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by order of Presidio County

In Van Horn, some locals begin to mobilize against planned pipeline

By ALLEGRA HOBBS
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VAN HORN — Dozens of community members gathered Thursday at the Van Horn Convention Center to learn more about a planned natural gas pipeline that would come within roughly a mile of city limits — a development some fear may endanger their community and negatively impact their quality of life.

ONEOK Inc.'s Saguaro Connector Pipeline would span 155 miles from the Waha Hub in Pecos County to the U.S.-Mexico border at Hudspeth County, where it would then transport natural gas under the Rio Grande for international export from Mexico. It would have the capacity to transport 2.834 billion standard cubic feet of natural gas per day.

The proposed pipeline's intrastate journey before crossing the border takes it through Reeves, Jeff Davis, Culberson and Hudspeth counties. Concerns about environmental impacts and the disruption of archeological sites — namely the Indian Hot Springs site — have already been raised by West Texans. But the pipeline's proximity to the town of Van Horn in Culberson County was a dominant topic of discussion at last week's meeting, where some locals were learning details of the project for the first time. Some shouted their objections during the meeting, wondering aloud why they'd been unaware of the project.

The meeting was hosted by activist groups including The Property Rights and Pipeline Center and Earthworks, who expounded on the potential negative impacts of such a project — harmful emissions, and even ruptures and explosions. Lawyers were on hand to explain landowners rights to those whose property is in the path of the pipeline — a situation in which the pipeline company is able to assert eminent domain. Yard signs and bumper stickers protesting the pipeline were laid out on a table for attendees to take home.

Van Horn native Cody Davis, Local Emergency Planning Committee chairman for the county, expressed concern about emergency preparedness in the small, fairly remote town. If all goes according to plan and the necessary permits are issued, ONEOK aims to begin construction next year, with plans for the pipeline to be fully operational in 2025. Davis is tasked with writing emergency plans for the county — a lengthy process he fears he will be unable to complete in time for the pipeline's construction.

"I have less than a year to write a plan that's going to involve peoples'

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Photo by Elvira Hermosillo / Foto por Elvira Hermosillo

Fifth graders Fernanda Ronquillo and Ivan Moreno help Glenda Morales prepare lumpia, or Filipino pork spring rolls.
READ MORE ON PAGE 4.
Estudiantes de quinto grado Fernanda Ronquillo y Ivan Moreno ayudan Glenda Morales a preparar lumpia, o rollos de primavera filipinos.
LEER MÁS EN LA PAGINA 4.

PISD updates district safety plan, creates mental health coordinator position

By SAM KARAS
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PRESIDIO — At last week's meeting, Presidio ISD Police Chief Joel Nuñez gave a presentation to the school board about the district's safety protocols, with a special emphasis on mental health. In the wake of a school gun violence epidemic, the state has put more stringent regulations in place — but Nuñez wanted the district to go above and beyond.

Nuñez began with a brief outline of the school's emergency management plan. Whenever there's a shakeup in school leadership, the document must be reviewed and new signatories added — this year, the district saw the resignation of the superintendent and the middle school principal as well as the reassignment of the high school principal.

The emergency management plan provides a blueprint for the district to follow in the wake of a wide range of emergencies — everything from bomb threats and chemical spills to bullying. Once the threat has been identified, the document provides easy-to-follow steps customized to Presidio ISD leadership and local coordinating agencies.

Citing safety concerns, Nuñez said that the document would not be available online, but would be available to any concerned parent or community member requesting it. "We're always trying to be transparent,"

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PISD actualiza el plan de seguridad del distrito, crea un puesto de coordinador de salud mental

Por SAM KARAS
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PRESIDIO — En la reunión de la semana pasada, el jefe de policía de Presidio ISD, Joel Nuñez, hizo una presentación a la junta escolar sobre los protocolos de seguridad del distrito, con especial énfasis en la salud mental. A raíz de una epidemia de violencia con armas de fuego en la escuela, el estado ha implementado regulaciones más estrictas, pero Núñez quería que el distrito fuera más allá.

Núñez comenzó con un breve resumen del plan de manejo de emergencias de la escuela. Cada vez que hay una reorganización en el liderazgo escolar, se debe revisar el documento y agregar nuevos signatarios; este año, el distrito vio la renuncia del superintendente y el director de la escuela intermedia, así como la reasignación del director de la escuela secundaria.

El plan de manejo de emergencias proporciona un plan para que el distrito lo siga después de una amplia gama de emergencias, desde amenazas de bomba y derrames químicos hasta acoso escolar. Una vez que se ha identificado la amenaza, el documento proporciona pasos fáciles de seguir

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Sheriff's department budgets for additional north county deputy

By SAM KARAS
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PRESIDIO COUNTY — At last week's meeting, the Presidio County Commissioners Court approved a slot in next year's budget for an additional deputy serving the northern half of the county. The position would round out the number of full-time Presidio County Sheriff's Office (PCSO) employees on patrol to seven, including County Sheriff Danny Dominguez.

