



CITY OF WESTWOOD, KANSAS

NEWSLETTER

Summer 2022 4700 Rainbow Blvd, Westwood www.westwoodks.org

A MESSAGE FROM THE MAYOR

Friends and Neighbors,

Welcome to Summer 2022 in Westwood! We have many wonderful things happening, and have been working very hard for you and the City, and with this newsletter, I would like to provide a few updates on them. All of these have been included in our weekly "Buzz", or in our posted meeting agendas, or other forums, so please also be sure to sign up for these community updates, and follow the City on our Facebook page as well!

Facilities Studies: In 2021, the City partnered with the Urban Land Institute to analyze future land uses and opportunities for City (or Foundation) owned parcels in the City, or properties on which the City has a purchase option. These include our Public Works building, our City Hall site and adjacent parcels, Dennis Park, the former church site at 5050 Rainbow, and the site of the current (but soon to be former!) Westwood View Elementary School. (The results of that Technical Assistance Panel can be found at westwoodks.org/uli2021tap

In early 2022, the City formed an ad hoc Facilities Assessment Committee to then begin reviewing our current City assets and needs in terms of administration space, public work and police space, parks and green space, and other community needs. My thanks to Lisa Fielden, Holly Wimer, Sean O'Brien, David Kelman, John Sullivan, Chief Curt Mansell, and City Clerk/CAO Leslie Herring for serving on this committee. Based on the committee's recommendation following an open RFP process, the City has engaged the firm of Multistudio (formerly Gould Evans) to prepare a facilities assessment. In addition to our community committee, there will be additional opportunities for public engagement this summer. Again, please sign up for our communication channels so we continue to receive valuable and necessary community input.

Administrative Updates: As mentioned previously in this newsletter, following the long Covid pandemic that separated many of us for so long, the City Council engaged this past year in some long-overdue work with a facilitator to work on our goals, purposes, and responsibilities in the coming months and years. The City Council engaged in this planning initiative, and also held sev-

eral work sessions, and from these, in May the City Council determined that it was best to create a new office of the City Administrator. for the City. A significant amount of time and discussion went into this decision, and while this newsletter may not be able to capture all of the reasons for this update, a few stand out: (1) given the growth and the number of matters facing the City (everything from development, to facilities planning, to major road projects, etc.), it is important to have professional city administration, rather than rely solely on the mayor or city councilmembers (who provide legislative direction and oversight) (Note: in Johnson County, only Westwood Hills and Mission Woods do not have a city administrator position); (2) it provides a clearer organizational chart for members of our staff, especially where the city councilmembers and mayor serve as part-time volunteers, with more consistency in direction; and (3) it allows your City Council to focus more on legislative priorities, visioning, and community input, as opposed to spending their time on day-to-day operations.



Please note that nothing will change as to elections or the makeup of the City Council. There should be no practical change to how our City services are provided to residents. Whereas current positions in City administration consist of the City Clerk/Chief Administrative Officer and the Assistant City Clerk, we expect the new roles will now be one City Administrator, and one City Clerk. The City Administrator will be appointed by the mayor, with the consent of the City Council. As has been the case previously, the Mayor will also continue to appoint the Chief of Police and Public Works Director, with the consent of the Council, and with the recommendation of the City Administrator. Leslie Herring currently serves as our City Clerk and "Chief Administrative Officer" and will be recommended for initial appointment to the role of City Administrator.

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Westwood Foundation Update: The Westwood Foundation recently elected its new officers, and I would like to congratulate residents Justin Bridges (Vice President), Rita Zeller (Secretary), and Sean O'Brien (Treasurer) on their new roles! I will continue to serve as President. Many thanks also to our other Foundation members, Kumud Pyakuryal, Robert Thompson, and Thomas Scott. The Westwood Foundation most recently approved a grant to the Westwood Women's Club for its Belinder Beautification project, and I would be remiss if I did not thank all Club members—particularly Jayme Tebow, Club President—for their work on behalf of our City, continuing to make it inviting for our residents and guests.

Westwood View: As you can see, construction of our new Westwood View is nearly complete, and will be open in time for the beginning of the 2022 school year! I also recently had the opportunity to participate in the



WWV PTA Carnival for its "Dunk the Mayor" fundraiser! Our City Planning Commission, the Westwood View parent committee, plus the PTA and the Westwood View Education Enhancement Fund, have done so much to make this happen for our

community. In addition to the school itself, the City will soon be installing sidewalks on the east side of Belinder Street to support safe access to Westwood View.

