

THE COLUMNS

A Publication for the Residents of Mission Hills

Winter 2015

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Join us for the Holiday
 Tree Lighting Event Sun.
 Nov. 22 at 5:30 pm

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Stewardship



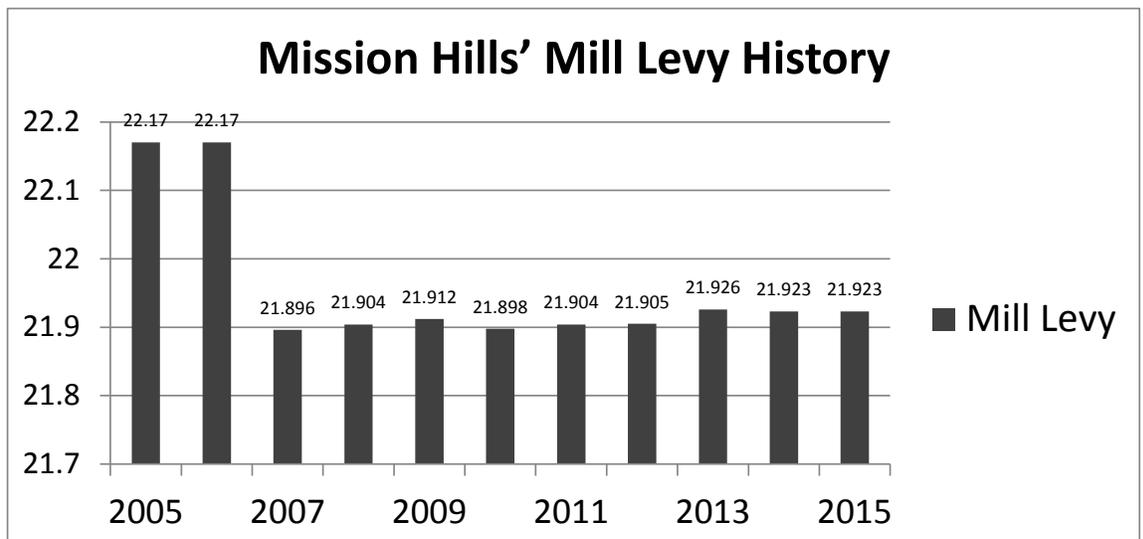
Rick Boeshaar
 Mayor

You elect your City's governing body to be good stewards of your tax dollars and yet maintain the high standards of appearance and functionality of your City. We are fortunate that our founders set up our governing body such that all five elected Council persons serve "at-large," representing the entire City, not just a neighborhood that might have different priorities from another. Our City's staff has remained small, yet very professional. City services such as park maintenance, tree care, snow removal, road upkeep, and sewer repairs are all provided by contractors who bid for the work in our City.

Many of the day-to-day functions of government are accomplished by volunteer residents who contribute their time and talents serving on City committees for the betterment of our City. These stewards have been frugal enough to find productivity increases and manage rising City services costs within the resources provided by a few fees, a small sales tax, and the property taxes gained only from property value appreciation.

From the beginning, our statutes set up five voting Council representatives and a Mayor who votes only in case of ties. So, since I rarely vote (twice in six years), I think I can objectively brag on our Council members and our City's professional staff for the job they do to be good stewards. In August the City Council completed its budget process for 2016 and, for the eleventh year in a row, was able to hold the property tax rate flat. This has been an increasingly difficult goal to achieve, especially with aging infrastructure such as the 63rd Street bridge – due to be replaced next year.

The chart below shows that since 2007, our City Councils have maintained a flat property tax mill levy despite the rising costs of materials and contracted services.