Chief Deputy Joel Nuñez kicked off the discussion about the new deputy in March, when he asked the commissioners to use money already in the PCSO budget to temporarily create a deputy position through the end of the fiscal year. The commissioners approved his request, but needed to revisit the issue before the FY24 budget was completed.

In 2015, the commissioners court voted to add a deputy to the southern half of the county. The plan had always been to add an additional deputy up north, but that idea stalled after the Marfa Police Department — whose duties were covered by contract with the PCSO from 2007 to 2017 — was reestablished.

In March, Nuñez explained that the three deputies patrolling the southern half of the county were often called to help assist in Customs and Border Protection operations. "We have a lot of activity [on the border], it's increasing," Nuñez said. "We want someone to cover more of the normal duties of a deputy — citizen complaints, highway patrol, community

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El departamento del alguacil presupuesta para diputado adicional del norte del condado

Por SAM KARAS
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CONDADO DE PRESIDIO — En la reunión de la semana pasada, el Tribunal de Comisionados del Condado de Presidio aprobó un espacio en el presupuesto del próximo año para un diputado adicional que sirva a la mitad norte del condado. El puesto redondearía el número de empleados de tiempo completo de la Oficina del Sheriff del Condado de Presidio (PCSO) en patrulla a siete, incluido el Sheriff del Condado Danny Domínguez.

El diputado jefe Joel Núñez inició la discusión sobre el nuevo diputado en marzo, cuando pidió a los comisionados que usaran el dinero que ya estaba en el presupuesto de PCSO para crear temporalmente un puesto de diputado hasta el final del año fiscal. Los comisionados aprobaron su solicitud, pero necesitaban revisar el tema antes de que se completara el presupuesto del año fiscal 24.

En 2015, la corte de comisionados votó para agregar un diputado a la mitad sur del condado. El plan siempre había sido agregar un oficial adicional en el norte, pero esa idea se estancó después de que se restableció el Departamento de Policía de Marfa, cuyas funciones estaban cubiertas por un contrato con PCSO de 2007 a 2017.

En marzo, Núñez explicó que los tres diputados que patrullaban la

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En Van Horn, algunos lugareños comienzan a movilizarse contra el oleoducto planificado

Por ALLEGRA HOBBS
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VAN HORN — Docenas de miembros de la comunidad se reunieron el jueves en el Centro de Convenciones Van Horn para obtener más información sobre un gasoducto de gas natural planificado que llegaría aproximadamente a una milla de los límites de la ciudad, un desarrollo que algunos temen que pueda poner en peligro a su comunidad e impactar negativamente en su calidad de vida. .

El oleoducto Saguaro Connector de ONEOK Inc. abarcaría 155 millas desde el Waha Hub en el condado de Pecos hasta la frontera entre EE. UU. y México en el condado de Hudspeth, donde luego transportaría gas natural por debajo del río Bravo para la exportación internacional desde México. Tendría capacidad para transportar 2,834 millones de pies cúbicos estándar de gas natural por día.

El viaje intraestatal del oleoducto propuesto antes de cruzar la frontera lo lleva a través de los condados de Reeves, Jeff Davis, Culberson y Hudspeth. Los habitantes de West Texans ya han planteado preocupaciones sobre los impactos ambientales y la interrupción de los sitios arqueológicos, a saber, el sitio de Indian Hot Springs. Pero la proximidad del oleoducto a la ciudad de Van Horn en el condado de Culberson fue un tema dominante de discusión en la reunión de la semana pasada, donde algunos lugareños aprendieron detalles del proyecto por primera vez. Algunos gritaron sus objeciones durante la reunión, preguntándose en voz alta por qué no estaban al tanto del proyecto.

La reunión fue organizada por grupos activistas, incluidos The Property Rights and Pipeline Center y Earthworks, quienes expusieron los posibles impactos negativos de dicho proyecto: emisiones nocivas e incluso rupturas y explosiones. Los abogados estuvieron disponibles para explicar los derechos de los propietarios de tierras a aquellos cuya propiedad se encuentra en el camino del oleoducto, una situación en la que la compañía del oleoducto puede hacer valer el dominio eminente. Se colocaron sobre una mesa letreros en el patio y calcomanías en los parachoques que protestaban por el oleoducto para que los asistentes se los llevaran a casa.

Cody Davis, nativo de Van Horn, presidente del Comité Local de Planificación de Emergencias del condado, expresó su preocupación por la preparación para emergencias en la pequeña y bastante remota ciudad. Si todo sale según lo planeado y se emiten los permisos necesarios, ONEOK pretende comenzar la construcción el próximo año, con planes para que el oleoducto esté completamente operativo en 2025. Davis tiene la tarea de redactar planes de emergencia para el condado, un proceso largo que teme no podrá completarse a tiempo para la construcción del oleoducto.