I do continue to receive questions about, "What happens now to the existing Westwood View"? At this time, the only plan currently on the table is that, when

the new Westwood View opens, and the children move to the new building, the existing Westwood View will be used to house students from Rushton Elementary, which is planned to be rebuilt. That means Westwood View will still be used as a school for the next several years. However, as part of our facilities assessment, we are beginning the process of considering new uses for the Westwood View site, the interest and ability for development (whether for park space, municipal purposes, housing, or other uses), and the best ways for us, as a City, to approach what new opportunities may come.

Other: In other news: I am pleased to announce that, in May, the City Council passed a resolution supporting the Kansas City Regional Climate Action Plan, sponsored by Climate Action KC and the Mid-America Regional Council (MARC); the permanent improvements to 47th Street (with new sidewalks and streetlights) will also be underway this summer; the Westwood and Roeland Park public works committees have been working together to bring options for "complete streets" improvements to Mission Road; we are having preliminary conversations with KDOT, the Unified Government, the KU Health System, and others to discuss pedestrian and safety enhancements to Rainbow Boulevard; and we recently welcomed the opening of the new Unforked restaurant in Woodside Village!

Finally, as hopefully you know, summer pool passes are now being processed again by the City. During these hot summer months, I hope to see you by the pool, or at our upcoming fireworks event (it's back!), or at July block parties, Movies in the Park, or simply out jogging or biking. Thank you for all you do for our City, and please continue to take care of each other.

Mayor David E. Waters

FACILITIES STUDY PUBLIC PRESENTATION SCHEDULE

The City of Westwood is assessing our real estate holdings, the conditions of our existing City Hall and Public Works facilities, and the opportunities presented by the upcoming completion of the new Westwood View elementary school. The City is working with a consultant team lead by Multistudio to assist with this evaluation. Multistudio will be presenting their final assessment at the September 8th regular City Council meeting.

Until then, we invite you to learn more about this important study and to share your insights and thoughts with us. We will be hosting an information session and conversation at City Hall on July 13th at 6 p.m. and we hope you can join us in-person or on-line (a zoom link will be made available). For those who want to learn more but cannot join, we will be recording the presentation and posting it on the City website homepage.

For more information about this process visit <https://www.westwoodks.org/facilitiesassessment>

COMMUNITIES FOR ALL AGES SURVEY

Day by day, America is getting older. Ten thousand baby boomers turn 65 every 24 hours. According to census projections, by 2050, the number of older adults in America will double to more than 89 million, and more than one out of five Americans will be 65 or older.

The nine-county Kansas City region anticipates the population of those 65 and over will increase by 90 percent during the same timeframe. Westwood will also see an increase in the 65+ population.

With this information, the City of Westwood is participating in the Communities for All Ages Recognition program, an age-friendly city initiative sponsored by Mid-America Regional Council. The City of Westwood invites you to take a few moments to complete a questionnaire on the livability of our city, and your perspective on elements that make a city age-friendly.

Why is this important? An age-friendly community is a

great place to grow up and grow old. As America's population ages, experts believe that the most successful and vibrant communities of the 21st century will be those that are age-friendly: communities that allow for greater mobility, productivity, and optimal health and well-being. We need your input to inform and guide us as we plan for the future.

This survey takes between 15 and 20 minutes to complete. While you may elect to share your contact information, your individual responses are anonymous and will be combined with all responses for the public. A summary of responses will be made available to the public within three months following the deadline.

The Communities for All Ages Survey can be accessed online at <https://www.westwoodks.org/communitiesforallages>. Additionally, paper copies can be picked up at Westwood City Hall or delivered to Westwood homes upon request. Please contact City staff at 913.362.1550 or info@westwoodks.org.

GO GREEN 2022! ENVIRONMENTAL FAIR

Join us for *Go Green 2022!* This FREE family-friendly Environmental Fair aims to show you how each small step you take can help reduce your carbon footprint at home, school and work and save money while doing so. Local businesses and nonprofits will provide information and items to help you live a more sustainable life. This event will include performances by Eco Elvis, and The Green Spirit Band, as well as children's activities.

Go Green 2022 will be held on Saturday, September 17th from 9 a.m. to noon at the Powell Community Center, located at 6200 Martway Street in Mission, Kansas.

Go Green 2022! is brought to you by the Cities of: Fairway, Merriam, Mission, Mission Hills, Mission Woods, Prairie Village, Roeland Park, Westwood and Westwood Hills.

A MESSAGE FROM YOUR POLICE DEPARTMENT

With the warm weather, it has been a pleasure to see an increased number of people using our park. We wanted to take a moment to remind everyone of the Park Rules so everyone can have a safe and enjoyable time.