Continued on Page 2

Even before 2007, when increases were approved, they were for specific purposes clearly understood as necessary for the level of services our residents expect. In 2002 there was a need to increase police coverage in order to reduce a high crime rate. In 2004 an increase was necessary to improve sanitary sewer lines before transferring our system to Johnson County Wastewater. In 2005 the Kansas Legislature stripped Cities of a portion of the State's property tax that they had been giving back to the Cities for local purposes. In order to maintain our basic services, the Council that year had to increase the mill levy and institute a 1% sales tax in order to make up for the significant revenues that would now be staying with the State. A sales tax affects members of the three country clubs as well as those of us who buy from stores and take delivery at our homes. There have been other special sales taxes implemented by Johnson County which are shared with Cities, including Mission Hills. Our City Staff diligently seeks matching fund sources to stretch tax dollars. We have implemented special fees for special purposes such as repairing specific portions of the Sanitary Sewer System and the Stormwater system. Those fees were assessed one time (Sanitary improvements) or for a specific period, i.e. "sunsetting" (the 2011-2015 Stormwater Utility Fees). In 2016, residents will no longer pay the Stormwater Utility Fee. We continue to gain revenues from other fees, paid by users to cover specific services, such as building permit fees, pet license fees, tour permit fees, etc. I hope you share my pride in working with a City Council and a very professional City staff for an enviable record of good stewardship. ■

Mission Hills Hosts Two Professional Fellows

The City of Mission Hills is excited to welcome two professional fellows through the Young Southeast Asian Leaders Initiative (YSEALI). YSEALI is President Obama's signature program to strengthen leadership development and networking in Southeast Asia, deepen engagement with young leaders on key regional and global challenges, and strengthen people-to-people ties between the United States and young Southeast Asian leaders. Philip Robert (Bob) Flores is from the Philippines and is the head of the Xavier Ecoville Project, which is a university-led recovery, rehabilitation, and resettlement project for survivors of Typhoon Washi. Adhi Rachman Prana is from Indonesia and is a junior planner for the Ministry of National Development Planning, where he focuses on decreasing poverty and addressing labor issues. Bob and Adhi began their fellowship by traveling to Washington D.C. to meet other professional fellows and receive training through the State Department. They will spend a month in Mission Hills learning about the City's environmental sustainability projects, attending County and professional educational sessions, city-wide meetings, and visiting Joplin to learn how their community managed disaster recovery after the devastating 2011 tornado. The capstone of their fellowship will be a presentation in Washington D.C. that summarizes their learning experience. ■



Philip Robert (Bob) Flores in Washington D.C.



Adhi Rachman Prana in Indonesia

Snow and Ice Control on City Streets

Please remember the following regarding the City's snow and ice control efforts:

- Every snow/ice event is unique and the plan for each storm is directly related to the duration and severity of the storm.
- When we have enough warning and it is appropriate, the City streets are pre-treated.
- Plowing will generally begin after 2" of snow has fallen.
- All streets in the City have been prioritized for snow/ice removal. Priority one streets are the arterials and will be cleared first. Arterials include: 63rd Street, Mission Drive, Tomahawk Road, Mission Road, Belinder, State Line Road and Indian Lane (Mission Road to 63rd Street).
- The remaining streets and cul-de-sacs will have one lane cleared after the priority streets are completed, and then generally within 8 hours after a 3-4 inch storm has ended these streets should be cleared curb to curb. In the case of heavy snowfall, it can take longer than 8 hours to plow the snow on every street in the City. ■



What should I do with that snow on my driveway?

With a lower amount of snowfall last winter, we thought you might be out of practice so we wanted to take the time to share with you some information regarding snow removal.

- When clearing snow from your driveway, do not place the snow from your driveway back into the street as it causes problems for drivers on the street and is a violation of City ordinance. Additionally, if you have a private contractor remove the snow from your driveway and they push the snow to the street opposite your driveway please ask them to be sure and clean up all snow left on the roadway.
- Similarly, if you are using a snow blower to clear your driveway or sidewalk, please do not blow the snow onto the street, as this too is a violation of City ordinance.
- When snow is expected, we always encourage residents to park their vehicles in the driveway and do not allow vehicles to extend into the roadway. Cars in the roadway slow snow removal operations and results in cars being buried behind the plowed snow. If parking on the street is unavoidable, please park on the side where the addresses are odd numbered (on some streets the fire hydrants are on the odd numbered side of the street so you will have to park on the even numbered side). Having cars parked on just one side of the street will allow the plows to at least clear one lane.

