

Mayor Robert N. Pinkerton Jr.
 Mayor Pro Tem Rick Wells
 Alderman James "Joe Buck" Camp
 Alderman Rick Ridolfi
 Alderman Kirk Mills
 Alderman Fred Mallett



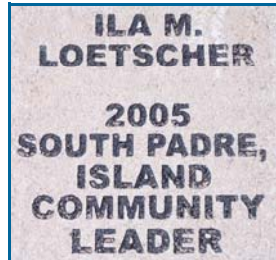
Town Meetings

- April 25: Beach & Dune Task Force Meeting, 3:00 p.m. at the Visitors Center
- April 28: Development Plan Review Board, 3:30 p.m. at Public Works Conference Room
- May 3: Board of Adjustments & Appeals, 9:00a.m. at SPI City Hall
- May 4: Regular Board of Aldermen Meeting, 5:30 p.m. at Club Padre
- May 9: Beach & Dune Task Force, 3:00p.m., at the Visitors Center
- May 10: Special Events Committee, 10:00a.m. at the Visitor's Center
- May 11: Convention & Visitors Bureau Advisory Board Meeting, 2:00 p.m. at the Visitors Center
- May 12: Development Plan Review Board, 3:30 p.m. at Public Works Conference
- May 17: Economic Development Corporation Meeting, 2:00 p.m. at the Visitors Center
- May 18: Regular Board of Aldermen Meeting, 5:30 p.m. at Club Padre
- May 19: Planning and Zoning Commission, 2:00 p.m. at the Visitors Center

All meetings are open to the public and are subject to change.

April Proclaimed "Ila Loetscher Month"

Volume 2, Issue 2



Ila's Memorial Paver at the Rio Grande Valley Walk of Fame



Ila Loetscher

In honor of her selection to The Rio Grande Valley Walk of Fame, her dedication to the Ridley's kemp sea turtles, and her many contributions to South Padre Island, April 2005 was proclaimed "Ila Loetscher Month" by Mayor Robert N. Pinkerton, Jr., and the Board of Aldermen at their regular meeting on April 6th.

In February, the Board of Aldermen selected her as their first nominee to The Walk of Fame. Our "Turtle Lady" became the first person selected to The Rio Grande Valley Walk of Fame from South Padre Island, and she was honored at a ceremony and dinner at The Dodge Arena, in Hidalgo, on March 2nd. Her niece and nephew, Mary Ann and Ray Tous, of South Padre Island, were on hand at the event to represent Ila's family.



(l-r) Ray & Mary Ann Tous, State Sen. Eddie Lucio & Barbara Byrd



Mary Ann & Ray Tous accepting Ila's memorial, at Dodge Arena

Ila Loetscher, who passed away in 2000, was a pioneer environmentalist who raised worldwide awareness for the plight of the Kemp's Ridley Sea Turtles and South Padre Island. Jacques Cousteau dubbed her "the Wavemaker" for her outspoken efforts on behalf of the sea turtles. She was featured on many television talk shows and documentaries, including the Johnny Carson Show, David Letterman, the Today Show, Real People, National Geographic, and the Mother Earth Handbook.

In 1977, Ila formed the not-for-profit corporation, Sea Turtle, Inc., and her home became a sea turtle rescue center and classroom for thousands of people who visited each year.

Remarkably, when Ila was 22, she became the first licensed woman pilot in the State of Iowa. She became associated with Amelia Earhart as a charter member of the 99's Club, formed by the first 99 women pilots in the United States. Her continued interest in flying brought her into contact with Charles and Ann Lindbergh.

In 1955, Ila's husband David died, and the family moved to South Padre Island in 1957.