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ENGLISH NEWS

PISD updates

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he said. "But we can't give the bad guys a play-by-play on how we do things."

Nuñez then announced that the district would be creating a position for a full-time, district-wide mental health coordinator funded by federal grant money. In the wake of numerous school shootings around the country, school safety experts — as well as the Texas Education Agency — had come to see offering mental health resources as a form of emergency prevention.

Instead of having campus-specific counselors who serve other roles in teaching and administration, this position would be solely dedicated to mental healthcare, lending students a sympathetic ear and connecting them with clinical resources if needed.

Most importantly, the district mental health coordinator would be able to watch out for red flags signaling destructive behavior — and to continue keeping tabs on individual students to make sure their needs are adequately addressed. "We need someone who can keep tabs on each child," Nuñez said.

The coordinator would also be available to serve teachers and staff members dealing with difficult situations and mental health crises. "Teachers have needs and need to talk to somebody sometimes," he said.

Nuñez explained that many districts are opting for online resources and programs, but felt that having someone available to students and staff in person would be indispensable. "I personally didn't think [having online-only resources] was acceptable," he said. "Presidio has always been ahead."

Ultimately, the goal was to be several steps ahead — rather than waiting for an emergency to happen. "If we take proactive measures on mental health, it could prevent a situation like Uvalde," Nuñez said.

School Board President Iris Galindo expressed her support, both for the program and for generating more conversations about mental health within the district. "It's great to encourage our students and staff to communicate if we see anything," she said.

Sheriff's department

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presence."

At last week's meeting, Nuñez doubled down on his observations about the strain placed on the department. He also explained that the north county deputies patrol a wider area than just Marfa — the more remote reaches of the county along Casa Piedra and Pinto Canyon roads. "If you do the math, two deputies providing 24/7 coverage to Marfa is pretty difficult," he said.

PCSO Secretary Shanna Elmore explained that there are two additional deputies patrolling the county through Operation Stonegarden, a federal grant program for law enforcement in local governments along the border. Those deputies can't help with the "normal duties" detailed by Nuñez. "Stonegarden duties are mostly to serve the border initiative and provide support to U.S. Border Patrol when needed," she said.

At last week's meeting, the commissioners voted to approve the PCSO's application for the next round of Operation Lone Star funding. Operation Lone Star functions like Operation Stonegarden on the state level, providing funding to law enforcement in border counties in Texas. If approved, $87,360 of state money would go toward deputy salaries.

The new north county deputy position — separate from the Operation Stonegarden and Operation Lone Star deputies — will be filled by a familiar face for many. PCSO Precinct 1 Constable Steven Marquez will serve as full-time deputy. Marquez resigned from his position as chief of the Marfa Police Department in March, but stated that he would still keep his post at the sheriff's office.

The county's assistant auditor, Alicia Sanchez, explained that because Marquez was already on the county's insurance payroll, the immediate impact to next year's budget would be around $54,000.

Planned pipeline

(Continued from page 1)

lives and property," he said.

"We've got a sheriff's department that's got six deputies and the sheriff," he said. "We don't have the capabilities, we don't have the resources — we just don't."

Davis said he plans to oppose the pipeline's construction near Van Horn. His cousin, Manuela Carrasco, said she would do everything within her power to oppose the project. She said she feared the adverse health effects of emissions — her husband has asthma, she said, and suffers from kidney disease.

"I'm worried about the effects of it, the possible effects of it," she said. "I'm not to the point where I'm going to be panicking, but at the same time, I don't need to tempt that as a fate. We don't need to play around."

A recent report from Inside Climate News and the Texas Tribune revealed that West Texas natural gas operators were releasing tons of excess emissions into the air amid the June heatwave.

In response to a request for comment regarding community concerns, ONEOK spokesperson Brad Borror stated that the company is "committed to the safe and reliable operation of our pipelines in the communities where we operate."

The company is currently awaiting approval from the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) to construct the border facilities necessary to transport the natural gas beneath the Rio Grande. That two-part permitting process — seeking FERC authorization and a "presidential permit" — applies only to the roughy 1,000 feet of pipeline that crosses the border.

Borror said that the FERC process "includes a forum for stakeholders to provide input," and that impacted landowners had been contacted by the company.

But most of the pipeline — all but the 1,000 feet under review by FERC — falls entirely within the state of Texas, thus falling under the jurisdiction of the Texas Railroad Commission. The intrastate portion of the pipeline does not require approval or permitting from the federal government.

Towards the end of the meeting, one attendee stood up and asked if they had a chance at opposing the pipeline's presence near their community. Lori Simmons, an organizer with the Property Rights and Pipeline Center, noted that upwards of 50 people were in the convention center that evening.

"Y'all are not a small group," she said. "This is a large group, and y'all are loud."