The park amenities are available on a first come, first served basis. When using the park, please follow these guidelines:

- Tennis court time limits are 45 minutes for singles and 60 minutes for doubles
- Bicycles or skateboards are not allowed inside the parks or public grounds
- Alcoholic liquor or cereal malt beverages are not allowed inside the park
- Please refrain from swimming or wading in the park fountain
- All trash, bottles, or debris should be placed in trash containers

- Excessive noise will not be tolerated, especially in the evening hours that may disturb neighboring residents
- Please refrain from climbing the park's trees

Always be alert. Criminals can be park users, too.

Burglars sometimes use parks to prey on those who are using the park legitimately. Remember to lock your car and do not leave valuables in the passenger compartment. Auto burglars sometimes frequent park areas because they know that people hiking, playing, or napping and may be a distance away from their cars for extended periods of time.

If you see anyone who makes you feel uncomfortable, trust your instincts, and go the other way. Report anything you feel is suspicious to the police department.



Chief Curt Mansell

FEATURED STILES GALLERY

ARTISTS

The Stiles Gallery is dedicated to the memory of Art Coordinator Shirley Stiles. For almost ten years Ms. Stiles arranged for a monthly display of works by a different artist to hang in the art gallery in Westwood City Hall. Ms. Stiles was an accomplished artist and each Friday would meet at City Hall to paint and share techniques with a circle of fellow artists and friends.

Kathy Butler, Ms. Stiles' daughter, continues the work of showcasing local area artists. Thank you Kathy for your dedication to the Gallery

and for helping make Westwood beautiful!

Tina Kolm—July

Tina Kolm is a graphic designer and art instructor. After employment in New York agencies, Tina joined Hallmark Cards as an art director. She has taught graphic design and computer applications at Johnson County Community College and is now a full-time faculty member at the Art Institutes International-Kansas City.

Larry Butterworth—August

Larry Butterworth grew up in Kansas and Nebraska and earned his Bachelor of Fine Arts degree from the

University of Kansas. Painting and drawing have always been his favorite traditional media since he discovered them as a child. Larry has been working with Adobe Photoshop, Adobe Illustrator and photography. Larry enjoys all the media he works with as paths of discovery.

Terry Campbell—September

Terry Campbell was introduced to gytaku in 1987 while attending a veterinary conference in Hawaii. He became infatuated with the art and purchased the first gytaku that he had ever seen. Since that day, he has learned from a number of artists who have and continue to have an influence on his gytaku work.

SUMMER PARKS & RECREATION EVENTS

Mark your calendar and join us for fun summer events in Joe D. Dennis Park!

- Sunday, July 10th @ 4 p.m.—Sprinklers & Squirt guns Event: Grab your squirt toys and come cool off at the park! Big sprinklers and slip 'n slides will be set up and we'll have buckets of water to refill squirt toys.
- Thursday, July 21st @ 7 p.m.—This event will feature a performance by Jill Westera and Them KC Boys. Attendees are encouraged to bring their own lawn chairs, blankets and refreshments. This casual event encourages neighbors to get together and enjoy live music outdoors.
- Saturday, August 6th @ 8:30 p.m.—Movie in the Park: The City will feature Disney's Luca on the big screen in Joe D. Dennis Park. Lemonade and snacks will be available. Attendees are encouraged to bring their own lawn chairs and blankets to this event.
- Saturday, August 27th @ 4 p.m.—Sprinklers & Squirt guns Event: A repeat of the July 10th event to celebrate the end of the summer season.

COMMUNITY SHREDDING & ECYCLE EVENT

A community shredding event will be held on Saturday, September 17th from 9 a.m. to NOON at 4350 Shawnee Mission Parkway, Fairway KS. Proof of residency is required to participate (i.e.: Driver's License, Utility Bill, etc.). More details about this event will be provided on westwoodks.org once they are confirmed.

FALL COMMUNITY GARAGE SALE

IS SEPTEMBER 10TH

A community garage sale will be held on Saturday, September 10th. Those who are interested in participating can fill out an online form at <https://bit.ly/3whzYPy> to register their address and provide hours of operation and a list of items that will be sold. The City will advertise this event online. Participants are always welcome to advertise additionally as they see fit.

If you have any questions please contact Abby Schneewis by calling 913.362.1550 or by email at abby.schneewis@westwoodks.org

OKTOBERFEST IS OCTOBER 1ST

Westwood's annual Oktoberfest celebration will be on Saturday, October 1st in Joe D. Dennis Park. More details about this event will be provided on the City's website once they are confirmed. We hope you can join us for this fun-filled event!

STAY UP TO DATE ON WESTWOOD NEWS

The Westwood Buzz is a short-format communications update distributed via e-mail every Wednesday morning. It keeps residents and patrons updated on events and happenings in the Westwood, Kansas area and is a great way to stay informed between quarterly newsletters. If you or someone you know are interested in signing up scan the QR code in this article or visit westwoodks.org/stayinformedto Sign Up and join our mailing list.

