




The Official Newsletter of The City of Audubon Park



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Janette Mercer, City Clerk*

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MAYOR'S MUSINGS

Dorn Crawford

With the end of the year at hand, there's a quick opportunity to reflect, and to look ahead, before the day-to-day routine quickens once gain. I hope everybody's having an enjoyable holiday time, and can resume school, work and other commitments refreshed and reinvigorated. It's hard to believe this year has gone by so fast.

The City continues to gain stability and civic and fiscal health, much of it achieved by a focus on expressed community concerns, responding to immediate problems and demands, and meeting deferred maintenance and capital needs as resources permit. Best practices to support and sustain these efforts have been developed on the fly, though, so standardized procedures and continuity plans are still needed to document the work done, and stretch a sound present footing into a secure future for the City. This is the low-visibility part of the enterprise, until you think about how long and hard it's been moving many projects and programs along without an existing routine in place. Count on a surge in this behind-the-scenes foundation work in the months ahead.

City leadership and staffing have undergone some inevitable transitions. A new City Council took office at the year's beginning, two-thirds of its membership brand new, but has quickly mastered its agenda with energy and enthusiasm. Police Chief Doug Sweeney accepted a senior position in Metro government in November – but with the strong team he built, succession was smooth. Deputy Chief Mike Minniear

has been appointed as Chief; training officer Teddy Laun as Deputy Chief; and patrol officer Chris Heaps as training officer, all with commensurate promotions effected at the December Council meeting. Two new patrol officers, Tommy Harlow and Todd Mottley, also joined the force; see their introductions later in this issue, and please welcome them as they appear on our streets. Our City Attorney, Katie Reisz, has moved into other areas of practice in her firm, and Samuel 'Chip' Hayward Jr is now in office with us. Chip is an established practitioner of municipal law, serving several years as city attorney for the city of Green Spring, and others represented by his firm.

The City's improved stature, and local contacts, especially in law enforcement, have helped readily replace people who do depart. Enhanced morale, dedication and commitment are encouraging people to stay. And we've been very lucky in borrowing the valuable time and effort of many resident elected and appointed officials from other demanding jobs.

Those who've had recent business with City Hall know the key players who hold it all together: City Clerk/Treasurer Janette Mercer, who keeps the records, pays the bills, and dispenses all manner of advice and assistance; Susan Gordinier, part-time bookkeeper doing regular financial reporting, fiscal recordkeeping, and participation in the budgeting and auditing process; Chief Mike Minniear, noted above, who with his intrepid crew keeps us safe and orderly, enforcing the City Code and all manner of local, state and Federal law; and Public Works operator Jason Payne, who mows, plows, repairs and maintains our precious City resources.

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Most of the City's officials and board appointments have been filled, at least once, including the ranks of the Code Enforcement, Ethics, Forest, and Parks and Recreation Boards. Vacancies continue to come up in these important positions, of course, as resident moves and other demands arise, so it's been especially encouraging to see continued interest in supporting these important City functions. Please inquire, or expect a tap on the shoulder, if you have an interest or aptitude in one or more of these areas, and a willingness to contribute.

Outreach efforts to promote community networking have been strenuous and ongoing, including comprehensive Web postings and archives; energetic social media interaction; electronic mail feeds for both routine and emergency notices; hard-copy mail for state-mandated materials; monthly Council meetings, and periodic town hall gatherings; topical surveys; quarterly newsletters; and old-fashioned phone and office calls, and over-the-fence conversation. Having effective means to get the word out, and to hear what comes back, is at least as important a priority as the substance itself.

