

THE COLUMNS

A Publication for the Residents of Mission Hills

August 2022

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BULKY ITEM PICKUP September 17, 2022

Items must be placed
at the curb no later
than 7:00am

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A Letter from Mayor Dickey

Fellow Residents:

We are well into summer and the wonderful green spaces of our City look great. From the marvelous plantings of Sunken Garden (thank you to the Parks Board), to the gorgeous flowerbeds of so many of your homes, or simply to the towering tree canopy, we live in a very beautiful place!

In mid-July you should have received another dedicated letter providing an update on our Crime & Safety progress. As I noted in that letter, we still have work to do. We also still need your help – so lock your cars, don't leave keys or valuables in them and don't hesitate to call 913-642-5151 (police non-emergency line) if you see something unusual. That letter can be found on the City's website if you do not recall receiving it. One final note here, we recently trapped and removed one of the coyotes that has taken up residence in our City and will continue attempting to trap any others.

Our enormous project on Tomahawk continues to move along on time and on budget. We've had a surprise or two along the way, but the staff and our contractors have been creative and adaptive. I am highly optimistic we'll be done by our target date later this fall, and you will be pleased with the changes. I also want to thank those who live on Tomahawk for their patience!

If you have not been to one of our City events this year, I hope you will join us for one or more of those remaining! The Community Engagement Committee has done a fabulous job planning, and the weather has been generally cooperative. We are fortunate to live in a community with great greenspaces and engaged residents, so please come out and meet more of your neighbors. The remaining events are listed on the inside the newsletter and may also be found on the City's website.

Changing gears.

Annually the Council and Staff do a strategic budget retreat in advance of the preparation of the following year's budget. We review our five-year capital plan, look at multi-year revenue and expense projections, and establish priorities to ensure we are spending tax dollars wisely.



Letter from the Mayor (continued)

We have a long history of staying current with our infrastructure. I drive Tomahawk (well, I did before the project!) every day to work. When I cross the State Line into Missouri, I am just amazed at how the road, curbs and sidewalks change. It's stark. If you have not, please take a moment to compare Tomahawk or 63rd street on either side of the State Line. As is readily apparent from this comparison, once you fall behind on infrastructure, catching up is very difficult and expensive.

In 2017, we recommended a 0.25% sales tax to be dedicated to maintaining our infrastructure at the highest level. Our projection at the time showed we had a potential structural deficit for capital of approximately \$250,000 annually. We felt the best way to fill this gap was with a sales tax (and not a mil levy increase) for two primary reasons.

First, we "export" approximately 30-40% of that tax to non-residents who belong to one of the three clubs in our City. Those non-resident members use our roads and other infrastructure, so having them contribute to that maintenance makes sense.

Second, the bulk of our non-club sales tax revenue is realized through ecommerce sales. Like my example above, the more you order, the more delivery trucks travel into the City creating wear and tear. So, in this sense, a sales tax appropriately puts some of the burden on those using infrastructure the most.

Over the past four years the sales tax has funded approximately 11% of our updated lane miles of roadway (and curbs where we did them), or 1.4 miles of road. Some of that sales tax is going toward the Tomahawk Project, which helped us capture matching funding from the county.

In 2017 we purposefully put a five-year sunset on the sales tax to ensure that the Council and Staff would have to evaluate its benefit and whether an extension would be needed. We also believe that we should be able to clearly explain those benefits to you as taxpayers if renewal is warranted.

So, on the November ballot, we will be asking you to renew the 0.25% dedicated infrastructure sales tax for another five years. We have a clear capital plan (which can also be found on the City's website) that allows us to maintain our roads, curbs, sidewalks and bridges at the level of quality you expect. I hope you will support this extension in November. Should you have any questions, any Council member or I would be happy to answer them! Thank you in advance.

In closing, we live in a very special community with great natural beauty, wonderful homes and engaged residents. I want to again thank all those residents who volunteer their time, talents and energy for our City. Your involvement helps make us better every day, and is most appreciated. Thank you again.

As always, please continue to provide us feedback on how and where we can do better. You are welcome to call City Hall at 913-362-9620 or email info@missionhillsks.gov. You are always welcome to email me directly at mayor@missionhillsks.gov.

Have a wonderful summer!

Out on a Limb; Tree Talk

Jesse Kirk, *City Arborist*



As I write this at the end of June, we have been going through a period of extreme heat. What started out as a late spring with ample moisture sure turned hot quick! For as cool and wet as we were at the beginning of spring, we seemed to have minimal anthracnose (foliar fungus that prefers cool wet weather) infections compared to previous years. Some factor in that disease triangle just wasn't there to favor the disease. By the time this newsletter comes out, it will be too late in the season to worry about controlling foliar fungus and bagworm control will be getting difficult. Hot dry weather favors spider mites so be on the look out for those as we move through summer into fall. You can check for spider mites by holding a white sheet of paper under a branch and tapping the branch and foliage against the sheet. Look for the small slow-moving specks on the sheet to verify spider mites are present. Spider mites aren't strong crawlers so high-pressure water blasts are an effective means of control, but you'll need to be certain you're thoroughly blasting all sides of the foliage and repeated sprays will likely be required.

