

KNEL- AM / KNEL-FM

2nd Qtr. Issues

Apr. – June - 2023

Key issues facing the community addressed by KNEL in the 2nd Quarter of 2023.

- Local Government
- Elections
- Education
- Agriculture
- Community
- Local Economy

Local issues were the subject of coverage during KNEL daily newscasts, regular daily public affairs programming, special event broadcasts and inclusion on KNELRadio.com web site. Coverage included appearances by local officials from the Cities of Brady and Mason, Mason and McCulloch County Commissioners Courts; Brady and Mason School Districts; and AgriLife Extension representatives in newscasts and on KNEL's daily Morning Program public affairs program.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT –

At its April 4 meeting, the Brady City Council approved the Brady Economic Development Corporation Project Odyssey to support program and product expansion plans at Odssey Manufacturing in Brady. The project will provide a \$250,000 initial loan, a second loan of \$125,000 after year 1 and a final grant of \$125,000 after year two, provide specific performance and employment measures are met.

McCulloch County Commissioners agreed in April to planning to remodel the former County Jail into a records storage facility for the County, rather than try to sell the building.

Mason City Commission held two special meetings in April. The first was for approving a contract for engineering related to City plans to seek a State grant for sidewalk improvement in the downtown Mason area. The Mason City Commission held a Town Hall meeting on June 1st to provide residents with information on the City's plans for pursuing the grant for sidewalk upgrades. The second public meeting was for a discussion of plans for a Energy Battery Storage System in the City.

A new Brady Police Chief, Randy Batten, was sworn in April 17th.

A large crowd gathered on all the streets surrounding the Mason Courthouse on April 19th to watch the placement of the new cupola atop the building. The Courthouse is in the process of being rebuilt since it was seriously damaged in a fire in 2021.

Rochelle Water District issued a Boil Water Notice in late April until repairs were made and tests confirmed the water was again safe to drink.

McCulloch County Commissioners held a Special Session June 3rd to allocate the remaining funds available to the County from Covid-19 Relief Act funds previously targeted for the County.

U.S. Congressman August Pfluger held Town Hall meetings in the area in Eden and the Llano areas in June. In conjunction with those meeting, Cong. Pfluger also appeared on KNEL's Morning Program to outline the subjects being covered at the Town Hall Meetings.

ELECTIONS –

With the completion of candidate filing on March 6 and the election scheduled for May 6, KNEL hosted and broadcast live two Candidate Forums April 3^{re} and April 24th for candidates in contested races for Brady City Council, Brady Mayor and Brady School Board.

Local elections were also held for Mason City Commission and Mason School Board.

In Local Elections held on May 6, Aaron Garcia was elected Mayor of Brady, with Felix Gomez and Gabe Moreno elected to the City Council. In the Mason City Commission election, both incumbents were re-elected. In the Mason School Board election, both incumbents were defeated by the challengers.

EDUCATION –

Lohn ISD Superintendent, Leon Freeman, announced his retirement at the end of the school year. Freeman had been at the school for 42 years and had served as the superintendent for 28 years. He was recognized at the Chamber Awards banquet with its Lifetime Achievement Award.

Lizette Paceley was named as the new Lohn ISD superintendent.

Brady ISD Board of Trustees voted to adopt a Calendar for the 2023-24 school year that will include both five-day and four-day weeks for Brady schools.

Brady High School Athletic Director and Head Football Coach, Shay Easterwood, announced his resignation at the end of the school year. A new AD, C.J. Villegas, was named, and Jaron Roberts named as the new football coach.

Rochelle ISD announced that Chayden Feist had been named the new Principal.

Mason ISD Superintendent Brannon Kidd resigned at the end of the year. Mason ISD Board appointed an interim superintendent while a permanent replacement is being sought.

COMMUNITY-

Church Street Jamboree – a street festival of the arts was hosted in downtown Brady by the Brady/McCulloch County Chamber of Commerce on April 15.

The first Richland Springs Trade Days was held April 15th with over 100 vendors participating.

The Haven Family Shelter hosted its annual “Coffee with a Cop” event on April 20th. It offers an opportunity for citizens to meet and engage with local law enforcement.

Blue Ribbon Week was observed in the community during April in conjunction with Child Abuse Awareness Month.

In May, KNEL launched a “Nominate Your Favorite Teacher” award to honor teachers in the area. The teacher selected received tickets to a Texas Rangers baseball game, hotel accommodations in the Arlington and other various prizes. In June, KNEL asked listeners to nominate their Favorite First Responder, with the award presented at the end of the month.

The 8th Annual Heart of Texas Car Show and Swap Meet sponsored by the McCulloch County Child Welfare Board was held April 15th.

Voca Volunteer Fire Dept. sponsored Fish Fry was held April 23rd.

Brady/McCulloch County Chamber of Commerce held its annual awards banquet in April to recognize outstanding citizens in the Community and to celebrate successes of the past year.

The Lower Colorado River Authority awarded a grant to the City of Brady for new playground equipment at the Brady Lake park, and a grant to the restored Palace Move Theater in Brady for new flooring. A grant was also awarded to the Melvin Community Center for flooring improvements there.

The Misson At Brady, a coalition of members from various area churches, conducted their 9th annual project in which they upgrade and improve 8-10 area homes over two weekend to make the homes dry and warm. In 2023, the group completed repairs to the 100th home to be improved.

AGRICULTURE –

Zesch Family Ranch in Mason County received the 2023 Lone Star Land Steward Eco-Region award for the Edwards Plateau region.

Serita Short was named as the new Texas AgriLife Agriculture and Natural Resources Extension agent for McCulloch County.

LOCAL ECONOMY –

Sales tax rebates to area Cities and Counties were reported each month by KNEL, indicating how much funding was being returned to the local community from Sales Taxes collected in each one.

Brady/McCulloch County Chamber of Commerce hosted the second quarter “Good News” business lunch, with KNEL providing live coverage of the meeting on KNEL-AM.

