



Mayor's Monthly Newsletter

Written by Mayor Justin Ray

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Mayors Newsletter March 2018

Touting the TIRZ

Hello Neighbors, Residents and Friends

From time to time, a local community group will ask me to speak at one of their meetings. I embrace those opportunities to showcase all the exciting things going on in our City. Recently, I was asked to speak before the Harris County Republican Party's Local Government Committee. The Committee is studying Tax Increment Reinvestment Zones (TIRZ) and local government tax incentive policies. The Committee was only familiar with Houston's TIRZ districts and I considered this an excellent opportunity to discuss our new TIRZ district in the Jersey Crossing and how Jersey Village manages its tax incentive programs.

My comments that evening began with an account of our city's history, geography, services and future growth potential. As I often do, I touted our City's commitment to fiscal responsibility and ability to provide necessary public services while maintaining a healthy fund balance. I am especially proud of this aspect of Jersey Village as it demonstrates that a modest sized city can provide superior public services while remaining good stewards of the taxpayer's money. My comments also described our City wide commitment to law enforcement and public safety. I discussed how our City's General Fund as well as a special fund, the Crime Control and Prevention District, allocates significant resources to public safety and our community's sincere support of our first responders. Other areas of discussion included Jersey Village's continued pursuit of increased government transparency and the multiple projects that compromise the City's long term flood mitigation strategy.

Much of the discussion revolved around the TIRZ district and tax incentives. Starting from a philosophical level, I explained my view that local government should encourage rather than discourage business and economic growth. The greatest tool government has is the ability to wield the power of taxation. I explained how the TIRZ and other incentives harness taxation for investment and growth in the community, often times in areas that otherwise wouldn't be developed. During the discussion, questions arose about the transparency and tax payer obligations of TIRZ districts. This was another opportunity for me to discuss the TIRZ district's commitment to transparency and that its membership is comprised of Jersey Village residents and business owners. The discussion was lively, thoughtful and constructive. It was an excellent experience and another opportunity to promote our community and demonstrate the importance of local government in action, working for the tax payer.

Speaking of local government in action, March is going to be another busy month for City Council and Staff. In addition to the regular monthly meeting, we will conduct workshops that dig deep in to golf course club house renovations and flood mitigation projects. In keeping with spirit of transparency, the March meeting is slated to be broadcast live for those residents who want to dial in and watch City Council in action. I'm still debating on whether I'll open meetings with "*Live from Jersey Village, It's Monday Night!*" Stay tuned.

All the Best,

Justin Ray
Mayor
Jersey Village, Texas