RECENT TOWN ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND CURRENT PROJECTS

Spring is upon us, and it could be said that the New Year on the Island begins with the onset of Spring Break. This year's rites of spring are now behind us, and it seems a good time to review the many accomplishments of the last several months. In addition, it's a good time to provide information on a number of very exciting projects that will be moving ahead in the coming months. The Town of South Padre Island staff has been very busy under the dynamic leadership and vision of our current Board of Aldermen, and there is much to report. The following is a list of many of our accomplishments, as well as projects that are underway:

- **Re-striping and painting of parking areas** – Parking spaces on Gulf Blvd. and in the beach accesses were re-striped and painted this year.
- **Installation of banners on Padre Blvd.** – Colorful South Padre Island banners were mounted on the utility poles along Padre Blvd., a joint project between the Convention and Visitors Bureau and the Public Works Department
- **Improvements of beach accesses** – In addition to the re-striping noted above substantial improvements were made to several beach accesses, including added rubber matting for improved handicap access at the beach accesses of Neptune, Moonlight and Seaside Circles. In addition, major improvements are underway at Gulf Circle, where a product new to our Town, called Ecocreto, is being used as permeable surface in lieu of concrete for paving, as well as landscaping and the installation of water and sewer for a shower fixture. The big news is the award of a \$71,000 grant from the General Land Office of Texas that will make a \$118,000 beach park a reality at Treasure Island Circle. This park will have rest-rooms, covered picnic tables, a shower, landscaping and parking, and will set the standard for beach accesses in the future. There are plans for many improvements to our beach accesses, and we hope to move forward vigorously on these.
- **Beach re-nourishment** – The most recent chapter of our extremely successful history of beach re-nourishment was written this year, continuing the great partnership among the General Land Office, the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers and the Town to provide dredged sand to our beach that would otherwise have been dumped in the Gulf. Over 200,000 cubic yards of sand was pumped onto our beach this year, providing over 20 acres of re-nourished beach front.
- **Fertilization of all medians** – Our medians at the entrance to the Island were also re-nourished this year with the application of more than 8 tons of fertilizer, keeping this beautiful gateway to our Island looking inviting.
- **Spill Safety System for Fuel Pumps** – Our Public Works crews have acquired and begun the use of specialized equipment to catch and contain any potential spillage at the Town's refueling station, to prevent any environmental problems from this process, going the "extra mile" to safeguard our Island.
- **Installation of storm water inlet boxes for West Pike and Padre Blvd.** – Installation of the storm water inlet at this point will help alleviate drainage problems in this area.
- **Trimming and grooming of right-of-ways and palm trees** – Residents and visitors will see a much improved appearance of the Island as a result of an improved standardized routine to grooming of the right-of-ways and palm trees.
- **Improvements in trash control resulting in a much cleaner Island after such events as Spring Break and throughout the year** – The Public Works Department, in concert with BFI, our waste disposal contractor, has instituted an improved approach to preventing wind blown trash on the Island. In addition, the Town's purchase of a new street sweeper last year has paid real dividends in terms of much cleaner streets.
- **Cluster Box improvements** – Our Public Works Department installed concrete or asphalt aprons adjacent to the postal cluster boxes on the Island to improve the appearance of the right-of-way areas where folks pull their cars over to collect their mail.
- **Significant Technology Enhancements to upgrade operations, security and service** – The Town staff have been working diligently in this area, and making great strides forward. Improvements have included conversion of the Police training Center into a Communications/Administration substation during Spring Break, acquisition of new computer hardware for town operations, software and anti-virus security improvements, full upgrade of Town internet access with installation of new high speed T1 lines and routers and greatly improved communication links between City Hall and the Convention Centre. In addition, we have achieved greatly improved security of City Hall with new camera and recording equipment for monitoring all areas and new electronic access controls for all entry doors. We have achieved wireless access to the Police communications network and installation of new Tough Book laptop computers in all Police vehicles, purchased and installed a new state of the art communications system, including new radios, antennas, repeaters, base radio and back up systems, and installed new equipment in the dispatch center for enhanced 911, mapping and alarm monitoring as well as greater interoperability. Many of these improvements were made possible through successful grantsmanship of Town staff. In the near future we will be providing major upgrades of Police and Court software for improved documentation, data storage, security, and management of all related operational records. The Town disposed of over 3,500 pounds of outdated documents from our storage facilities in the past year, and staff will be establishing electronic document imaging as a standard throughout Town operations in the near future. This will provide for safe, secure and functional archiving, reduction of paper usage and reduction of physical space needed to store records.

