



Sparklight extends COVID-19 relief efforts

Special to Long Beach Breeze

Sparklight recently announced it is extending many of its relief measures that were set to expire on June 30, 2020. The measures will continue through the end of the year in order to support customers and communities in need during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Through December 31, 2020, the company will continue to offer its 15 Mbps residential internet plan for \$10 per month for the first three months of service, in order to help low income families and those most impacted from coronavirus challenges, such as seniors and college students.

Sparklight is also extending access to free public WiFi hotspots across its footprint through the end of the year in order to keep individuals and communities connected during the crisis.

Other actions being taken by the company include working with residential and small business internet and phone customers who have been harmed financially by the COVID-19

pandemic to keep them connected, including waiving late fees through July 31, 2020, and offering flexible payment plans. Also, the company will permanently boost the majority of their residential internet data plans by an additional 50 to 300 GB for free (based on plan) as of July 1, 2020.

In addition, Sparklight is partnering with communities, hospitals, medical centers and other essential institutions in addressing their unique broadband connection

needs and challenges.

"As effects from the COVID-19 pandemic continue to impact our customers and communities, a fast and reliable internet connection is essential for staying in touch with family, friends, school and work," said Julie Laulis, President and CEO. "We remain steadfast in standing by our company promise of keeping our customers and communities connected to what matters most during these difficult times."

For more information, call 877-692-2253.



Board of Aldermen announce drainage grant, \$4M from Legislature

By Lindy Sholes

The Long Beach Board of Aldermen met on June 16, and again on July 7.

At the June 16 meeting, the Board considered a request from the Gulf Coast Heritage Rose Society to hold its First Annual Heritage Rose Festival at the Town Green on September 19, from 9 a.m. until 4 p.m. Based on the letter submitted to the Board, the mission of the Society is to educate the public on antique roses, and the event is expected to include horticultural vendors, concession, music, crafts and gardening lectures. The festival will be free and open to the public, and visitors will learn about the characteristics, history, and cultivation of the roses. The aim of the event will be to encourage the cultivation of these roses in private residents as well as public locations. As of now, Beauvoir is the only place that has a heritage rose garden on the Coast.

Also during the meeting, it was noted that the City received a grant to take care of drainage in Old Savannah and Red Gate within eighteen to twenty-four months. It was noted that flooding wasn't as bad in recent storms as it has been in the past.

A public hearing will be held at the

regular meeting on August 18 to approve the budget for 2021.

The City is looking at purchasing three seven hundred dollar ozone machines to sanitize buildings and vehicles. Ozone machines can help ensure citizens coming to use City properties that every step to ensure cleanliness and health has been taken.

At the July 7 meeting, the Board approved a request to waive fees for the Kiwanis Club of Long Beach, along with other Kiwanis Clubs in Harrison County, to use the Long Beach Community Center for a pancake breakfast and pizza lunch in appreciation for Harrison County healthcare workers, first responders and grocery workers. The event will be Saturday, September 19, from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

The Long Beach School District budget for the 2020-2021 fiscal year was approved at \$6,176,062.65. Last year's budget was \$6,088,770.

There was discussion of making masks mandatory for businesses in Long Beach, but no action was taken.

The Mayor announced that Representative Richard Bennett secured \$2 million for downtown revitalization and \$2 million in funding for the Quarles House renovation.

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