Capital projects. With the City's fiscal health recovered, some deferred maintenance and capital improvements are ongoing. Rotting window frames and their leaky single panes have been replaced in the most vulnerable areas of City Hall, and the rest budgeted. Failing furnace and air conditioning units in the police station upstairs have been replaced, and a more serious system overhaul for downstairs is being bid. Entrance columns have been professionally restored, and arrangements set for regular protective care; power supplies for lighting (electric, gas, or both) have been more difficult to arrange affordably, but efforts continue. Aged and unreliable service vehicles have been sold, and replaced where essential. The most urgent road repairs and repaving have gone forward, and remaining needs charted for the coming year, as resources permit. Much work still remains, for sure, but progress is encouraging.

In this improving fiscal environment, much has been learned about proper accounting to conserve available funds from year to year, to support big-ticket, long-term capital investments like road repair, parks development, legal exposure, storm damage recovery, and reforestation. Research accompanying the current audit, together with fund management tools already adopted, have yielded management and reporting techniques we can use to carry over and incorporate unspent funds to complete unfinished work and/or meet future needs.

Non-capital projects. Less visible, but just as urgent for our health as a community, are the updating, revising and streamlining of the City's legal and administrative systems for documentation, planning and procedures. Major efforts continue, at the frustratingly slow pace forced by the broad scope of these tasks. The City's code of ordinances is being updated to conform to the last 20 years of new state law; restructured to make a coherent body out of the patchwork of provisions adopted over its lifetime; and simplified to minimize duplication, overlap, obscure text and obsolete provisions.

Similar projects are chartered or under way targeting the City's employee handbook; Council orientation materials; staff procedure manuals; records management system; insurance coverage; and tax assessment and collection system. Ongoing litigation is being rigorously defended, to minimize the City's exposure or vulnerability.

This year also marked the occasion for state review of the credentials and professional standing of the City's police force, which affirms its eligibility for KLEFPF (Kentucky Law Enforcement Foundation Program Fund) stipends to full-time officers, and so helps confirm the City's standing as a credible player in local law enforcement. Chief Minniear faced this very demanding effort in his opening days, and earned high marks and endorsements from the inspector.

The City took on an ambitious effort this year to acquire a new insurer, after recurring experience with

both rising premiums and increasingly common reservations on coverage. As you may know, after policing and waste management, this is the single greatest item of expense in the City budget. Review and evaluation of proposals eventually produced an arrangement with the Reisert Agency, whose primary vendor is The Travelers. The new policies provide a considerable increase in coverage, reduced prospects of reservation, and an overall savings of several thousand dollars in premiums. We look forward to working with agent Ben Curtis and his team.

Waste management. This was the first full year of our current three-year waste collection contract with Waste Management, LLC, with all services provided on Tuesdays; consolidated services for multiple dwellings; large wheeled recycling carts issued to all customers; and updated customer service provisions – all at a net reduced cost amounting to about \$75 annually for each single household. The new contract arrangements seem to be working fairly smoothly so far, though close monitoring continues.

Utility and service work. This year saw several utility projects undertaken, large and small, bringing opportunities to remind service providers of their obligation to keep residents informed, and to treat their property responsibly. The main oversight tool we have is the permitting process required for utility work in the City. Please insist that anyone who wants to enter your property show a proper permit – or call City Hall and ask if one’s been issued. Our police are prepared to assist in resolving any situation that may result. This also helps with outreach, so all providers can be better informed of the reasonable protective and communications functions the City performs.

Among the more prominent projects were those involving fiber-optic cable for super-fast Internet access. AT&T installed trunk lines last year along the main routes in the western part of the City, to Oriole Drive. Individual residences are being commented to these lines as services are ordered by private customers. While expected, no application has yet reached City Hall for extending the project into the rest

of the City, east of Oriole. Some related issues such as deficient preparatory tree trimming remain under scrutiny and follow-up.

The Google “uniform franchise agreement” for fiber-optic service in the metro area was a subject of intense effort by the Jefferson County League of Cities, but was not successfully concluded, and the County Attorney has advised cities to proceed individually. AT&T’s suit challenging an unexpected Metro ordinance allowing third parties (like Google) to move existing equipment on utility poles to accommodate new lines remains pending, and may have contributed to delaying the project, and to rumored changes in installation plans to a below-ground scheme.