- **Implementation of the Town Communications Plan** – Over the past year we have responded to the public's desire to be better informed about Town matters and better served in terms of service requests and complaints. This response has been provided through a combination of elements, including establishment of a Public Information/Customer Relations Manager position, publication of the new Town newsletter, the Beachcomber, and significant improvement in the Town's website and homepage, with much more to come soon in this area.
- **New grant program with software contract** – Town staff have established a whole new level of grant pursuit capability through combination of sophisticated new grant software and the use of a professional team to write and follow through on selected grant opportunities. These efforts are showing great payoff, with more than \$300,000 in grants within just the last few months, with only a fraction of this amount invested for this purpose.
- **Convention Centre improvements** – We currently have two studies underway to help us determine the best future use of the Convention Centre, a facility essential to our tourism and convention business. In addition to seeing unprecedented levels of use of the existing facility we are carrying out a professional engineering assessment of the condition of the facility, while at the same time achieving a study to determine the feasibility of its expansion. The Board of Aldermen have also pledged their commitment to a 7,000 square foot site adjacent to the Centre for the establishment of a skateboard park, and a dynamic young group of young folks has already begun active pursuit of donations and grants to help make this venue a reality.
- **Enhanced Island Medical Services** – The Board of Aldermen has taken on the challenging task of seeking out the solution to provision of enhanced medical services on the Island, with the goal to establish satisfactory availability of medical care on a daily basis. The Board has established the South Padre Island Expanded Health Care Availability Ad Hoc Committee and, supported by Town staff, they have engaged the public and the health care providers in the community to seek out viable alternatives to resolve this problem. Their research on this subject should result in recommendations to the Board of Aldermen in the near future.
- **Transit System Enhancements** – During the course of the last few months the Town has achieved significant enhancement of the WAVE bus route, to include a direct connection to the Transit System in Brownsville that provides transportation to and from Brownsville and the Brownsville Airport, at a cost of only \$2.00, with a free ride to anyone staying at a hotel on the Island. Thanks to our grant efforts we have also acquired two new, state-of-the-art buses for the system at a cost to the Island of \$29,000 or only 20% of the total cost for the vehicles.
- **Planning Activities** - Significant enhancement of the Town's Strategic Planning process has taken place, and the Board of Aldermen has determined to also move forward on improvements in long term capital needs planning and development of a new Comprehensive Plan for the Island within the next few months. These planning processes are critical to the future success of our Island environment and economy. In addition, an extensive professional analysis of the Island's Marketing Plan is now ongoing, and we expect to receive a report and recommendations on this critical element of the Island's economic efforts within the next few months.
- **Establishment of the Development Plan Review Board** - In order to better manage commercial development on the island and enhance the appearance of such development the Board of Aldermen have established the Development Plan Review Board (DPRB). The DPRB is made up of residents appointed by the Board of Aldermen and is supported by Town staff in their work to review commercial development plans to determine compliance with local ordinances and encourage use of adopted guidelines and standards.

CURRENT AND FUTURE PROJECTS

- **Padre Boulevard Improvement Project** – This remarkable and exciting project will transform Padre Boulevard, providing safety and aesthetic enhancements that will make the boulevard more vehicle and pedestrian friendly, while adding landscaping and lighting elements that will profoundly improve the appearance of this primary thoroughfare. Phase I of the project, which will involve installation of landscaped center medians from Sunchase Mall to Red Snapper, will kick off in April with a public meeting to share the proposed design and elements of the center median improvements. It is hoped that construction on Phase I improvements will begin in October or November of the current year and finish before Spring Break of next year. Phase II of the project will involve dramatic landscaping, sidewalk and parking improvements to both sides of the boulevard. Phase II will be substantially more expensive and complex than Phase I, and will take longer to construct. This project is receiving substantial participation and funding from the Texas Department of Transportation, whose officials are working closely with the Town to ensure good design and construction.

Heliport and AWOS - Town officials are working closely with officials of the Federal Aviation Administration to design and construct a new helicopter landing pad on the south end of the Island, in the area of the "Four Corners" at the entrance to the Island. The new facility will enable emergency services helicopters to land and take off there just as they do at the Convention Centre.

(Continued on Page 4)

Recent Town Accomplishments and Improvements (Continued from Page 3)

In addition, the site will also see the installation of an Advance Weather Operating System, or AWOS. The AWOS will give us our own weather reports that can be shared with others off the Island as well. This is an important and much needed project, and we look forward to beginning construction as soon as possible following the FAA review of the project, which we hope will be complete in three to six weeks.