Staff photo by Allegra Hobbs / Foto por Allegra Hobbs

Community members gathered at the Van Horn Convention Center on Thursday evening for an informational meeting on the Saguaro Connector Pipeline, a planned natural gas pipeline that would come within roughly a mile of town.
Los miembros de la comunidad se reunieron en el Centro de Convenciones Van Horn el jueves por la noche para una reunión informativa sobre el gasoducto Saguaro Connector, un gasoducto planificado que llegaría a aproximadamente una milla de la ciudad.





NOTICIAS EN ESPAÑOL

PISD actualiza

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personalizados para el liderazgo del Distrito Escolar Independiente de Presidio y las agencias locales de coordinación.

Citando preocupaciones de seguridad, Núñez dijo que el documento no estaría disponible en línea, pero estaría disponible para cualquier padre o miembro de la comunidad que lo solicite. "Siempre estamos tratando de ser transparentes", dijo. "Pero no podemos darles a los malos un detalle de cómo hacemos las cosas".

Luego, Núñez anunció que el distrito crearía un puesto para un coordinador de salud mental de tiempo completo en todo el distrito financiado con dinero de una subvención federal. A raíz de los numerosos tiroteos en escuelas de todo el país, los expertos en seguridad escolar, así como la Agencia de Educación de Texas, se acercaron para ofrecer recursos de salud mental como una forma de prevención de emergencias.

En lugar de tener consejeros específicos del campus que desempeñen otras funciones en la enseñanza y la administración, este puesto se dedicaría exclusivamente a la atención de la salud mental, prestando atención a los estudiantes y conectándolos con recursos clínicos si es necesario.

Lo que es más importante, el coordinador de salud mental del distrito podría estar atento a las señales de alerta que indican un comportamiento destructivo y continuar controlando a los estudiantes individuales para asegurarse de que sus necesidades se aborden adecuadamente. "Necesitamos a alguien que pueda controlar a cada niño", dijo Núñez.

El coordinador también estaría disponible para servir a los maestros y miembros del personal que se enfrentan a situaciones difíciles y crisis de salud mental. "Los maestros tienen necesidades y necesitan hablar con alguien a veces", dijo.

Núñez explicó que muchos distritos están optando por recursos y programas en línea, pero consideró que sería indispensable tener a alguien disponible para los estudiantes y el personal en persona. "Personalmente, no pensé que [tener recursos solo en línea] fuera aceptable", dijo. "Presidio siempre ha estado por delante".

En última instancia, el objetivo era estar varios pasos por delante, en lugar de esperar a que sucediera una emergencia. "Si tomamos medidas proactivas en salud mental, se podría evitar una situación como la de Uvalde", dijo Núñez.

La presidenta de la Junta Escolar, Iris Galindo, expresó su apoyo, tanto para el programa como para generar más conversaciones sobre la salud mental dentro del distrito. "Es genial alentar a nuestros estudiantes y personal a comunicarse si vemos algo", dijo.

El departamento del alguacil

(Continuación de la página 1)

mitad sur del condado a menudo eran llamados para ayudar en las operaciones de Aduanas y Protección Fronteriza. "Tenemos mucha actividad [en la frontera], está aumentando", dijo Núñez. "Queremos que alguien cubra más de los deberes normales de un diputado: quejas de ciudadanos, patrulla de caminos, presencia comunitaria".

En la reunión de la semana pasada, Núñez duplicó sus observaciones sobre la presión ejercida sobre el departamento. También explicó que los diputados del norte del condado patrullan un área más amplia que solo Marfa: los tramos más remotos del condado a lo largo de las carreteras Casa Piedra y Pinto Canyon. "Si haces los cálculos, dos diputados que brindan cobertura las 24 horas, los 7 días de la semana a Marfa es bastante difícil", dijo.

La secretaria de PCSO, Shanna Elmore, explicó que hay dos diputados adicionales que patrullan el condado a través de la Operación Stonegarden, un programa de subvenciones federales para la aplicación de la ley en los gobiernos locales a lo largo de la frontera. Esos diputados no pueden ayudar con los "deberes normales" detallados por Núñez. "Los deberes de Stonegarden son principalmente para servir a la iniciativa fronteriza y brindar apoyo a la Patrulla Fronteriza de los EE. UU. cuando sea necesario", dijo.

En la reunión de la semana pasada, los comisionados votaron para aprobar la solicitud de PCSO para la próxima ronda de financiación de Operation Lone Star. La Operación Lone Star funciona como la Operación Stonegarden a nivel estatal, brindando fondos a las fuerzas del orden público en los condados fronterizos de Texas. Si se aprueba, $87,360 del dinero estatal se destinarían a los salarios de los diputados.

