



KELLER CITIZEN

JULY 18, 2017 3:57 PM

Westlake moves town hall to a new location

BY RICK MAUCH

Special to Star-telegram

WESTLAKE — The town of Westlake is moving its town hall to a new location, which is just a stone's throw from what will soon be the old location.

But please don't throw a stone as the facility is brand spankin' new, and beautiful, said Westlake Communications Manager Jon Sasser.

"No, we don't want to do that," he said with a laugh. "We've worked much too hard."

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The new town hall, which will open to the public on July 26, will be located at 1500 Solana Blvd. The soon-to-be former location is at 1301 Solana Blvd.

The new building will house the town council chambers and courtroom space downstairs. Upstairs will be all of the city offices, including the municipal court. Unlike before, all departments will be together in one office space through one main door.

"No longer will you have to go to separate offices to pay your water bill, register your pet, report for jury duty," Assistant Town Manager Amanda DeGan said.

The move was simply because more space was needed, Sasser said. The current building is 12,000 square feet and the new one is 20,000. With the town growing, so is the city staff, and thus the need for more space.

"We desperately needed the additional space," Sasser said.

The town hall has been located in building 4 at Solana Plaza for the past decade. The new offices are at the location also known as the Terrace at Solana, building 7, and will be just to the left of six identical large buildings that have also been called the "Six Pack." They house Sabre, Goosehead Insurance, and a small office of Verizon Wireless.

Town hall will still be on the south side of Texas Highway 114.

The new town hall location has been vacant since 2009, Sasser said, noting that it was originally part of an IBM campus built in the late 1980s. Renovation began in May.

Sasser said the landscape setting includes some water features and large cypress trees. There are also more than three times as many reserved parking spaces for visitors, up to 20 from the current six.

This is the third move for the staff since 2000. In 2003, town hall moved to Westlake Academy for four years, while the courtroom and council chambers stayed at 1301 Solana. In 2007, staff returned to Solana due to academy growth.

Sasser said building a new town hall was once considered an option as the town owns some land in the Entrada development. However, with Entrada's infrastructure still under construction, town officials were forced to make a decision whether to find a different location or make due with the one they had.

Sasser said the town signed a 10-year lease for their new location.

Town Manager Tom Brymer said the Council determined a need to focus its limited capital investment dollars in a new fire station.

"That made obtaining more town office space by leasing at this new location the best option," Brymer said.

As for the old town hall, Sasser said no plans have been released as to its future, but he expects it to be used business space leasing. He said there is one small business, Supply Logic, that will be the lone tenant once the city moves its offices.

"They'll be the last ones standing, so to speak," he said.

But, he expects the offices to fill soon enough, given Westlake's growth. The Charles Schwab Corporation is slated to open a \$100 million, 500,000 square-foot regional campus in the town in 2019, bringing around 1,200 jobs to the the area within a decade.

"Both residential and commercial, it is an exciting time in Westlake," Sasser said.

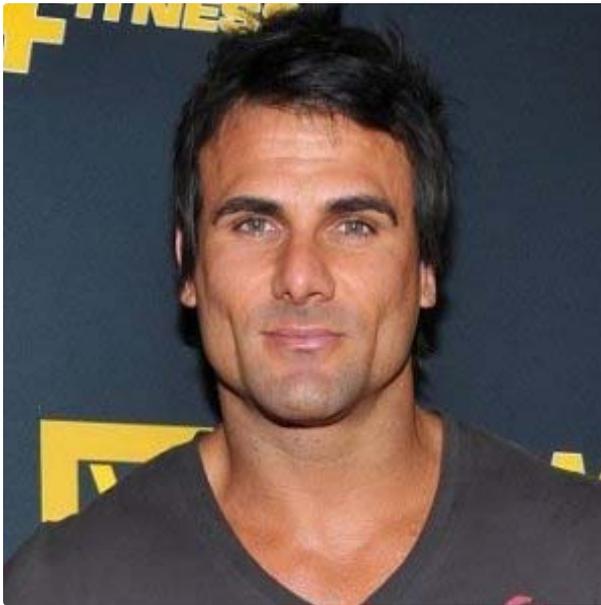
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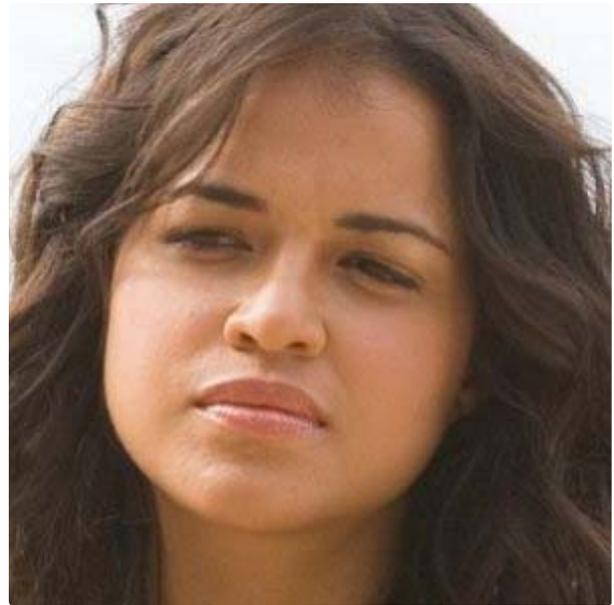
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