More broadly, telecommunications franchising has been heavily impacted by a recent state Supreme Court decision against the centralized fee collection and distribution system previously operated by state government. Developing our own independent fee structure and franchise arrangements for each telecomm vendor poses a profound administrative challenge ahead.

Forest Management. The Forest Board has done a terrific job of maintaining and restoring our urban canopy, helping to counter the effects of nearby barren areas like the fairgrounds and the airport. It’s an inspiration to watch their work, and a privilege to pitch in when they call for help. Additional City revenue was made available this year to support the Board’s work, and helped pay for major projects like cabling and structural pruning of older trees in the parks. In addition to age and urban environment, the emerald ash borer has joined other insect and disease threats to complicate the Board’s work, so they deserve special thanks and support for their steely determination to restore and sustain this defining feature of our community.

Parks Development. Because our small parks are public spaces, in addition to maintaining their natural beauty, it’s important they attract people, especially our children, with facilities they want to use. The

'playscapes' initiative begun by the Forest Board has placed fun things that blend smoothly into a natural environment: tire swings and log hops, and potentially treehouses, underbrush fortresses, and so on. A reconstituted Parks & Rec Board will be working to identify more suitable locations and facilities for the new generation. Tire and infant swings now hang in Wren, Oriole and Crossbill Parks, with adjoining log hops in the first two. Other developments are expected to follow.

Community Activities. This year provided an outstanding combination of public and private fun in our public spaces, from a memorable Dogwood Festival celebration, to an Easter egg hunt and Arbor Day planting in Robin Park, to a second-grade class's school's-out picnic and squirt-gun fight in Wren, to an excellent Independence Day parade starting from Oriole, to a spectacular block party on Dove Road, and a standout fall Auktoberfest. The Parks & Rec Board will be studying other prospects, like collateral support for existing events (e.g., Memorial and Veterans Day flag ceremonies, Garden Tour, Community Christmas celebration), and new activities like movie nights, concerts, farmer's market collaboration, a 5- or 10K run event, and similar possibilities.

Forest management, parks and community activities are all major undertakings whose success is a direct function of your volunteer support. As the City works on outreach channels and appeals for participation in the months to come, please consider where you can pitch in, for specific events or in an ongoing role. Be a proud civic player! The City gets programs that can keep performing. You get bragging rights, and the pride of playing a direct part in the vibrant Audubon Park community we all know and love.

There seems little risk of idle time in the effort to keep up with this large City agenda. I know we'll keep doing our best. When Jason, and the police patrols, and that guy on the bike go by, don't forget to wave! Best wishes for the last of the holiday season, and peace and prosperity in the new year!

SPEED BUMPS

Contribution by Councilor Lisa Weaver

You may have noticed that temporary speed bumps have been placed at the stop signs on Audubon Parkway at the five way intersection of Audubon, Chickadee and Cross Bill. This is an experiment by your City to see if the speed bumps will help slow down the traffic on the Parkway and also keep motorists from "rolling through" the stop signs at that intersection.

These will soon have to be taken up to facilitate snow clearing; but we still hope to get your opinion, as residents of Audubon Park, as to whether or not you think this is a viable or helpful solution to the problem. Here's a last chance to be involved in a decision that will affect all of our citizens!

Please fill out the following short survey and let us know your thoughts. The trial is nearing its end, so please take time to provide your thoughts, if you haven't already done so. Your response can be returned to City Hall by any of the available channels – phone, fax, mail, email, media message, or drop-by. The results will be compiled and brought before the Council for discussion.

Thank you, in advance, for your thoughts!

The speed bumps are effective, make them permanent.

Yes No

The speed bumps do not help, remove them.

Yes No

The speed bumps help, but are unsightly, find another solution.

Yes No

There is no problem at this intersection.