El nuevo puesto de diputado del norte del condado, separado de los diputados de Operation Stonegarden y Operation Lone Star, será ocupado por una cara familiar para muchos. El agente del precinto 1 de PCSO, Steven Márquez, se desempeñará como adjunto de tiempo completo. Márquez renunció a su puesto como jefe del Departamento de Policía de Marfa en marzo, pero afirmó que aún mantendría su puesto en la oficina del alguacil.

La auditora asistente del condado, Alicia Sánchez, explicó que debido a que Márquez ya estaba en la nómina de seguros del condado, el impacto inmediato en el presupuesto del próximo año sería de alrededor de $54,000.

El oleoducto planificado

(Continuación de la página 1)

"Tengo menos de un año para escribir un plan que involucre la vida y la propiedad de las personas", dijo.

"Tenemos un departamento del alguacil que tiene seis oficiales y el alguacil", dijo. "No tenemos las capacidades, no tenemos los recursos, simplemente no los tenemos".

Davis dijo que planea oponerse a la construcción del oleoducto cerca de Van Horn. Su prima, Manuela Carrasco, dijo que haría todo lo posible para oponerse al proyecto. Ella dijo que temía los efectos adversos para la salud de las emisiones: su esposo tiene asma, dijo, y sufre de una enfermedad renal.

"Me preocupan los efectos, los posibles efectos", dijo. "No estoy al punto de entrar en pánico, pero al mismo tiempo, no necesito tentar eso como un destino. No necesitamos jugar".

Un informe reciente de Inside Climate News y el Texas Tribune reveló que los operadores de gas natural del oeste de Texas estaban liberando toneladas de exceso de emisiones al aire en medio de la ola de calor de junio.

En respuesta a una solicitud de comentarios sobre las preocupaciones de la comunidad, el portavoz de ONEOK, Brad Borror, declaró que la compañía está "comprometida con la operación segura y confiable de nuestros oleoductos en las comunidades donde operamos".

Actualmente, la compañía está esperando la aprobación de la Comisión Federal Reguladora de Energía (FERC) para construir las instalaciones fronterizas necesarias para transportar el gas natural debajo del Río Bravo. Ese proceso de permisos de dos partes, que busca la autorización de la FERC y un "permiso presidencial", se aplica solo a los aproximadamente 1,000 pies de tubería que cruza la frontera.

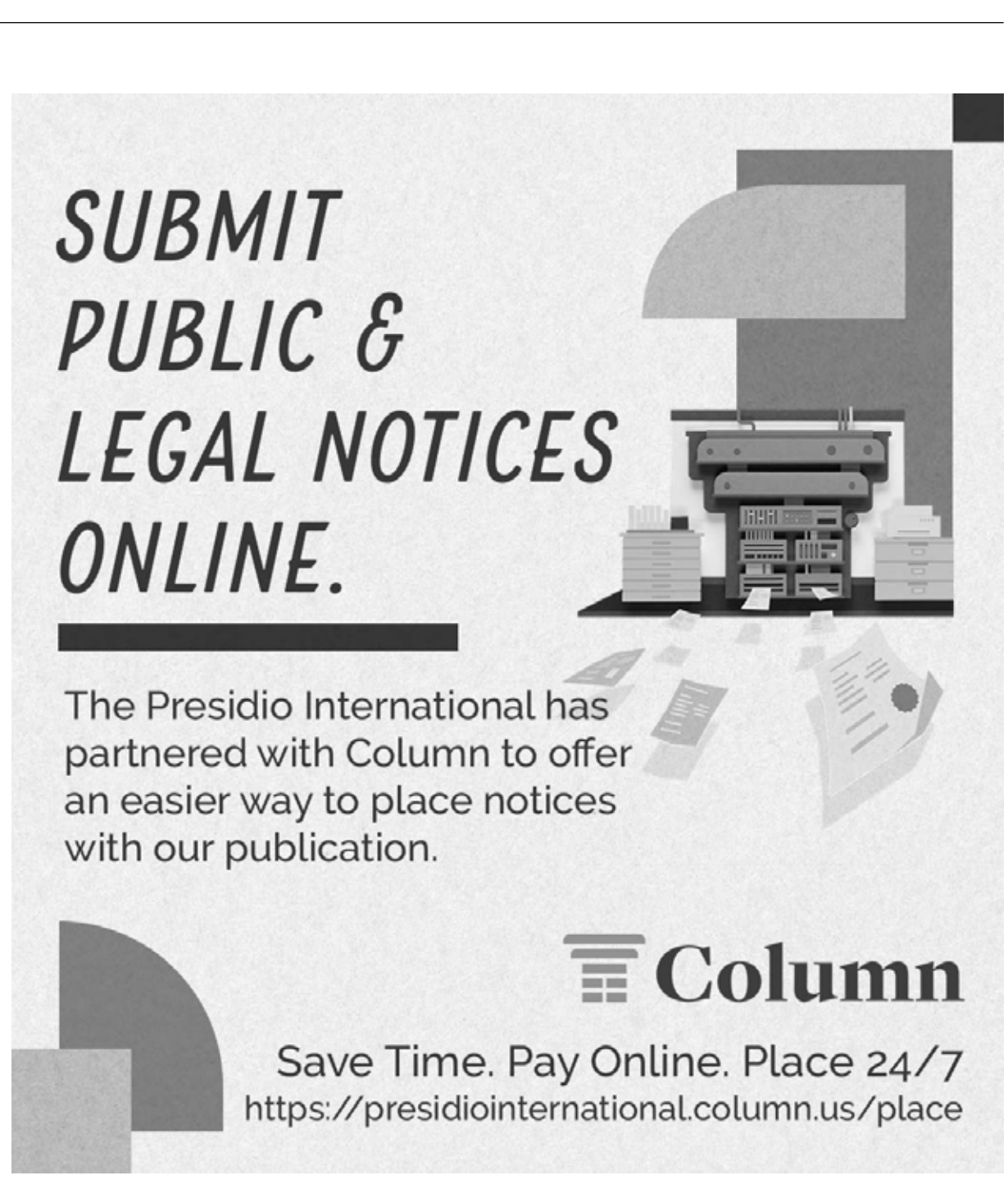
Borror dijo que el proceso de la FERC "incluye un foro para que las partes interesadas proporcionen información", y que la empresa se había puesto en contacto con los propietarios afectados.