- **Landscaping Project at Padre Blvd and Swordfish** – The landscaping and brick pavers project now underway at the intersection of Padre Blvd. and Swordfish is being done both to improve the appearance on those four corners and to give a sense of how things could look if we carry this concept farther with Phase II of the Padre Boulevard Improvement Project. This smaller project has been a very collaborative effort, involving the Town, the adjacent property owners, and the Point Isabel Independent School District Success Center kids. Special thanks on this project go to Vern Lewis, Jim Green, Ed Walsh, Francisco Gonzalez, Scott Pajeski, Shane Wilson and all the young men and ladies from the Point Isabel Independent School District Success Center.
- **City Hall Municipal Complex Project** – This project, approved by voters in February, now moving toward construction, will be one of the most exciting success stories in the Town's history. The facility will be built with no increase in taxes needed to support the cost, and will provide residents and visitors a modern, safe, secure and efficient building in which to conduct their business and receive vital municipal services. In addition, we have just learned that our careful planning of this project and our prudent fiscal practices have resulted in achievement of the highest bond rating in the history of the community, ensuring the lowest interest rates possible and saving many thousands of dollars in the cost of the project. We expect to break ground on the structure within the next six months and complete construction within eighteen months. This will be one of the most complex and challenging construction projects ever done on the Island, and yield the most useful and attractive public structure in its history. The building will include a contemporary Police Department, Courts and prisoner holding facility, for conducting safe and secure law enforcement and justice activities. There will be a new emergency dispatch center and emergency operations center, to ensure provision of vital services under all but the most extreme of weather conditions. Administrative facilities will provide modern, adequately sized and well designed areas for public meetings, provision of planning, code enforcement and building permit services, where the public will be comfortable and well served, and where public records will be efficiently archived and well protected. We all look forward to the ground breaking ceremony of this facility, and to the benefits it will bring to the community.
- **New Birding and Nature Science Center** – This beautiful new facility, to be constructed by the South Padre Island Economic Development Commission, will be located near the Convention Centre. A project sign near the site of the proposed facility shows how attractive the Center will be, and this project represents a major step forward in tourism and recreation attractions for the Island. Birding attracts thousands of enthusiasts to the island each year, and this facility will, no doubt, increase these numbers to even greater levels. For more information and to find out you can help make this exciting project a reality please contact Ms. Darla Lapeyre at the Economic Development Commission offices.

As you can see, these are exciting and progressive times for the Town of South Padre Island, and there is much more to come, so stay tuned and be a part of the wonderful future of this great community.

Sav Cheese!



Recently, the South Padre Island Police Department posed for their group photograph. Our Police Department works hard to make our Island a safe place. Thanks for a job well done, people!



Aldermen Honor Boys & Girls Club Of Laguna Madre

(l-r) Club Members, Chief Executive Director of the Boys & Girls Club of Laguna Madre Johnny Silva, South Padre Island Mayor Pro-Tem Rick Wells & South Padre Island Police Chief Robert Rodriguez

At the Board of Aldermen meeting on April 6th, the Boys & Girls Club of Laguna Madre was honored by a proclamation naming April 3rd – 9th as Boys & Girls Club Week in South Padre Island.

The proclamation stated that there is one Boys & Girls Club organization in the Laguna Madre Area providing services to more than 500 young people annually and that the Boys & Girls Club of Laguna Madre is at the forefront of efforts in Educational Development, Cultural Enrichment, Sports Programs, and Teen Outreach.

It further stated that the Boys & Girls Club of Laguna Madre helps ensure that our young people keep off the streets, offering them a safe and supportive place to go and providing them with quality programs.

The Boys & Girls Club of Laguna Madre will celebrate National Boys & Girls Club Week 2005, along with some 3,400 Clubs and more than 4 million young people nationwide.

Alderman Candidates Draw for Ballot Positions



Pictured (left to right) are Gloria Rios (drawing for her daughter) Tara Rios Ybarra, Alderman Rick Ridolfi, Alderman Rick Wells, Jim Hoff, Alderman James "Joe Buck" Camp, and City Secretary Joyce Adams.

Board of Alderman candidates were on hand March 9th, at City Hall, to draw for the three Alderman positions on the May 7th Board of Alderman ballot. Alderman James "Joe Buck" Camp drew first place on the ballot, followed by Jim Hoff, Bob Fudge, Alderman Rick Wells, Alderman Rick Ridolfi and Tara Rios Ybarra.