As we get into the hotter drier months, stressed and recently planted plants will require supplemental water. Plants that are struggling due to root loss or unestablished root systems will need deep, soaking waterings to thoroughly saturate the soil around their roots. People often think that since they're running their irrigation systems daily, they're adequately watering their trees as well, but turf and your tree's fine absorptive roots aren't generally occupying the same soil depths. Using a soaker hose or turning your hose to a trickle and moving it around within the dripline of the tree every fifteen minutes or so is a great way to ensure that your trees are getting the water they need to thrive.

Some species should only be pruned during the dormant season to minimize disease transmission. In our area this is primarily the oaks to prevent oak wilt. Oak wilt is spread when small beetles move from feeding on infected trees to fresh wounds on nearby trees. Obviously, we don't always have the luxury of waiting until late fall or winter so when you're forced to prune oaks during the growing season it is necessary to use tree wound paint to cover the fresh cuts. Outside of using pruning paint to minimize disease transmission it's an outdated practice that is no longer recommended.

Oak leaf itch mites were a big topic a couple of years ago. Those mites were predators of fly midges. That year we saw lots of marginal leaf galls on oaks that housed the fly midges. Until we start to see an increase in the galls, I don't suspect we will have another banner year for the itch mites. So far, I haven't seen any indication that this will be that year.

Solid Waste Service - Update

We want residents to know we recently sat down with representatives from Waste Management to review the past 6 months of service as well as iron out any potential and ongoing issues. They have made a few adjustments on their end and are happy to receive your calls at [913-631-3300](tel:913-631-3300) for any issues or questions you might have. Additionally, please remember these items for your disposal service:



- Collection times may vary, so please have all (Trash, Recycling, and Yard Waste) put out on your collection day by 7am.
- Collection can occur as late as 7pm on your collection day.
- Bundles of sticks for yard waste need to be no longer than 4 feet with a diameter of the bundle less than 18 inches and secured with twine (no wire).
- Landscaping timber is not allowed in yard waste but is as trash.
- Please keep all plastic bags out of the recycling.

Upcoming Events



Annual Tree Lighting
11/20



YOGA in the Park
8/27



Bulky Item Pick-up
9/17



Shredding & E-cycle
Event
9/17



Coffee with
a Cop
10/5



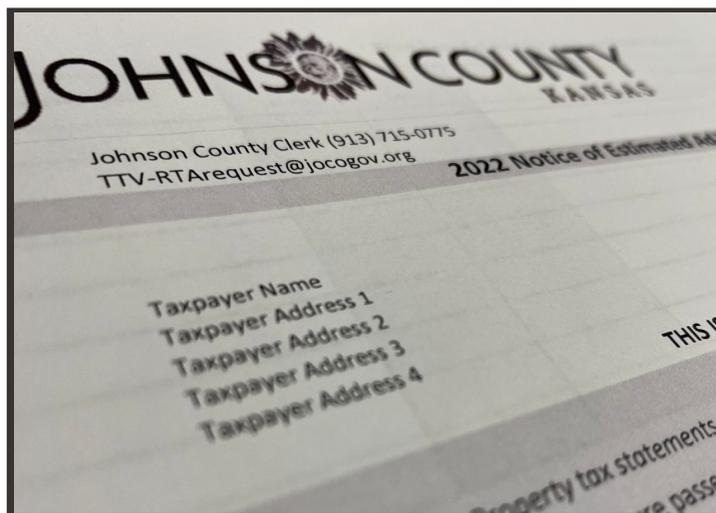
Movie in the Park
10/1



Diner à Verona
9/24

Revenue Neutral Rate - Upcoming Notice

Recent changes in state law require Kansas counties to mail a notice to each property owner in early August that details the current and proposed tax rate for each taxing subdivision related to that property. Taxing subdivisions include the counties, cities, school districts, fire districts, library and parks districts, etc. Specifically, the notice will reference whether each taxing subdivision is exceeding the revenue neutral rate. If an entity is proposing to use more property tax revenue in the next budget year compared to the current year, they are exceeding the revenue neutral rate and must hold a public hearing. If this all sounds new to you, that's because this will be the first-year property owners are receiving these notices.



While the City of Mission Hills proposes to continue its long-standing policy of holding the City's portion of the mill levy flat, we must still hold a public hearing. The hearing is scheduled for Monday, September 12 at 5:30 pm at City Hall. It is important to note this notice is not a bill. You will still receive your annual property tax statement from Johnson County in early November. For additional information, please visit the Johnson County website at www.jocogov.org/EstimatedTaxNotice.

The Go Green 2022! Environmental Fair

You're invited to come learn more about how being green can save green through energy efficiencies, local products and more!

The City of Mission Hills - with neighboring cities in Northeast Johnson County - is hosting Go Green 2022! on Saturday, September 17th from 9 a.m. - noon at the Powell Community Center in Mission. This free, family-friendly environmental fair will show how each small step you take can help reduce your carbon footprint at home, school and work and save money in the process.

Go Green 2022! will include vendors, children's activities, door prizes, giveaways and entertainment. For more information, check out our website at www.mission.org/gogreen.





MISSION HILLS

K A N S A S

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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