We certainly understand that snow removal can be a challenge, but helping us keep additional snow off of the roadway ensures safer travel conditions and eliminates additional snow removal costs. ■

Holiday Cards/Gifts for Deffenbaugh Driver

Many residents show their thanks to the Deffenbaugh driver for his excellent service by leaving checks or cash taped to their trash/recycling bins during the holiday season. Unfortunately, over the past several years, many envelopes with financial gifts have been stolen from the cans. In an effort to curb this type of theft, the City has offered to allow residents to drop off holiday cards and gifts for the Deffenbaugh driver at City Hall. City staff will hold the gifts for the driver to pick up at his convenience.

Out on a Limb: Tree Talk

by George L. Eib and Jesse Kirk, Consulting Arborists



George L. Eib



Jesse Kirk

Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) has been confirmed in both Indian Hills Homes Association and the Mission Hills Homes Company. If you have Ash trees on your property, now is the time to start considering treatment.

There are several treatment options available, the trees that the City is treating were treated in May using Ememectin Benzoate, trade named Tree-age. This is the only two year treatment currently available. There is much more detailed information regarding EAB on the Mission Hills website or you can call City Hall to schedule a private consultation with a City Arborist.

The City is on a three year pruning cycle meaning that we strive to prune one third of the trees within the City right of way each year. For simplicity we are moving towards doing one homes association each year. We are hoping to prune the Tomahawk Roads Homes Association (State Line Rd. to Belinder Ave. and 63rd St. to 70th Terr.) beginning in January 2016, depending on the prices we receive through the bid process. In an effort to combat the canopy loss due to EAB we will continue our planting efforts into Spring 2016. Our goal is to plant another 100 trees and increase our species diversity. These planting sites will be marked with a small green tree on the curb, if you see one of these trees on your curb watch your mail for more detailed planting information.

At some point, each street in Mission Hills will be impacted by large capital improvement projects initiated by the City as well as the utility companies. These projects are necessary to maintain infrastructure. They are often inconvenient and can have significant negative effects on our urban forest. We realize this and do our best to work with the contractors doing the work to ensure that the health of our trees is taken into consideration. We monitor and record the condition of street trees near construction so that contractors can be held accountable for any damage they do. We also direct contractors in arboricultural practices that minimize the negative impacts of construction on both public and private trees. ■

Fall & Winter Checklist

- ☑ If you have not had your lawn aerified in the past two years, I recommend you consider having this done.
- ☑ Continue to mow grass as long as it grows, as the weather cools cut it shorter. Keep leaves off lawn during fall and winter. Remember to keep your mower blades sharp.
- ☑ I recommend you consider applying a fall fertilizer.
- ☑ Do not blow or dump leaves or snow into the street or into drainage channels.
- ☑ Disconnect your hoses from your faucets once freezing temperatures arrive in order to prevent freeze damage to your plumbing.
- ☑ You should not prune spring flowering shrubs now as they set their buds in the fall. Wait until after they flower in the spring for shaping.
- ☑ It is important to have a chimney sweep check to make sure you do not have creosote buildup that could cause a fire. It is also important that you do not burn pine in your fire place.
- ☑ Keep gutters clear of debris that can cause water to spill or pool. Debris buildup can cause water to backup under shingles, resulting in interior damage.
- ☑ Clear overhead utility lines of overhanging limbs to prevent damage during a storm. You will need to have a private tree company do this.