Early voting for the municipal election will commence at the South Padre Island City Hall, Wednesday, April 20th and conclude on Tuesday, May 3rd. Election Day voting will occur at City Hall, from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m., on Saturday, May 7th.

New Beach Access Nears Completion



South Padre Island Building Inspector Richard Ehrlich, Public Works Director David Whitehead, and Assistant City Manager/Fire Chief Clifford Rowell (l-r) supervise the paving on the Island's new Gulf Circle Access.

This Beach Access is the first one to be built with Ecocreto, a new porous concrete that allows water to pass into the ground. Ecocreto should reduce the need for drainage in streets and parking lots.

The new Beach Access will have 20 new parking spaces and a foot shower

Anton Nelessen Discusses "Smart Code"



The Town of South Padre Island and the Southmost Section APA invited Anton Nelessen, an award winning Planner and Urban Designer, to the Island to provide continuing education credits for practicing planners and architects. Town committee members, and the general public were invited to attend as well.

During his presentations at the Convention Centre, Tony presented such concepts as:

- *The built environment has positive and negative impacts on the human psyche.
- *Streets and sidewalks are the spine of a city/town and the design of the streets and sidewalks is fundamental to the use and perception of places.
- *His research has shown certain fundamental characteristics of places which people "like" and those places people do not like.
- *New Urbanism and the SmartCode provide a framework for places which people like.

Farewell, Judge Tenison



Robert (Bob) McIntyre Tenison, 77, of South Padre Island, Texas, passed away at his home on Tuesday, March 1st. He was born November 5, 1927 in Dallas, Texas and moved with his family to South Padre Island in 1976.

Bob served as Municipal Court Judge for the Town of South Padre Island from August 21, 1985 to June 15, 1988.

The Mayor, Board of Aldermen and Staff of the Town of South Padre Island join together in wishing our warmest condolences to Bob's family.

South Padre Island Receives Its Highest Historical Bond Rating

The Town of South Padre Island has received its highest bond rating ever. According to Mr. Horacio Aldrete with Standard & Poor's, the Town's bond rating has been increased from BBB+ to A-. Mr. Aldrete commented that the bump in the Town's bond rating was due to the Town's strong financial management, performance and leadership. The bond rating firm Moody's, has also raised the town's rating from A-3 to A-2. In addition, it is anticipated that for the first time ever, the Town will qualify for bond insurance at a reasonable cost, which may allow the bond rating to rise to as high as AAA.

Upon hearing the news, South Padre Island City Manager Dewey P. Cashwell Jr. stated, "I am extremely pleased with the news about the upgrade of our rating, which will result in savings of well over \$200,000 on the new Municipal Complex project!"

Success Center Kids Put In "Sweat Equity" On SPI 4-Corners



Success Center Kids Working On Project



Shane Wilson

Point Isabel Independent School District Success Center kids Elda Aguilar, Jimmy Garcia, Juan Jose Martinez, Desiree Villareal and Jerry Zamarron put in "Sweat Equity" on the South Padre Island Landscaping Project at Padre Boulevard and Swordfish.

Working with the South Padre Island Public Works Department, the kids are helping out with the installation of brick sidewalk pavers and landscaping on the project. South Padre Island Public Works Director David Whitehead stated, "We are very happy to have the kids involvement in the project; these kids do a great job, and we fully support programs like the Success Center."

Point Isabel District Hearings Officer Shane Wilson said, "The kids initiate these projects themselves, and the South Padre Island's Four Corners Project is a rewarding opportunity for them. Projects like these convey self-esteem, as well as social and job skills."

SPI BOA Election Sat., May 7th

On Saturday, May 7th, residents of the Town of South Padre Island (Cameron County Precinct 52) will have the opportunity to vote for candidates for three at-large positions on the Board of Aldermen. Voting will be held at City Hall, 4501 Padre Boulevard, South Padre Island, Texas 78597. Voters may cast their ballots, in person, from 7:00 a.m. - 7:00 p.m.

