

COMMITTEE TO INCORPORATE VON ORMY

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Press Release

Wednesday October 11, 2006

RE: Von Ormy Petitions San Antonio for Permission to Form City

Event. Today, Wednesday October 11, 2006, the Committee to Incorporate Von Ormy (CIVO) submitted a petition to the mayor and city council of San Antonio to give the residents of Von Ormy permission to hold an election on the question of whether to incorporate Von Ormy into a municipality.

Issues Related to This Event. Von Ormy lies within the extra-territorial jurisdiction (ETJ) of the City of San Antonio. ETJ is the area that lies between the city limit of an existing municipality and a five mile extension of that city limit. Even though the land within an ETJ of a city is not considered to be part of that city, in order to form a new municipality within the ETJ permission of the existing city in the form of a resolution or ordinance is required.

The policy behind this rule is to prevent new communities, which are entirely dependent on the growth and infrastructure of a city for their existence, from forming their own city in order to avoid city taxes and city restrictions. In the case of Von Ormy, the policy does not apply. Von Ormy has co-existed with San Antonio for nearly two-hundred years and during that time Von Ormy has maintained a distinct historic and social identity. The ETJ of San Antonio grew into Von Ormy, not the other way around.

Public Support. The effort to incorporate Von Ormy into a municipality was been publicly endorsed by Bexar County Judge Nelson Wolff, County Commissioner "Chico" Rodriguez, State Representative David McQuade Leibowitz, and many others.

Committee to Incorporate Von Ormy (CIVO) is a Texas non-profit association formed in the summer of 2006 by residents of Von Ormy, Texas to incorporate Von Ormy into a municipality. The CIVO website can be found at <http://www.vonormytexas.com/civo.shtml>. The current CIVO officers are:

Chair	Art Martinez de Vara, Student at St. Mary's Law School
Asst. Chair	Charlie Brown, Pilot/Owner Alamo River RV Resort
Asst. Chair	Mike Suarez, Internet Specialist
Secretary	Mary Louise Castro, Teacher SWISD
Treasurer	Raymond Vara, Jr., Bookkeeper
Asst. Treas.	Sally Martinez, Retired

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Von Ormy, Texas is an unincorporated city in southwest Bexar County. The historic town center today lies near I-35 and Benton City Road. During the Spanish colonial era, Von Ormy sprang up along the natural crossing point of the Medina River on the Camino Real between San Antonio and Saltillo. Von Ormy was known then as "Paso de las Garza's" or "Garza's Crossing." On December 4, 1886 the city changed its name to "Von Ormy" in honor of Austrian Count, Norbert Von Ormay, who moved to the city that year. A year later Count Von Ormay and his court mysteriously disappeared, but the name remained.

During the War for Texas Independence, the residents of Von Ormy came to the aid and assistance of our neighbors in San Antonio. During the Battle of Concepcion, Von Ormian Juan Martinez reinforced Texian forces under Col. Travis and Col. Crockett who were pinned down along the San Antonio River by Mexican forces. Von Ormian Blas Herrera rode hurriedly to San Antonio to warn the defenders of the Alamo of the approach of Santa Ana upon seeing the approach of the Mexican Army into Von Ormy. Von Ormian "Deaf" Smith, served the Republic heroically as a spy during the war and a Texas County was named in honor of him (Deaf Smith County). And after Texas won its independence the alcalde (mayor) of San Antonio, Jose Antonio Ruiz, sought and received refuge in Von Ormy, where he lived the remainder of his days and was buried.

In 1836, Santisima Trinidad Catholic Church was built in Von Ormy and the parish exists today though renamed Sacred Heart Catholic Church. The town's first post office opened in 1872 and the town now has its own zip code (78073). In 1906, the first bridge over the Medina River at Von Ormy was built by the International & Great Northern Railroad. In 1914, the town had two grocers, a general store, a cotton gin, and a population of 350. In 1946 the population was still 350. The Von Ormy School closed in 1956 when Southwest ISD was formed by area residents. The school taught the children of Von Ormy for nearly 50 years. Since that time the population has grown slowly, and in 1990 Von Ormy had over twenty businesses. Currently, there is a strong movement, led by the Committee to Incorporate Von Ormy (CIVO), to incorporate Von Ormy into a municipality. The area CIVO wishes to incorporate is 2.0 square miles and has over 1700 residents and over a dozen businesses.

Other local institutions include the Jarret Volunteer Fire Department (<http://www.jarretfr.com/>) and the Von Ormy Historical Society (<http://www.vonormytexas.com/>). A complete history of Von Ormy can be found on WikiPedia at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Von_Ormy%2C_Texas

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Von Ormy has co-existed with San Antonio for nearly two-hundred years and during that time Von Ormy has maintained a distinct historic and social identity. During the War for Texas Independence, the residents of Von Ormy came to the aid and assistance of our neighbors in San Antonio. During the Battle of Concepcion, Von Ormian Juan Martinez and others reinforced Texian forces under Col. Travis and Col. Crockett who were pinned down along the San Antonio River by Mexican forces. Von Ormian Blas Herrera rode hurriedly to San Antonio to warn the defenders of the Alamo of the approach of Santa Ana upon seeing the approach of the Mexican Army into Von Ormy. Von Ormian "Deaf" Smith, served the Republic heroically as a spy during the war and a Texas County was named in honor of him (Deaf Smith County). And after Texas won its independence the alcalde (mayor) of San Antonio, Jose Antonio Ruiz, sought and received refuge in Von Ormy, where he lived the remainder of his days and was buried.

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