

individualism” and there are few better examples of the peril than that final scene of “The Searchers.” Ethan Edwards gave everything he had to search for his niece and avenge the bloody raid on his people. In the end, he was left with only that.

Last week, in the comments to my essay on Facebook, my friend Jerod McDaniel observed that there is an internal struggle that comes with the romantic isolation of the West. People (individually and collectively) need heroes. We can long for heroes and attempt to create them out of the romantic isolation of our own lives. We are so tough and bold that we don't NEED other people. We can go it alone. We can brave any challenge or danger that besets us. We are just like the brave heroes who settled the frontier before us! That can be a powerful feeling. When the spring winds howl, when the dust or hail storms rage, when a year's worth of rain comes in a week, or when the native flora and fauna are predisposed to

spines, stingers, and poison, it is hard not to valiantly channel the spirit of your forefathers in the West.

But as Jerod and I discussed, these concepts can be both powerful and toxic, depending on how they are used. We can channel the heroism, romance, and idealism of the cowboy into a force for positivity in our lives and in our communities. That is something to work towards and be proud of. But if we channel these qualities the wrong way, then we might end up a tragic and lonely figure like Ethan Edwards. Our communities and society are worse off when these qualities are emphasized in the wrong manner.

Next week: Louis L'Amour, Elmer Kelton, and the heroism of the everyman.

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Bedford's application for the position. He was seconded by Josh Tennison and the motion carried with a vote of 3 - 0.

Discussion was held regarding purchasing a new vehicle for the public works department. The Superintendent and Mayor would like to purchase a new vehicle and backhoe for the public works department. Two out of the four vehicles the City has currently do not have the power to haul the necessary equipment the City needs for their daily tasks and emergency repairs to the system. The Mayor would like to apply for a USDA grant that will allow the City to purchase a new vehicle and/or a backhoe and get reimbursed for 75% of the cost. The application for this grant will be presented at the next meeting.

Discussion was held regarding Resolution 1-23 Ordering General Election year 2023 Correction. The extended hours on the election schedule are no longer required and hours were amended to regular business hours. A motion was made by Tracy Grantham to approve of the corrected resolution ordering the general election. She was seconded by Josh Tennison and the motion carried with a vote of 3 - 0.

A motion was made by Tracy Grantham to approve of the EDC Type B grant for 711 Austin Street (This 'N That Shop) roof repairs. She was seconded by Josh Tennison and the motion carried with a vote of 3 - 0.

A motion was made by Josh Tennison to approve of the EDC Type B grant for 717 Austin Street (This 'N That Shop). He was seconded by Brantly Robertson and the motion carried.

A motion was made by Tracy Grantham to approve of the EDC Type B grant for the Watering Hole fence installation. She was seconded by Brantly

Robertson and the motion carried with a vote of 3 - 0.

A motion was made by Josh Tennison to approve of the EDC Type B grant to Mountain Creek Golf Course for upgrades. He was seconded by Tracy Grantham and the motion carried with a vote of 3 - 0.

A motion was made by Tracy Grantham to approve of the EDC Type B reimbursement for 318 E 1st Street demo expenses. She was seconded by Josh Tennison and the motion carried.

The following changes to the Personnel Policy were presented to City Council for approval: Remove ACO and CEO as contracted positions and change them to employees where the department heads will hire and fire; change the on-call policy to a minimum of one hour of comp time or overtime if the employee returns to the field; define uniforms provided as shirts and they will be provided to employees on time of employment; increase the public works department uniforms for purchase of pants and boots worn out from the job; update the sick time and vacation time accumulation; add incentives for ACO and CEO certifications; update the per diem amounts for mileage and meals with the US general services administration; change internal controls for mail logs to either office staff as well as change bank deposits to as needed instead of daily; all financials including bank statements and receipts will be provided every regular meeting for Council review. A motion was made by Brantly Robertson to approve of the above amendments as presented and was seconded by Josh Tennison. The motion carried with a vote of 3 - 0.

Air conditioning/heating units in the public works office malfunctioned and needs to be repaired. Quotes for repair were provided by Clawson Mechanical Services. A motion was made by Brantly Robertson to approve of the presented quote and allow Clawson Mechanical Services to repair the units. He was seconded by Josh Tennison with a vote of 3 - 0.

TML Health Benefits will be changing their waiting period for benefits for employees. Currently the City has a 90-day waiting period before benefits will go into effect for employees. The 90-day waiting period is no longer available. The options are either a 30-day or 60-day waiting period. A motion was made by Josh Tennison to implement a benefit waiting period so benefits become effective on the first day of the month following 60 days after a new employee's start date. He was seconded by Brantly Robertson and the motion carried with a vote of 3 - 0.

Discussion was held regarding an abatement dispute on 624 Commerce Street. The property owner refuses to pay the cost of the abatement. They claim they spoke to someone at the City and they promised to call them back. No one in the office had spoken to this property owner prior to the invoice being sent. Previous code enforcement might have spoken with them but no notes were made in the file. The property owner has requested that the abatement invoice be waived and if the request is denied the property owner will let the City foreclose on the property. A motion was made by Brantly Robertson to deny the request for waiving the abatement invoice and was seconded by Tracy Grantham. The motion carried with a vote of 3 - 0.

*(Continued on next page)*

## RL City Council meeting minutes told

The Robert Lee City Council met in regular session at City Hall on Thursday, February 16. Those in attendance included Mayor Jason Moran; Council Members Brantly Robertson, Tracy Grantham, and Josh Tennison. Council Members Mike Stephens and Jonathan Torres were absent.

The call to order was made, a quorum determined, and the meeting declared open at 6:30 pm.

Daniel Jasso expressed his concern for the volume of abandoned and unused tires around the city. He has done independent research regarding the price and hauling method of a tire drive. He would like for the council to consider this project in the future.

The consent agenda, which

included the January 19, 2023 minutes, Municipal Court report, and the Financial Report, was discussed. A motion was made by Josh Tennison to approve of the consent agenda and he was seconded by Tracy Grantham.

The 2022 Annual Audit was tabled until the next meeting when the audit is finished.

Discussion was held regarding hiring a financial consultant (CPA). Two applicants have applied for the contract position. The City Secretary would like to hire a CPA to aid in financials. They would be able to look over the monthly financials and be available for assistance if any questions or concerns arise before the annual audit. A motion was made by Brantly Robertson to accept Everett

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