Consolidated Fire District No. 2 Receives Highest ISO Rating

Consolidated Fire District #2 (CFD2) serving Northeast Johnson County, KS has received *Protection Classification (PPC)* rating of 1 by ISO (Insurance Services Office). This is an increase from the previous rating of 3. CFD2 is one of only ninety-seven fire organizations nationwide to have received a Class 1 ISO rating. ISO evaluates the fire suppression capabilities of fire organizations across the country according to a uniform set of criteria in areas such as: emergency communications, equipment, staffing, training, station locations, operations, community risk reduction and water supply. Information gathered is used to assign PPC ratings. These ratings are utilized by insurance companies in establishing insurance premiums for homes and businesses. CFD2's achievement of a Class 1 rating may provide an opportunity for residents and business owners within the fire district to see savings on their insurance premiums. Home and business owners served by CFD2 may want to contact their insurance agents for further information. ■



John Rosher, 17, of Mission Hills earned 137 merit badges through Boy Scouts of America

Preparing for Power Outages

- If you are able, call -888-LIGHT-KC (544-4852). This is the fastest way to get your information to KCP&L crews who are working to restore power.
- Stay away from power lines, meters, and other equipment. Always assume a downed power line is still energized and do not approach it.
- Follow the manufacturer's guidelines if you use a generator and only operate it outdoors. If used indoors or in a garage, carbon monoxide fumes can build up and cause serious injury or death.
- Turn off most of your lights and unplug appliances and other electronic equipment to avoid overload damage when power is restored.
- Unplug any heat-producing devices, like irons and stoves, to reduce the danger of fire if power is restored while you are away.
- Avoid opening your freezer and refrigerator doors. A full freezer will keep its temperature for about 48 hours if the door remains closed.

Hiring for Tree Work?

As you drive the tree lined streets of Mission Hills it is easy to see what an important asset the tree canopy is to the City. Preserving and growing this canopy is a priority of the City Council. One important way to insure the health of City's tree canopy is consult experienced professionals in its care and maintenance. Beginning January 1, 2016, any company engaging in pruning, trimming, spraying, treatment or removal of a tree on any property within the City of Mission Hills will be required to have an Urban Forestry License. The annual license, which includes a \$25 fee, is also intended to provide the City a list of tree care businesses doing work in the City so that we can better communicate with them about City policies and processes. The license does not apply to homeowners doing tree work on their own property. Before hiring a tree service to work on your private trees please ask them to apply for an Urban Forestry License with the City. If you have any questions or would like additional information, please contact City Hall. ■



Reminders: Unlimited Trash the Week After Christmas and Christmas Tree Pick-up

- The week of December 28 there will be unlimited trash collection – no overage stickers are required for trash items that are outside the rolling cart on your pick-up day that week.
- Deffenbaugh will be collecting live Christmas trees on Monday, December 28 and Monday, January 4. Please be sure to remove all decorations prior to placing at curb.



6300 State Line Road
Mission Hills, KS 66208

The Columns is published three times a year for the residents of Mission Hills.

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63rd Street Bridge and Street Closure in 2016

The City has spent the last three years planning for the 2016 replacement of the 63rd Street bridge at the intersection of Wenonga Road and Indian Lane. Before the City begins construction of the project, which will also include redoing the 63rd Street roadway, curbs, gutters and driveway approaches from Mission Road to State Line Road, the utility companies will be completing improvement projects of their own. WaterOne will be laying a new water main on 63rd Street from Mission Road to Mission Drive and Kansas Gas Service will be installing new pipe connections at each point where 63rd intersects a side street. The utility company projects will begin in January and the bridge and roadwork will begin in April with all work, weather permitting, to be completed by October 1. Please be prepared to experience regular street closures and detours for the duration of the project, the City asks for your patience as we complete this important infrastructure improvement. Once the project begins, updates will be posted on the City's website and on the Mission Hills My Community mobile app. ■

City Calendar

At a Glance

- | | |
|-----------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| November 26-27 | Thanksgiving Holiday
CITY HALL CLOSED |
| December 25 | Christmas Holiday
CITY HALL CLOSED |
| January 1 | New Year's Holiday
CITY HALL CLOSED |
| January 18 | Martin Luther King Jr.
CITY HALL CLOSED |
| January 20 | Annual Joint Homes
Association Meeting @
Indian Hills Country Club
@ 6:00 PM |