Yes No

Comments: _____

PUBLIC SAFETY UPDATE

Chief Mike Minniear

There have been some major changes recently in our Police Department. Chief Doug Sweeney accepted a position as supervisor over permits for events at the City of Louisville. I'm proud to succeed him as the new Chief of Police, after serving as Deputy Chief for over four years. Sergeant Teddy Laun is the new Deputy Chief of Police. She just reached her third year with the Audubon Park Police Department. I'm retired from the Louisville Metro Police Department, and Major Teddy Laun is retired from the Shively Police Department. Many of you know us, and we are pleased to take on new leadership challenges in Audubon Park.

We are very excited to have Officers Tommy Harlow and Todd Mottley join the Audubon Park Police Department, after retiring as Lieutenants with LMPD. Both these men have dedicated their lives to protecting their community and come to us highly recommended. Please note their biographical sketches below.

The Audubon Park Police Department is very fortunate that these two outstanding men have chosen to join our ranks. There is no doubt they will each provide a high level of professional dedicated service to the City and our residents. When you see them out and about in the City, please take a moment to say hello and welcome them to the Audubon Park family.

HELLO - WHO'S THERE?

Audubon Park continues to attract talented people, in both its resident volunteer officials and its employees. The bad news is, this creates turnover, as people of this caliber are actively sought in other challenging assignments. The good news is, we've been very fortunate in finding equally skilled and motivated replacements. Here are the latest additions to our police force you should meet.



Tommy Harlow
Police Officer

Officer Tommy Harlow was born in Lebanon, Kentucky, and grew up primarily in the Louisville area. He graduated from North Bullitt High School in 1983. He is a proud veteran of the United States Navy and was stationed in Italy during his four-year enlistment. Tommy retired from the Louisville Metro Police Department in 2007 as a Lieutenant. District Detective, K-9 Officer, and Bike Officer were just a few of his many positions with the police force. He is currently a sergeant with the Louisville Fire Department in his tenth year. Tommy is married and a proud father of three children. While raising three kids and working full time, he was able to earn a degree in Business Management from Jefferson Community College. His hobbies include recreational softball, basketball, and cycling with his family.



Todd Mottley
Police Officer

Officer Todd Mottley was born and raised in Louisville. He graduated from DeSales High School in 1988. In 1992, he received a Bachelor of Science in Police Administration/Criminal Justice from the University of Louisville. Todd is also a retired Lieutenant from the Louisville Metro Police Department. Narcotics and Street Crimes Detective were among his favorite positions, but being a member of the SWAT Team topped the list. Todd has taken advantage of opportunities to further his education and develop his leadership skills: he completed the Southern Police Institute Administrative Officers Course in 2014, and the FBI National Academy in 2015. St. Xavier hired Todd recently as Head of Security. Missy, his wife, is a retired Louisville Metro Police Sergeant, and they have raised two children together. Sporting events with his children, fishing, and working out are his favorite hobbies.

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AUDUBON PARK GARDEN CLUB NEWS

Joanne Bader

Community Christmas Celebration Open House

The Audubon Park Garden Club welcomed a nice crowd to its annual Community Christmas Celebration at City Hall, which was held on a chilly but clear evening Sunday, December 10th from 6-8 pm. Nearly 50 neighbors and friends came to this event, which ushers in the holiday season and focuses on fellowship and community spirit! The Garden Club provided wonderful refreshments, including hot cider and delicious baked treats. The winners of the cash door prizes were Dr. Peter Tanguay (\$50) and Andrew Klump (\$100).

Residents have traditionally been asked to decorate doorways and homes to ensure that Audubon Park looks its best for the many visitors who enjoy driving or strolling through our City during the holiday season to see the beautifully decorated homes in our historic neighborhood. It has been wonderful to see more homes decorated with colorful Christmas lights this year (especially on Oriole Drive).

