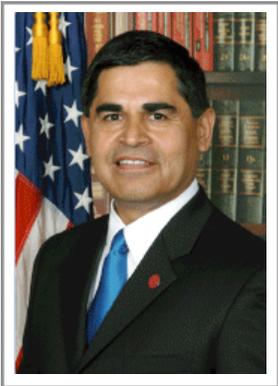


# Converse

A Quarterly Newsletter

Issue No. 1 - May 2011



Citizens of Converse, Welcome to the first edition of the Converse Newsletter. One of the city council's first priorities in 2011 was to improve communication between city government and the citizens of Converse. We are attempting to seek new ways to communicate with all the citizens of Converse. The Converse Newsletter and "Mayor's Desk" will provide you with an opportunity to discuss issues, answer questions and share information with the residents of Converse on a larger scale throughout the entire city. The Converse Newsletter is a proactive approach by the city council to keep citizens informed first hand in order to maintain total transparency. Some of the highlights this quarter included the hiring of a new city Auditor (Armstrong Vaughn & Associates) by the city council. After 15 years with the same city Auditor, a recent audit by Armstrong Vaughn & Associates revealed the need for updated financial software technology to provide detail and real time budgetary data. Another council initiative was the completion of the compensation study (by Werling & Associates) commissioned by the city council to evaluate the pay for all city employees. A strategic plan process was established by the city council and facilitated by Mr. Dan Norris to develop a 5 & 10-year visionary plan and modify the city master plan accordingly. The city council voted unanimously to address the future commercial & residential water needs of Converse by joining the newly formed Cibolo Valley Local Government Water Corporation. In February, after evaluating more than 70 applicants the city council voted unanimously to hire Ms. Shawna Dowell as the first female city manager of Converse. In March, for the first time in many years Toepperwein Road finally received a new coat of asphalt. The city of Converse celebrated its 50th Anniversary of incorporation on April 9th. Additionally, the New Converse Digital Marquee is projected to be installed in late May to early June. Finally, on May 27th the City of Converse will unveil its new official website. We hope that the Converse Newsletter will provide our citizens with an alternative news source. If you have any concerns, questions, or suggestions please call me at 210-787-7295 or email me at mayorsuarez@conversetx.net. Looking forward to hearing from you very soon!

Best Regards,  
Mayor Al Suarez

## Election Results (unofficial)

### Mayor

- 543 Al Suarez
- 513 John Lindgren

### Place 1

- 511 Kathy Richel
- 486 Renee Paschall

### Place 3

- 516 Andy Selko
- 510 John Shadron

### Place 5

- 508 Laura Beehler
- 498 Deborah James

Swearing in will take place on May 24th inside Council Chambers located at 402 S. Seguin Rd. at 7:00 pm. All are invited to attend. Our congratulations goes out to the three new members joining council, and our sincere thanks to those now leaving.

## Streets - 659-9513

Streets had two people licensed in Right of Way Pest control and will start spraying herbicide to maintain the curbs and streets grass encroachment. The Ave. B street reconstruction will begin on or about June 1<sup>st</sup> and has a target finish date of August 31<sup>st</sup>. This will be done in two phases, Phase 1 will be from Mesquite St. to Station St. and Phase 2 will be from Station St. to S. Seguin. This project is weather dependent and may possibly take longer if inclement weather sets in. Our normal street and sign repair will continue as needed. We thank all Converse residents for their patience and cooperation while we are out working in traffic.

## Parks - 659-9513

The Converse City swimming pool opens up Memorial Day weekend and regular season starts on June 4<sup>th</sup>, 2011. Hours of operation are Tuesday thru Sunday 1 pm until 8 pm. Daily rate is \$2.00, ages 2 and under are free. Reservations for pool parties may be made by calling 658-1965 for details.

The newly constructed bathroom facilities at North Park are set to open soon and a footbridge connecting to the pavilion has also been completed. More park improvements are being planned in the upcoming months.

## Grounds - 659-9513

We will continue to pick up brush following the Zone Pickup Schedule. If you need an out of zone brush pickup these will be done for a charge of \$50 that will be added to your water bill. You can schedule an out of zone pickup by calling Water Billing at 658-1965.

