks prepared, passing on to the new men in government a his suggestions and comments on what they face. Heading the list was the warning that they must represent all the people of Eagle Lake, not just the special interest groups or their own personal interests.

"You inherit a few problems that were around when I took office 16 years ago," he said. Heading that list was drainage. Once, Struss said, when a lady called complaining about drainage problems, he said he asked her if she had a direct line to call to see if the rain could be turned off. "She didn't appreciate that," Struss added. He urged council to pursue the federal community development grant application now

being processed, which targets the Rice Mill area for a \$5 million in drainage and sewer improvements.

Also on the list were boquets tossed to police chief Ben Johnson and city manager Robert Klockman. I pass on to you the best police department I've had in 16 years," he said of Johnson. And about Klockman, he told council to keep on with the "heavy trash" pickup program that has helped clean up the city. That's the best idea Klockman has come up with since he has been city manager, Struss said. Last month, that program, which sends a garbage crew around town on the first two Wednesdays of each month, cost the city \$900 last month, but also rid the town of 245 cubic yards of trash that might otherwise have been strewn around and ignored.

Another major point the former mayor said was that council should carefully guard the surplus funds the city has in the bank. "Don't blow it on some fast idea," he said. Later, Van Nort suggested the city use some of it to purchase the property at the airport.

Struss also said council should pay attention to street sign replacement, flood insurance implementation, the sidewalk next to the Masonic Cemetery, and loose dogs.

He later urged council to continue to press Klockman for answers to the city's dilapidated building problem.

Later in the meeting, councilman Vic Corman added his remarks. He said that some had said he was "Struss's boy" when he was elected two years ago. Just to set the record straight, Corman said such was, or course, the case, but that he was glad to be working with council and new mayor Powers.

Mayor Powers main comments was that the community should join spreading negative attitudes, and join

together for the betterment of the city. "Let's drop the negatives and encourage support of ourselves," he said he was honored to be elected, that he intends to serve the entire community, and was glad to see the large support showed him and the city.

In other business, council: A—Hired Pierce Arthur to audit the city's books.

A—Accepted a bid of \$80 from Ron Peroni to purchase five items offered for the city, including two old refrigerators. Other items were not sold because there were no bids, and Klockman was given permission to sell them.

A—Announced that the Police Department has begun helping people apply to the state crime victim compensation fund. Bobby Johnson will be assisting people complete the applications.

A—Learned that Klockman has the information necessary to apply for another community development grant for the Rice Mill area. Funds for the grant program have been cut 36 percent, and last year only nine out of 37 applications were approved.

A—Learned the Texas Water Commission has renewed the city's

waste water discharge permit. Klockman told council the city is meeting the permit requirements, although sometimes it is close. Struss had told council that when he became mayor he inherited a sewer plant problem, and even though a new plant was built, there still are problems.

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United Way only at 38% of goal; donations needed before May 1

The 1986 fund drive for United Way of Eagle Lake is in its final stages, but many businesses have not responded. The United Way board will meet shortly after May 1 to disburse contributions.

As of last Friday, contributions received amounted to \$5,621, or only about 39 percent of the \$14,425 goal. Should the goal not be reached, some agencies which have requested funds will receive none, while amounts for other agencies will be greatly reduced.

Since many of the area gravel companies are working with fewer employees, if they are working at all, reaching the goal will be even more difficult. In the past several years,

these companies and their employees have been instrumental in the annual fund drive.

Letters to businesses were mailed two weeks ago asking that employees be given a pledge card so they can make a donation. Employees can return those contributions to a teller at the First National Bank, or to John Peering at the Headlight.

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