

THE COLUMNS

A Publication for the Residents of Mission Hills

Summer 2017

Visit us at
www.missionhillsks.gov

A little care can make
a big difference.



Please be careful and inform yard maintenance professionals that string trimmers and lawn equipment hitting the light poles can chip off the black paint on light poles. These damages increase maintenance costs.

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Sales Tax Election on the November Ballot



Rick Boeshaar
Mayor

In the last newsletter I wrote about the possibility of our City holding an election this summer to maintain the property tax mill levy flat for the 11th year in a row. This would have been needed because of action by the Kansas Legislature. At that time your City Council was beginning to set priorities for the 2018 budget. The top priorities included keeping the property tax mill levy flat, maintaining the safety and security of our residents (even with known cost increases coming via our police contract due to adjustments in police salaries and the replacement of two police cars) and finally the need to repave four streets and repair two areas of our stormwater system in 2018.

The budgeting process is now largely complete and the Council has discussed the options. We found that the costs of the above priorities could not be accommodated without an increase in revenues or the use of a considerable portion of our reserve accounts. Reserves are kept for emergencies. The costs we want to cover are not emergencies. The costs of safety, security, and maintaining our City's infrastructure are ongoing and rising, despite our continuous efforts for efficiency.

We are unanimous in believing that the City should not delay needed capital improvements next year. Pushing those costs "down the road" only compounds the problem in future years. Rather than raising the property tax mill levy, we agreed that we should ask you, the voters, to approve a sales tax increase of ¼ cent to fund the revenue shortfall. If approved, Mission Hills' sales tax for goods and services purchased within our City (at the Country Clubs) or for items delivered to addresses within our City will increase by .25% to a total of 1.25%. The added sales tax will have a "sunset" feature, reducing back to the original 1% tax after five years. By not depleting our reserve accounts, we protect our AAA bond rating and we maintain our ability to respond to one-time emergencies. By using a sales tax, our residents share the burden with others who do not live within our City, but who do use our roads, bridges, and other amenities. Calculations show that our total sales tax receipts are split approximately between residents (70%) and non-residents (30%).

Any increase in the sales tax requires a majority approval from our voters, so we will put that question on the November election ballot.

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Sales Tax Election on the November Ballot

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I, and the rest of your City Council, believe that we have been good stewards of your tax dollars, while maintaining the high level of services you have come to expect. We take care of our roads, bridges, and stormwater systems. We keep the aesthetics of your City (parks, fountains, and tree canopy) excellent, which contribute to the increasing values of your property. We have not raised the property tax mill levy in 15 years. The City’s portion of the sales taxes has not increased since 2005. The costs of maintaining our community are rising faster than we can accommodate via organizational efficiencies.

The choice will be in your hands this November. We recommend you say “yes” by approving the sales tax increase. If not, we will have to plan the best way to slow down our capital improvements.

Community Updates

Google Fiber Update

You will soon see construction crews working in the City of Mission Hills to bring Google Fiber to homes that signed up in 2016. Google anticipates construction will move relatively quickly with minimal disruption to our community. Google Fiber representatives have told us they hope to have service activated by the holidays for residents who have already signed up.

Crews will place a door hanger at your home notifying you work will be underway as the buildout progresses. If you have any questions about Google Fiber's products, please call 844-36-FIBER. If you have construction inquiries, please call 877-454-6959.

What Number Should you Call to Contact the Police Department?

If you are in immediate need of assistance, please call 9-1-1. If you need to contact the Police Department from 8 am to 5 pm, with a non-emergency situation, the operator can be reached at 913-642-6868. The operator will direct your call to the appropriate person based upon your need. To contact the Police Department outside of these hours, the dispatch operator can be reached at 913-642-5151. The dispatch number is answered 24 hours a day, seven days a week.



Thank you to everyone who attended the City of Mission Hills Annual Keim Street Fair.

Are You Prepared for a Disaster?

By Captain Byron K. Roberson
Prairie Village Police Department

Why prepare for disaster? Without warning, disaster can strike and force you and your family to go for days without basic necessities or require you to evacuate your home. Relief workers will be on the scene quickly following a disaster, but they may not be able to reach you immediately. The City's police force is constantly preparing for unfortunate events that affect life, property, and services. The police's Emergency Management Department has the following tips to help a resident plan on what to do before, during, and after a disaster.



