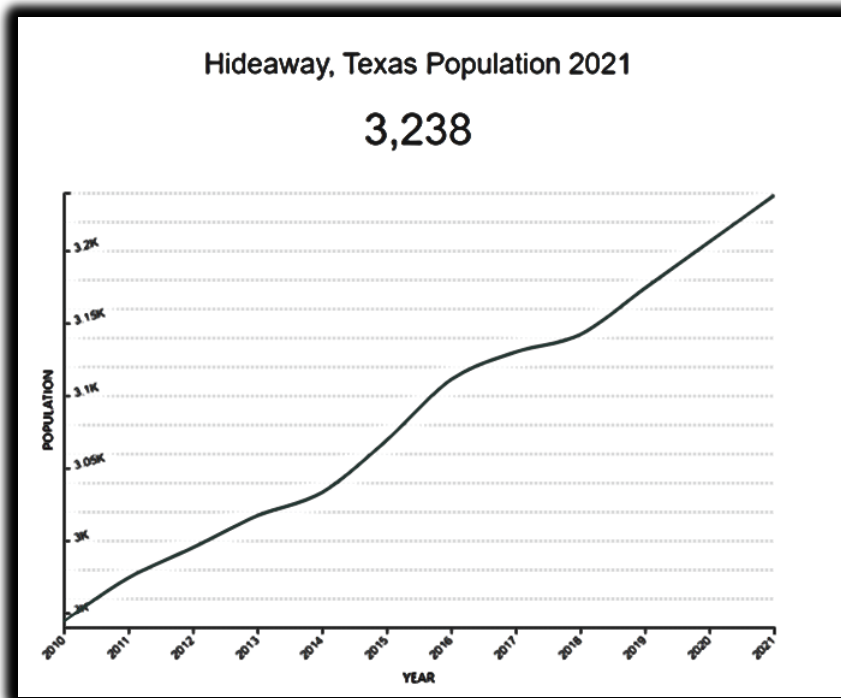


Last month's City Desk article was written by the city's Waste Water Task Force and I really appreciate all the work that this talented group of Hideaway citizens has done. This month, I'll try to share some vision for the future regarding wastewater.

The following is a summary of a presentation that I made at "Town Hall Meeting" on October 18th hosted by Hideaway Lake Club Inc. I was honored to be asked to participate in this meeting.

My first slide simply asked the question: "What is Going on Today in the city of Hideaway?" My next slide reflected the population increase in Hideaway since 2010. **The total population of Hideaway increased over 300 from the 2010 census through the 2020 census.**



My next slide simply stated that your city is: Evaluating what actions can be taken to preserve the quality of life we all enjoy here in Hideaway. **The biggest threat to our property values in Hideaway is the contaminations of our lakes.** When the club updated its Strategic Plan in 2016-2017, One item listed was: **Plan for a sewer system.** In 2017, **the club asked the city to take the lead on this planning.** In 2018, your city undertook this challenge and formed a Wastewater Study Team. This team submitted their report to the city in August 2019. A copy of this entire report is available on the city's website.

Immediately after receiving the report from the Study Team, we formed the Wastewater Task Force to develop specific plans regarding the management of wastewater.

This Task Force has worked diligently during the past year to develop specific recommendation for the city.

The recommendations from the Task Force were:

- Improve regulation of septic systems in Hideaway to hopefully prevent any contamination of our lakes.
- Develop plans for a citywide sewer system when it is needed.
- Evaluate additional revenue sources to minimize the cost to individual residents to install a sewer system to keep control in our hands , rather than Smith County,

Due to the high estimated cost, the plans for developing a sewer system have been temporarily placed on the “back burner”. Your city is now in the process of applying to be a “Authorized Agent” by the TCEQ to regulate septic systems.

- As a sewer system will be very costly to develop, your city will need another source of revenue in order to develop one for Hideaway. We are considering a \$.10 per \$1000 of appraised value. This is about half of TJC’s tax rate.

If we adopted such a tax rate, then the city would be able to pay 100% of our Fire Protection fee from LVFD. This would save homeowners approximately \$100 /yr from their club bill for fire protection.

We have been considering this action for many months and will be voting on it in a future Board of Aldermen meeting. Here are some of the options we see:

- Do nothing and wait for the TCEQ to levy a fine on Hideaway for non-compliance with their rules.
- Ask residents to pay a several thousand-dollar assessments to fund the sewer system when it is required. (Remember the proposal submitted by the club in 2012.)
- Ask residents to pay a nominal property tax to allow the city to fund the sewer system.