

City Work Force Emerges During 1960s – Public Safety Among Priorities

Following Sugar Land's incorporation on Dec. 29, 1959, Mayor T. E. Harman began transitioning services previously provided by Imperial Sugar to the newly created City government.

The City hired its first City employee – City Secretary Hazel McJunkin – and scheduled two Council meetings on the first and third Tuesdays of each month, a practice that continues today.

One of City Council's first actions after incorporation in 1959 was to approve building codes, plumbing codes and electricity codes. This was followed by the implementation in 1961 of a comprehensive city plan, which allowed for the incorporation of zoning. Sugar Land then hired its first City building official, Albert H. Weth.

The City's first fire chief was Walter "Soapy" Borowski. Volunteer firefighters listened for a town siren that sounded a set number of blasts to indicate which part of town the fire was located.

An important step during the 1960s was the creation of a City police force. Sugar Land hired Joe Burke to the newly created position of city marshal. J.E. Fendley was later hired as Sugar Land's first police chief.

Officer Ernest Taylor was one of SLPD's first officers. Hired in 1969, he learned police work on the job, advancing from patrol officer to detective to captain of the Fort Bend Major Crimes Task Force, which was created during the early 1970s. Taylor was the group's commander for nine years, during which time the group conducted regional undercover and

surveillance operations that resulted in major arrests. Taylor was promoted to police chief in 1992. He retired in 2002.

By 1973, the Sugar Land Police Department had grown to six officers, including Chief J.E. Fendley, Assistant Chief Larry Ross, Detective Ernest Taylor, Officer Bob Tollett, Officer Eber Stewart and Officer Ken Czarneski.

Money Magazine and CNNmoney.com rank Sugar Land as one of America's Best Places to Live.
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