## Storm Water - 658-3453

The City of Converse Storm Water Department is now in its fourth year. Over the last year we have marked all of the existing storm water inlets within the city with storm drain markers that say NO DUMPING, DRAINS TO CREEK. In addition, we have mapped out and marked the outfalls and inlets for the storm water system and conducted inspections to see what repairs are needed to ensure good water flow. There are education flyers in all City buildings for your benefit to help the environment. If you see illegal dumping please call the Converse Police Department at 658-2322. Your help is needed. For more information please check out the City's web site or call 658-3453 for the Storm Water Department. Remember that it is illegal to dump trash or debris over your fence.

## Water Billing - 658-1965

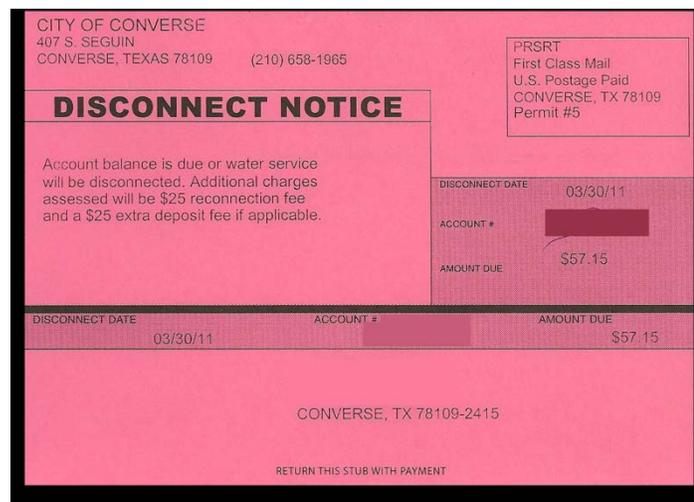
If you have any questions regarding your water bill or need to pay your bill, you can do it online, in person, over the phone or at the night drop in front of the building. We now send out Delinquent notices in addition to your water bill. These will be your last chance to pay your bill before your water is turned off for non-payment. They will be a different color from your normal water bill and you will have ten (10) days to make payment before water is turned off and you will be charged a \$25.00 reconnect fee. All accounts must be at a zero balance each month.

## Utilities - 658-3453

The Public Works Utilities department is located at 9239 Converse Business Lane. This department is responsible for repairing water and sewer main breaks. As a reminder, the City of Converse goes into Stage I water restrictions when the J17 well reaches 670, Stage II when the J17 reaches 660, Stage III is when the J17 reaches 650, and Stage IV is when the J17 well reaches 640. Notices will again be mailed out and also included on the bottom of the water bills. We are currently under Stage II water restrictions and getting ready to go into Stage III. Please remember that you are only allowed to water between the hours of 8:00 PM and 10:00 AM. There is no watering **EVER** allowed between 10:00 AM and 8:00 PM.

**Starting May 27th  
please be sure to subscribe to the  
newsletter online at  
[www.conversetx.net](http://www.conversetx.net)**

**You will receive each new issue (in  
color) automatically in your email  
and help the City save paper.  
Thank you!**



## A Moment with the Manager

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the citizens of Converse, City staff and our elected officials for providing me with a warm welcome as I begin my service with the City of Converse. It is my desire to facilitate a customer service oriented approach to providing city services to our residents. Please feel free to come by City Hall to visit with me or city staff on any concerns, questions or ideas for improving our community.

Please be advised that the City of Converse is presently in drought restrictions. Please monitor the City marquee, the Northeast Herald newspaper and our City website ([www.conversetx.net](http://www.conversetx.net)) for stage restriction updates. As the City enters each stage of water restrictions, it will mail notifications to every water account customer. Please note that each stage is progressively more expensive and restrictive of outdoor water usage (i.e. irrigation systems/sprinkling, watering of yards and filling of swimming pools, etc.).

Stage restrictions are not imposed to generate additional funds for the City's Utility Department. Stage restrictions are imposed to generate funds to purchase additional water rights. Please note that an acre foot of water is equal to 325,851 gallons of water at the cost of \$6,000 per acre foot. If the City pumps more than its allotment (2,550 acre feet per year), each water customer will be affected due to fines assessed by the Edwards Aquifer Authority to the City for over pumping. Your diligent conservation of water is of the utmost importance. The City of Converse's primary concern is to provide sufficient water to residents and businesses to support primary health and safety needs of all citizens.