A **Basic Emergency Plan** is one of the most important steps in disaster preparedness.

1. Decide what you and your family would do in each potential emergency situation. Choose a place away from your neighborhood where family members can meet in case you are separated and cannot return home due to a disaster.
2. Identify a friend or relative who lives out of the area for family members to contact if you are separated. Post emergency numbers by every phone and teach children how and when to dial 911.
3. Know how to shut off the water, gas, and electricity at the main switches in your home.
4. Plan how to help elderly or disabled neighbors in a disaster.
5. Check that your insurance policies are up-to-date and provide good coverage. Many insurance companies do not cover everything that results from a disaster.

Creating a **Disaster Supply Kit** will help ensure that you have the necessary supplies no matter how fast you may need to evacuate. The following is a list of that will help ensure that your Disaster Supply Kit includes all the essentials.

Water

- Pack at least one gallon per person per day for at least three days
- Store water in tightly sealed, non-breakable plastic, fiberglass, or enamel lined metal containers
- Change your water every six months

Food

- Pack enough food to last each family member for at least three days. Include foods for infants and family members with special diets.
- Include canned and boxed foods because they require little preparation and do not quickly expire. Remember to include a manual can opener or purchase self-opening cans.
- Pack food in sealed metal or plastic container
- Replace food every six months

Tools and Equipment

- Battery or hand crank powered radio
- Flashlights
- Spare batteries
- Resealable plastic bags and heavy duty garbage bags
- Washcloths and towels
- Blankets or a sleeping bag

Personal Items

- Personal identification
- Copies of birth certificates, marriage license, bank account numbers and any other important documents that if lost would be difficult to replace quickly
- Extra car and house keys
- Prescription medications

Stormwater Environmental Grant Opportunity for City of Mission Hills Residents

The City of Mission Hills has received a grant in the amount of \$5,000 from Johnson County for the Stormwater Environmental Grants cost-share program. The program encourages property owners to incorporate stormwater environmental improvements on their property and is intended to help cover the cost of material and/or contractor labor to install such facilities. Funding is subject to availability, as well as applicable laws and provisions including but not limited to the City of Mission Hills Municipal Code. A property owner is allowed to apply for one stormwater environmental grant in a calendar year, and the application must be filed and approved prior to the work occurring. New residential development is not eligible for the grant program.

What is stormwater runoff?

Stormwater runoff is water that is generated when rain, snow melt, and surface drainage flows over land or impervious surfaces and does not percolate into the ground. Impervious surfaces are defined as hard surfaces where water is unable to soak or infiltrate into the ground, such as streets, parking lots, sidewalks, and roof tops.

Where does stormwater go?

As stormwater runoff flows over land and impervious surfaces, it picks up sediment, contaminants, litter, nutrients, and other pollutants which then discharge into our waterways untreated. Unmanaged stormwater could adversely affect waterways causing water pollution, stream bank erosion, and even flooding.

What can I do?

By capturing rain water where it lands and infiltrating or slowing down the stormwater through environmental improvements the pollutants and sediment have a chance to settle out rather than create adverse affects in the City's waterways. These facilities can help promote water quality of our streams and creeks and help the water quality downstream.

If you are interested in applying for the program please review the following conditions:

The applicant shall be responsible for all project costs. The City of Mission Hills will provide reimbursement after the costs have been incurred:

- a. Native Plantings (buffers or swales) – 50% match up to \$1000
- b. Riparian Creek Corridor Plantings – 50% match up to \$1,000
- c. Pervious pavement – 50% match up to \$1000
- d. Rain Barrels – 50% match up to \$75 each (Limit 2 rain barrels)
- e. Native Trees – 50% match up to \$150 each (Limit 2 trees)

The project must be completed by **October 31, 2017**. If the project requires vegetation, it must be installed between April 1st and October 31st 2017. The City of Mission Hills will require access to your property for evaluation of the application prior to the start of construction, during construction, and after construction is complete for final inspection of the project. Implementation of an approved project is the sole responsibility of the property owner. The City of Mission Hills is not liable for personal injury or property damage resulting from said work. Projects approved for funding carry no implied warranty by the City of Mission Hills. It is the responsibility of the property owner for maintaining the stormwater environmental improvement for a minimum of three years. The applicant is responsible for obtaining all permits required by the City. This could include a land disturbance permit, building permit and/or notifying Kansas One Call before beginning any work.