The Garden Club would like to thank the many residents who helped decorate the lampposts along Audubon's streets, and would encourage those streets that don't currently decorate to join in next year! The beautifully decorated lampposts add to the festive atmosphere and definitely help everyone get in the holiday spirit. The Community Christmas Celebration (and City newsletter) would like to acknowledge those decorating volunteers: *Audubon Parkway – Vernon Weickel; Cardinal – Rob Mullen, John Nunnally, Rob Gates and Steve Stevens; Falcon – Carl Heger and Jody Schaefer; Linnet – Ernie and Glen Diemer; Oriole – Mark Abel and Jack Conlin; Robin – Don Brumleve; Thrush – Victor and Linda Perrone.* If you know who decorates the lampposts on your street not recognized here, please call Anita Garrison at 637-8837 so we can add their names to our lists.

Residents Help in Brightside Cleanup in October

Nine intrepid resident volunteers came out on a pleasant Saturday morning for the semiannual Brightside cleanup effort held on October 21st. Under the direction of new volunteer coordinator (and resident) Marie Eff, several bags of trash, weeds, and leaves were collected as the group beautified the City's western entrance on Preston Highway. The group was pleased to see less trash than normal! The next Brightside clean up will be held in April 2018, usually on the third Saturday of the month. Hope you can join us then!

Festival of the Dogwood

Although it is still several months away, please mark your calendars for the upcoming Festival of the Dogwood, which will be held during the month of April, with the annual Band Concert scheduled for April 15th. The Garden Club hopes that we can encourage more residents to light up their trees, homes or other flowering plants or shrubs next year – and remember, don't wait 'til the last minute to purchase spotlights, as these are often sold out just prior to the festival. More information will be provided about the festival in the spring newsletter delivered to residences in March.

Upcoming Garden Club Programs

The Garden Club hosts a monthly program series from September to May. These monthly programs are open to all residents and their guests, and are held at Audubon Park City Hall, 3340 Robin Road, beginning at 1 pm (unless otherwise noted).

Membership is no longer restricted to Audubon Park residents only.... If you know of anyone interested in joining the Garden Club, please have them contact Membership Chair, Janet Shumate, at 636-0111 or Club President, Jane Jonczy, at 239-4468 for more information. Membership in the Garden Club is \$25 per year. A full listing of Garden Club Programs for the upcoming year can also be found on the city's Web site: www.audubonparkky.org, in the Garden Club heading under the Community tab. Upcoming programs include:

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Monday, January 8, 2018, "Louisville Urban Growers," with guest speaker Whitney Sewell from Louisville Grows.

Monday, February 12, 2018, "Gardening for Songbirds," with guest speaker Jacquelyn McGrail, a Master Gardener, Landscape Design Consultant, and Past President of the Rambler Garden Club. This event, our potluck winter luncheon, is held at Audubon Baptist Church, 1046 Hess Lane at 11 a.m. Guests are welcome.

Monday, March 12 2018, "Irises," with guest speaker Robert Strohman from the Louisville Iris Society.

Monday, April 19, 2018, "Peonies," with guest speaker Jeff Wallitsch from Wallitsch Nursery and Garden Center.

Tuesday, May 9, 2017, "Installation of Officers." This meeting is the annual spring luncheon, held at Audubon Country Club, 3265 Robin Rd, at 11:45 a.m. Reservations are required, and there is a fee for the luncheon. Contact Grace Worful at 375-9041 for reservations or additional information. Weather permitting, the group will carpool to Whitehall Gardens, 3110 Lexington Road, following the luncheon.

Gardening Tidbits:

The Garden Club is selling soil knives (AM Leonard deluxe) for \$25 each, as well as Atlas Palmflex garden gloves for \$6 a pair, in sizes S, M, L, and XL. Contact Janet Shumate at 636-0111 if you would like to purchase these items. They make great gifts!