### CITY OF CONVERSE

**STAGE II RESTRICTIONS ARE IN EFFECT AS OF  
APRIL 25, 2011**

**AS OF MAY 23, 2011, CONVERSE IS 3.5 FEET FROM  
ENTERING STAGE III RESTRICTIONS**

For a full calendar including meetings and public events please visit us on the web at [www.conversetx.net](http://www.conversetx.net).

## OUR NEW WEBSITE LAUNCHES

MAY 27TH!

### City Council

Meets the 1st and 3rd Tuesday of the month

7pm 402 S. Seguin

There is a time provided for citizens to speak at every meeting.

### Buildings and Standards\*

Meets as needed

### EDC\*

Meets the 2nd Tuesday of the month

6:30pm

### Parks & Rec.\*

Meets the 2nd Monday of the month

6:30pm

### Planning & Zoning\*

Meets the 3rd Monday of the month

6:30pm

### Meet the Mayor\*

2nd & 4th Saturdays 8 - 10am

\* Meet in City Hall Conference Rm. located at 405 S. Seguin Rd.

## Fire Department

The Converse Fire Department would like to remind everyone to use caution when using any type of open flame device while outdoors. With the current drought conditions, even a moment's inattention can allow a fire to quickly spread. Also a reminder that it is illegal to burn brush or trash inside the city limits of Converse, We want everyone to enjoy their outdoor activities without experiencing the devastating effects of a fire. Please contact us at (210) 658-8900 for further information



Fire Station #2

## Library

The Converse Public Library welcomes a new Library Director! Robert Ayala, a graduate of the University of North Texas *College of Information*, comes to us most recently from the San Antonio Public Library. A native of South Texas, Robert received his Bachelor of Music from Trinity University (1988) and his Master of Music from The Ohio State University (1992) before getting his Master of Library & Information Science in 2010. He brings with him 13 years of management experience and a strong dedication to 21<sup>st</sup> century library values. Robert's wife, Kim, is a third grade teacher at Green Valley Elementary in Schertz and they have two boys, Benjamin and Sebastian.

Robert, Dawn (Library Assistant), Erica (Library Assistant) and our library volunteers are preparing this summer's reading program; *Dig Up a Good Book!: Texas Reading Club 2011*, organized by the Texas State Library & Archives Commission.

*Dig Up a Good Book* Summer Reading begins June 6<sup>th</sup> and runs through August 5<sup>th</sup>. Children and kids can begin registering for the Reading Logs beginning May 30. **Read books, submit reading logs, and receive a Certificate of Recognition and select a free paperback book!** In addition to the reading log program we are also providing special activities for children and kids every Tuesday – Thursday, with a special performance event one Friday a month beginning June 10. **Look for our new library website the beginning of June!**

**Date:!** June 6 through August 5  
**Activities every Tues. – Thurs., & Select Fridays (beginning June 10)**

<b>Time:!</b>	<b>Tues.!</b>	<b>10:30 am!</b>	<b>Kids Activity</b>
<b>!</b>	<b>Wed.!</b>	<b>10:30 am!</b>	<b>Toddler Storytime</b>
<b>!</b>	<b>Thurs.!!</b>	<b>2:30 pm!</b>	<b>Kids Activity (alternate time)</b>
	<b>First Friday Fun!</b>	<b>2:30 pm!</b>	<b>Special Performance for everyone (Movies, Music, Plays)</b>



## Building Department

The Converse Building Department (CBD) would like to remind all residents that construction/renovation permits are required for most home improvements including but not limited to: Swimming pools (above ground included), re- roofs, enclosing garages, installation of siding and fences, plumbing and electrical repairs such as replacing water heaters, water softeners or heating ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) units. CBD will conduct inspections to ensure compliance with our building codes which are a measure of protection to ensure that and sound construction practices are the standard for Converse. We recommend that you secure quotes from at least three contractors before signing an agreement, secure at least a one year warranty and **never provide funds prior to the completion and final acceptance of the work.** You may contact the CBD to ensure your contractor is licensed and eligible to obtain permits within the City of Converse. Permits must be posted on the job site and visible from the street. Please contact the CBD for questions or to obtain a current list of contractors that are licensed to work in Converse. If you are concerned about construction activities in you neighborhood and do not see a permit posted, please call CBD. Please be mindful that our offices are closed from 12 noon - 1PM for lunch, Monday thru Friday.