Pero la mayor parte del oleoducto, todos menos los 1,000 pies bajo revisión de la FERC, se encuentran completamente dentro del estado de Texas, por lo que se encuentran bajo la jurisdicción de la Comisión de Ferrocarriles de Texas. La porción intraestatal de la tubería no requiere aprobación o permiso del gobierno federal.

Hacia el final de la reunión, un asistente se puso de pie y preguntó si tenían la oportunidad de oponerse a la presencia del oleoducto cerca de su comunidad. Lori Simmons, organizadora del Property Rights and Pipeline Center, señaló que más de 50 personas estaban en el centro de convenciones esa noche.

"Ustedes no son un grupo pequeño", dijo. "Este es un grupo grande, y todos ustedes son ruidosos".







POR FAVOR RECICLA
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Presidio Elementary Flex Farm students get a taste of the Philippines

By SAM KARAS
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PRESIDIO — Earlier this month, Presidio Elementary School students taking summer classes in cooking and hydroponic gardening joined forces to prepare traditional Filipino dishes. Along the way, they practiced sustainable gardening practices, tried new foods and learned about the culture of their friends and neighbors from the Philippines.

Presidio Elementary's summer school kids have been experimenting with a hydroponic gardening unit referred to as the Flex Farm, installed at the school last summer. The Flex Farm is a vertical pod that allows plants to grow without soil — a major advantage in a place like Presidio, where the soil is shallow and rocky.

The Flex Farm — built by Fork Farms and funded by Amerigroup — is used throughout the school year by Johnery Estolloso's fifth grade students. The kids typically grow varieties of leafy greens — at this year's municipal Fourth of July bash, the community got to sample the Flex Farm's bright, crunchy lettuce.

During the summer, kids of all ages get to experiment with the unit. During this year's summer school, Ruby Hermosillo's enrichment students got to plant the seeds and other campers helped track their progress.

This year, the summer school staff wanted to try something new. Big Bend Conservation Alliance (BBCA) community liaison Elvira Hermosillo approached Glenda Morales, a Presidio Elementary School teacher leading a culinary enrichment program at summer school.

Morales — like a growing number of Presidio ISD staff and students — is from the Philippines. Hermosillo and Morales hatched a plan: why not use the Flex Farm to help introduce Presidio kids to traditional Filipino cooking?

They decided to grow bok choy, a type of cabbage commonly used in East Asian cooking. When the cabbage was ready to harvest, Morales and her students put their heads together to design a menu featuring the vegetable — which most of the students had never tried before.

Morales kicked off the class by making lumpia, or spring rolls. The students chopped up the bok choy and mixed it with seasoned pork before frying the rolls to create the perfect crispy snack.

The next day, the kids added bok choy to a traditional Filipino soup called Sinigang na Baboy, which also includes okra, radishes and a special variety of eggplant. They also got to sample japchae, a Korean stir-fried noodle dish.

Hermosillo said that the students enjoyed trying new foods — the lumpia were a big hit. "Some students were hesitant to try the new dishes, but they all came around and tried a little bit of everything," she said.

The experience was very meaningful to Morales, who moved to the United States in 2006. It's a long and expensive trip to go home, so her family typically makes do with occasional trips to El Paso for specialty groceries and a meal at Halo Halo, a Filipino restaurant.

She enjoyed getting to share some of the flavors of her home country with her students. "Many of them have never been out of Presidio, so it's a good opportunity for them to try another cuisine," she said.