FRIENDLY REMINDERS

In addition to community calendars, event notices, meeting schedules, and official information, the entire City Code of Ordinances is available on the Web site, AudubonParkKY.org, with provisions on parking, permit requirements, nuisance abatement, and all the rest. Please visit often!

- Speed limits and other traffic control measures are strictly enforced, for your safety and security. The City speed limit is 25 mph.
- There is no parking permitted on the street between 2 AM and 6 AM. There is also no parking permitted on the grass. Please inform visitors of this important information.
- Pets must be leashed or otherwise under their owner's physical control when outside. When dog walking, *please pick up after them.*
- Building, tree, and property sale permits are issued through City Hall. If you have a project in mind, a tree you would like to trim or remove on the easement, or if you would like to have a yard sale, please call or come by City Hall for more information on obtaining a permit.
- Report any streetlights that are out of order or malfunctioning to City Hall, at 637-5066. This input will be relayed to LG&E for repairs.
- Please discourage children and others from climbing trees in the various City parks, out of concern for both safety and potential damage.
- Information regarding ash trees and the emerald ash borer is available at City Hall, and on the Forest Board's archive Web site, TreeCommittee-APKY.org.
- Waste of all types – garbage, recycling and yard waste – is collected on Tuesdays (with occasional exceptions for holidays). Garbage is picked up from behind your house, while yard waste and recycling items are to be placed at the curb. Be sure to report any missed collection to City Hall.

Be Safe While Walking, Biking or Running

Please wear reflective clothing or other reflective gear – or, better still, carry powered lights – if you are out running, biking or walking in reduced light. It can be very difficult to see you if you are wearing dark clothing! Please take personal responsibility for this so accidents don't occur – you may be harder to see than you think!

FOREST BOARD NEWS

Leah Netherland, Chair

The winter season is a very busy time for Forest Board members. We now have 160 trees in the right of way areas that are pruned each year. These are trees that have been planted by the Board and still have low non-permanent branches. The type of pruning that we do is very specific in order to develop and maintain a strong trunk leader. We keep the lower branches small by utilizing multiple reduction cuts over several years so that when we do remove the branches the scar is very small. This scar will eventually heal, and the tree will be less susceptible to disease and storm damage.

And of course, we are still approving sites for new tree plantings. Call Leah Netherland @ 638-8919 for an assessment of your potential tree site.

COMMUNICATIONS

The City is committed to a maximum flow of information and civic dialogue, and has a variety of platforms for these purposes:

- This quarterly **newsletter** with updates, reports and discussions of City programs, events, services and facilities. The newsletter is published on the Web site, social media, and email subscriber list, and every other issue is delivered on paper to all residences.
- The **Web site**, *AudubonParkKY.org*, which is the City's open archive of municipal reference data – organizational, historical, fiscal, legal, and social. Links are also provided to the other media listed.

- **Social media** pages, used to make announcements, schedule activities and events, exchange ideas, and promote dialogue. Three Facebook pages are in use: *Audubon Park Residents*, the main civic page; *Friends of Audubon Park*, with smaller subscription but generally the same content; and *City of Audubon Park Police*, focusing on law enforcement and public safety.
- An **email subscriber list** distributing the newsletter and notices of City activities and events. Please sign up on the Web site, under the Resident Information tab, at "Audubon Park News."
- An urgent **notification system**, with email, text or voicemail options, for emergency and other alert messages. Please subscribe to this system, on the same page, at "ReachAlert."
- The variety of regular public Council and board **meetings**, listed on the Web calendar.
- Or, just dropping by **City Hall**, for information or an informal chat.

Please take advantage of all these resources for civic awareness and engagement.

State law also requires ordinances and some other official notices to be published, either by newspaper, or first-class direct mail. With current newspaper circulation, and rates, mailings are a much better choice – so you may see things like this in your mailbox from time to time.

Beyond those mandates, we're on our own, and just want to find the channels that do the best (and cheapest!) job of getting the word out. What are your thoughts and ideas?



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