# Council Corner

*Council Corner is a rotating column amongst the members of City Council. It gives the opportunity for Council members to reach out in the written word directly to the residents. Contact information for this quarter's member is listed at the bottom.*

My first year as a Councilman has come to a close, you may ask, what have you accomplished? I have kept my campaign promise by staying who I am as a person. I have reached out to citizens by meeting you on your turf and not just asking you to come to me. I have learned so much the past year and have solidified my belief that the citizens of Converse are well versed in what you want from your leaders, that being honesty, integrity, and most of all communication with your elected officials. I have also done my best to earn the trust of the city staff, the backbone of Converse. Without them the city would not function. Much emphasis is put on the City Council but we must give credit where credit is due. The water Department responding to leaks at all hours of the day and night, the Police officers protecting us all 24 hours a day, and no crime goes without a thorough investigation, the Fire Department that attracts EMS personnel from all over the metro-com due to it's talented personnel and a busy variety of emergency responses. The one thing I would like to see, is more of our citizens attend the Bi-monthly City Council meetings, they are held the 1st and 3rd Tuesday of every month. It's a true opportunity for you, the City Council's bosses, to let us know how we can make Converse a better place for you and your family. This is your home as well as mine, help me and the rest of the City Council make it a better place for us all to live. I care about you and this great city, lets keep moving forward together. Thank you Converse and thank you City Staff!!!

Steve Brown  
Converse City Councilman, Pl. 6  
Email: council6@conversetx.net

## Police Department - 658-2322

It's almost that time of year again, Summer, and that means more kids outside playing; make sure you watch your speed in the residential areas, it's only 20 mph.

It's true that anyone can become a victim of crime, but there are some very basic things that you can do to deter criminals from choosing you and you becoming a statistic. With summer time, that means more people are out of their homes on vacation; help make your neighborhood a more secure area. Get to know your neighbors and watch out for each other, pay attention to what is going on in and around your area. Call to report suspicious activity, even if the situation seems insignificant to you at the time. Consider starting a Neighborhood Watch Program by contacting your Home Owners Association or calling the Converse Police Department. Please help us to make our city a safe place for everyone.

## Economic Development Corporation - 659-9163

On February 25, 2010, the new Converse EDC Board and staff greeted members of the business community at an Open House Business Breakfast. Plans are underway to offer this event as a quarterly business luncheon. Converse EDC has hired a new Executive Director, Kate Silvas, who comes to Converse after spending four and half years as the Assistant Director for Economic Development for the City of Seguin Economic Development Corporation. Ms. Silvas was part of the team effort that recruited Caterpillar's Engine Assembly, Test and Paint Facility to Seguin, a job creation project that created 1,465 jobs and was the second largest job creation project in the State of Texas in the 2008 biennium. Converse EDC also has a new Executive Secretary, Michelle Burns. Ms. Burns was formerly the Executive Director of the Littlefield Economic Development Corporation where she worked on retention and expansion of existing businesses. The EDC Board meets the second Tuesday of each month at the City Hall Conference Room at 6:30 p.m.

# City Contact Information

*The City of Converse operating hours are Mon. - Fri. 8:00am to 5:00pm*

Parks  
659-9513

Economic Development  
Corporation  
659-9163

Building  
658-8285

Water  
658-1965

Library  
659-4160

Fire  
658-8900

Grounds  
659-9513

Streets  
659-9513

Police  
658-2322

Utilities  
658-3453

Storm Water  
658-3453

City Hall  
658-5356

C I T Y C O U N C I L



**FRONT ROW:** Councilman Grant Lopez, Mayor Al Suarez, Mayor Pro-Tem John Shadron

**BACK ROW:** Councilman Steve Brown, Councilwoman Renee Paschal Councilwoman Robin Benbrook, Councilman Randy Pannell