Morales hoped that the cross-cultural program with the Flex Farm would continue to grow next year. For her, it was symbolic of the strong friendship between lifelong Presidians and their Filipino neighbors. "We are so blessed to have this community that is so welcoming to us," she said.

Los estudiantes de Presidio Elementary Flex Farm prueban Filipinas

Por SAM KARAS
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PRESIDIO — A principios de este mes, los estudiantes de la Escuela Primaria Presidio que tomaban clases de verano de cocina y jardinería hidropónica se unieron para preparar platos tradicionales filipinos. En el camino, practicaron prácticas de jardinería sostenible, probaron nuevos alimentos y aprendieron sobre la cultura de sus amigos y vecinos de Filipinas.

Los niños de la escuela de verano de Presidio Elementary han estado experimentando con una unidad de jardinería hidropónica conocida como Flex Farm, instalada en la escuela el verano pasado. Flex Farm es una cápsula vertical que permite que las plantas crezcan sin tierra, una gran ventaja en un lugar como Presidio, donde la tierra es poco profunda y rocosa.

Flex Farm, construida por Fork Farms y financiada por Amerigroup, es utilizada durante todo el año escolar por los estudiantes de quinto grado de Johnery Estolloso. Los niños suelen cultivar variedades de verduras de hoja verde: en la fiesta municipal del 4 de julio de este año, la comunidad pudo probar la lechuga brillante y crujiente de Flex Farm.

Durante el verano, los niños de todas las edades pueden experimentar con la unidad. Durante la escuela de verano de este año, los estudiantes de enriquecimiento de Ruby Hermosillo pudieron plantar las semillas y otros campistas ayudaron a seguir su progreso.

Este año, el personal de la escuela de verano quería probar algo nuevo. El enlace comunitario de Big Bend Conservation Alliance (BBCA), Elvira Hermosillo, se acercó a Glenda Morales, una maestra de la Escuela Primaria Presidio que dirige un programa de enriquecimiento culinario en la escuela de verano.

Morales, como un número cada vez mayor de personal y estudiantes de Presidio ISD, es de Filipinas. Hermosillo y Morales tramaron un plan: ¿por qué no usar Flex Farm para ayudar a introducir a los niños de Presidio a la cocina tradicional filipina?

Decidieron cultivar bok choy, un tipo de repollo que se usa comúnmente en la cocina de Asia oriental. Cuando el repollo estuvo listo para cosechar, Morales y sus alumnos se unieron para diseñar un menú que incluyera la verdura, que la mayoría de los alumnos nunca antes había probado.

Morales inició la clase haciendo lumpia o rollitos de primavera. Los estudiantes cortaron el bok choy y lo mezclaron con carne de cerdo sazonada antes de freír los rollos para crear la merienda crujiente perfecta.

Al día siguiente, los niños agregaron bok choy a una sopa filipina tradicional llamada Sinigang na Baboy, que también incluye okra, rábanos y una variedad especial de berenjena. También pudieron probar el japchae, un plato coreano de fideos salteados.

Hermosillo dijo que los estudiantes disfrutaron probando nuevos alimentos: los lumpia fueron un gran éxito. "Algunos estudiantes dudaron en probar los nuevos platos, pero todos se acercaron y probaron un poco de todo", dijo.

La experiencia fue muy significativa para Morales, quien se mudó a los Estados Unidos en 2006. Es un viaje largo y costoso para volver a casa, por lo que su familia generalmente se las arregla con viajes ocasionales a El Paso para comprar alimentos especiales y una comida en Halo Halo, un restaurante filipino.

Disfrutó poder compartir algunos de los sabores de su país de origen con sus alumnos. "Muchos de ellos nunca han salido de Presidio, por lo que es una buena oportunidad para que prueben otra cocina", dijo.

Morales esperaba que el programa intercultural con Flex Farm continuara creciendo el próximo año. Para ella, era un símbolo de la fuerte amistad entre los presidentes de toda la vida y sus vecinos filipinos. "Somos muy bendecidos de tener esta comunidad que nos da la bienvenida", dijo.

OP-ED

Delivering historic tax relief for West Texans

By SENATOR CÉSAR J. BLANCO

With a much-anticipated sigh of relief for homeowners and businesses across the Lone Star State, the Texas Legislature has passed a historic $18 billion property tax relief package and hardworking families across Texas will finally see the property tax relief they need.

For many hardworking families, owning a home is part of the American Dream, but skyrocketing property taxes and valuations in Texas have made that dream seem out of reach. It's no surprise that local property taxes in West Texas have become the number one complaint among working families and homeowners. Too often across our district, I've heard stories about how high property taxes have pushed families out of their homes and left them to make impossible financial decisions.

West Texans are resilient. But the burden of property taxes is too heavy.