City Expands Online Permits and Licenses

The City of Mission Hills has implemented a new online permitting system to increase efficiency and make the City's permitting process more user-friendly. Resident and contracting applicants can create an account to submit applications and supporting documents, pay fees, and print permits online. Applicants can also keep track of inspections and receive feedback from staff throughout the permit process. The online portal can be accessed by computers, tablets, and smartphones.

How to Create a ViewPoint Account and Start Online Permit Applications

Visit <https://missionhillsks.viewpointcloud.com/> to access the public portal. When you register for the first time, ViewPoint will send you a confirmation e-mail. Inside that e-mail will be a link that you will need to activate your account. If you receive your email on your mobile device, you can activate your account from there too.

What applications can I access through ViewPoint?

With an account, you can apply for building, interior and home demolition, land disturbance, dumpster/POD, garage and estate sale permits. Residents can register alarms and contractors can apply for an occupational license or urban forestry license.

How do I know if a permit has been approved or when to pay my permit fee?

The applicant will receive notification emails from City staff throughout the approval process. The permit fee will be due after the form is reviewed by the inspector and the City Administrator. You will get notice via email once your application has been approved by the City Administrator. At that time, you have the option of paying online (by credit card) or in person. Paying online will save you a trip back to our office. Please note that if you chose to pay by credit card, there is an additional processing fee (this fee will already be included in the estimated fee amount).

What if I do not want to pay with a credit card?

Once you are notified that payment is due, you always can visit City Hall and pay with cash or a check.

Are printed permit placards still required?

Yes, after you pay the fee you will receive a notification with the permit, which can be printed from home or from any computer with access to a printer. Please use yellow paper for building permits and place it in a window or location visible from the street. If you have purchased a dumpster/POD permit place the placard on the outside of the structure, we recommend using a sheet protector to keep the permit information dry. You are welcome to come by City Hall if you would like us to print the placard for you.

How do I schedule an inspection?

You will be able to keep track of purchased inspections and receive permit reports through your login. To schedule inspections, call 913-362-9620 or email info@missionhillsks.gov.

Additional Tips :

- You can monitor the status of the application from home and see if any other action is needed online! Just log in to the site and click on Inbox (on the left) to see any current tasks that need your attention and your current applications.
- Now that you have an account, you can use the same email address and password to apply for all of your future permits.



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

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City Council Adopts Changes to Lighting Regulations

The City Council recently approved changes to the City's zoning and nuisance ordinances regarding exterior lighting. The Planning Commission initiated reviewing the City's exterior lighting regulations because residents expressed concern about the amount of light being generated from homes and on rear yard recreational and living spaces that have recently increased in popularity. City staff researched lighting regulations in other Johnson County cities and comparable cities listed in the Comprehensive Plan. The Architectural Review Board currently reviews exterior lighting fixtures and modification for approval and has a conversation with property owners regarding how exterior lighting can be disruptive to neighbors. Now as part of the final inspection of projects with exterior lighting a police officer on behalf of the City will measure the foot candle(s) of the lights in the evening to make sure the light does not exceed the limit. The Architectural Review Board will also be able to have a more specific conversation about exterior lighting and the light levels allowed during the approval process.

The City Council also adopted a lighting nuisance ordinance that allows police officers to measure the brightness of any exterior lights (new or existing) if the City receives a complaint from a neighbor. If the light level exceeds the allowance, the City will work with the owner to lower the foot candle(s) to the acceptable level. However, as with other nuisance related issues, the City will only intervene if there is a complaint related to exterior lighting.

City Calendar *At a Glance*

September 4 -
City Hall Closed for
Labor Day

September 16 -
Heavy Trash Day

September 16 -
Community
Shredding Event at
4350 Shawnee
Mission Parkway
from 9 am to Noon

November 7 -
Local General
Election
Biographies of
each candidate
will be available
on the City's
website