Early voting will commence Wednesday, April 20th, and will cease on Tuesday, May 3rd (excluding Saturdays, Sundays and legal state holidays), and early voters may cast their early votes by mail or personal appearance at the following address: Town of South Padre Island Municipal Building, 4501 Padre Boulevard, South Padre Island, Texas 78597. The hours designated for early voting by personal appearance shall be from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Candidates that filed to run for the three at-large places on the Board of Aldermen are Alderman James "Joe Buck" Camp, Bob Fudge, Jim Hoff, Alderman Rick Ridolfi, Alderman Rick Wells and Tara Rios Ybarra.



April 16th, 2005

South Padre Island Welcomes Steve Park, Driver of The South Padre Island Sponsored Orleans Racing Team Dodge Truck in The NASCAR Craftsman Truck Series



Steve Park



Steve signs autograph for a fan



Steve visits with an enthusiast



The South Padre Island Logo



#62, The Orleans Dodge



Steve signs another autograph



Steve signs a cap for a fan

TOWN OF



P.O. Box 3410
4501 Padre Blvd.
South Padre Island, Texas 78597
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Fax: 956-761-7561

2005 SPI Events Calendar

April/May

April 23: **Spring Adopt-A-Beach Cleanup**, Registration for this environmentally friendly event takes place at Water Tower Park (Laguna & Huisache) 9-Noon.

23: **Texas Gulf Coast Roundup**, Sea Ranch Marina from 8am-2pm. Sea Ranch Marina from 8am-2pm. For info call 361-939-7784.

30-May 1: **25th Annual SPI Windsurf Blowout**, All recreational windsurfers are invited to participate in course slalom and distance races. www.spiwindsurfing.com.

May 6: **Memorial Surfing Expression Session 2004**, North Jetties SPI Isla Blanca Park, 8AM Sharp! All Rio Grand Surfers, Texas, and visiting Surfers are invited. Only RGV Surfers are eligible for prizes. Call Scott Gangel at 956-943-1562 for info.

7: **Rio Grande Valley Regional Red Chili & Salsa Cookoff**, Sanctioned Competition at Dolphin Cove Oyster Bar. Must be member of International Chili Society. chefdemarko@yahoo.com.

15: **Pedal to Padre**, River Rockets Adventure Club, Bicycle Tour To SPI. Brownsville Event Center to Louie's Backyard. Cal 956-451-1500 to register. www.riverrockets.com.

Upcoming Conventions & Meetings

April 28-30: **Directors Choice**, Band and choir students from high schools across the United States that come to South Padre Island annually to compete.

May 7: **Directors Choice**, Band and choir students from high schools across the United States that come to South Padre Island annually to compete.

11-14: **Texas Chapter of the Philanthropic Educational Organization**, Private annual conference for PEO attendees only. Estimated attendance is approximately 200.

17-19: **Region One Technology Conference**, This is a private conference. Estimated attendance is approximately 300.

20-21: **Region One School Board Conference** Annual conference for School Board members across the Region One area. Estimated attendance is 200.

We're on the Web at:
www.townspi.com

If you would like to receive The Beachcomber and other important Town announcements in your e-mail, subscribe at www.townspi.com. You can begin receiving, via e-mail, all the news and events happening on South Padre Island.

HELP WANTED

Firefighter Starting Pay \$24,998

Applicants must be at least 18 years of age, possess a high school diploma or G.E.D., Texas "Class B" drivers license, a Basic Firefighter Certification issued by the State of Texas Commission of Fire Personnel Standards and Education and must possess a Texas Department of Health Certification as an Emergency Medical Technician. Firefighters are required to live within an eighty (80) mile radius of the Town.

Communications Coordinator - Convention Centre Starting Pay \$30,744

Responsible for the coordination of all public relations, advertising purchases, material development and dissemination of information, including solicitation and hosting of travel writers. Communications Coordinator will maintain slide, photo and video files for use by writers, tour operators, meeting planners and local businesses as well as write and distribute media releases, stories, columns, etc. The ideal applicant will possess a degree in journalism, communications, public relations, advertising, marketing or a closely related field and at least five (5) years of directly related experience. Any suitable combination of related coursework and experience that demonstrates comparability to the above may be given consideration at the discretion of the Town. The successful candidate must have strong writing, reading and speaking skills in both English and Spanish and must have the ability to work independently with multiple deadlines.

For more information on Help Wanted, Call 956-761-6456 or visit our Website at www.townspi.com. The Town of South Padre Island is an Equal Opportunity Employer.