Recognizing the dire urgency of this issue, along with Texas' historic budget surplus, I entered the legislative session with a firm determination to deliver much-needed economic relief to our working families and communities. After one regular session, two special sessions, and months of negotiation, I am proud to have co-authored and helped pass this Texas-sized, historic tax relief package to provide real economic relief to homeowners, renters and small businesses.

This legislation includes the largest property tax cut in the history of Texas, promising real relief in the wallets of homeowners and working families. On average, homeowners can expect to see over $1,300 in savings. This bill achieves this by raising the homestead exemption from $40,000 to $100,000 for homeowners and $110,000 for those over 65 or disabled. Additionally, this package allocates $12 billion to buy-down local school property taxes for all property owners, whether residential or commercial. In Senate District 29, from El Paso to the Big Bend and Permian Basin regions, 60,000 homeowners could pay zero dollars in school property taxes with the new $100k homestead exemption alone. That is real relief that can mean the difference between paying for utilities, groceries, medicine and other living necessities!

Small businesses will also reap tremendous benefits from this legislation. With $12 billion dedicated to cutting local school property tax rates by 10.7 pennies, the state will fill in gaps to make local school districts whole, while also providing much-needed property tax relief for small businesses. In addition to the property tax relief, we also doubled the franchise tax exemption, relieving over 67,000 small businesses in our communities from the burden of the state's franchise tax. Furthermore, the bill eliminates the requirement for taxable entities that do not owe any franchise taxes to file a No-Tax-Due franchise tax return. This streamlines the process, saving businesses valuable time and money associated with this unnecessary tax. Non-residential property owners will also benefit from a 20% appraisal cap on properties valued under $5 million. These measures demonstrate our commitment to nurturing the growth of small businesses, which are essential to local job creation and a strong economy.

While voters ultimately have the final say this November as to whether this tax relief plan will be put into place, passage of this long overdue relief is a major victory for homeowners, renters, and small businesses across Texas! This means money back in the pockets of millions of hardworking families to help relieve their economic strain and address food insecurity, strengthen our small business community, and ultimately build stronger and brighter futures for all our families and communities.

Senator César J. Blanco proudly represents the people of Culberson, El Paso, Hudspeth, Jeff Davis and Presidio counties in the Texas Senate.

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THE CITY OF PRESIDIO IS ACCEPTING APPLICATIONS FOR THE POSITION OF TWO UTILITY WORKERS WITH THE PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT. THIS IS A FULL TIME, PERMANENT POSITION. THIS POSITION WORKS UNDER THE GENERAL SUPERVISION OF THE PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR. A UTILITY WORKER PERFORMS VARIOUS WORK ASSIGNMENTS IN THE DEPARTMENT.

CANDIDATES MUST HAVE THE FOLLOWING MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS:

- MUST BE A U.S. CITIZEN
- MUST BE AT LEAST 18 YEARS OF AGE
- VALID COMMERCIAL DRIVER LICENSE WITH A PROVEN GOOD DRIVING RECORD
- MUST HAVE A HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA OR EQUIVALENT

APPLICATION AND COMPLETE JOB DESCRIPTION AVAILABLE AT CITY HALL. A CITY OF PRESIDIO EMPLOYMENT APPLICATION IS REQUIRED TO BE CONSIDERED FOR THE POSITION. THE CITY OF PRESIDIO IS AN AFFIRMATIVE ACTION/EQUAL OPPORTUNTITY EMPLOYER.

Please submit your application to the address below:

City of Presidio
City Secretary
P.O. Box 1899
Presidio, TX 79845

Physical Address: 507 W. O'Reilly St., Presidio, Texas

THE CITY OF PRESIDIO IS AN AFFIRMATIVE ACTION/EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER.
THIS POSITION IS OPEN UNTIL FILLED

City of Presidio has recently received a USDA Grant award for Community Paramedic Grant Scheduler/Coordinator position. Accordingly, the City of Presidio is seeking a qualified Community Paramedic Grant Scheduler/Coordinator and this is a Part-time position with 20 hours a week at a $15.00 rate with no benefits

Please submit your application and a statement of qualifications for the proposed services to the address below:

City of Presidio
City Secretary
P.O. Box 1899
Presidio, TX 79845

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Applications shall be received by the City of Presidio no later than 3:00 p.m. on July 31, 2023. City of Presidio reserves the right to negotiate with any and all individuals or firms that submit applications, as per the Texas Professional Services Procurement Act and the Uniform Grant and Contract Management Standards. Section 3 Residents and Business Concerns, Minority Business Enterprises, Small Business Enterprises and Women Business Enterprises are encouraged to submit proposals.

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PRESIDIO SPORTS CALENDAR

2023 SUMMER OPEN GYM SCHEDULE/HOURS

6/1/23 - 7/27/23

1:00PM - 3:00PM - GIRLS VOLLEYBALL
3:00PM - 5:00PM - GIRLS BASKETBALL
3:00PM - 4:30PM - BOYS BASKETBALL

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