

Top of the Hill News

Information for the Citizens of Fort Wright

Fall/Winter 2012

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Friends and Neighbors,

I just wanted to take this opportunity to personally say a few words about recent ordinances that the City Council passed that will go into effect either by the end of this year or at the beginning of next year. I will preface my comments by saying that we are aware that none of the three ordinances are or should be popular with most of the residents.

We as City Council are charged with managing the public finances that provide for the Police, Fire, Public Works, Public Administration, and various other public services. Our primary job is to work diligently to plan for and finance these functions in a manner that promotes safety, efficiency, sustainability while preserving our community standards and safeguards our property values.

It is our belief that we (the residents of Fort Wright) own and operate the finest Police, Fire and Public Works Departments in the tri-state. We also have the finest Administrative staff. Our Department Heads and staff consistently provide premiere services as efficiently as possible.

In 2011 we celebrated our Seventieth Birthday as a city. Over the years we have had to change with the times. For many, if not most of our young seventy years we have had the luxury of countless volunteers, and organizations that provided fire and police services on our behalf. Today these services require highly trained and qualified professionals. All of our Police Department, and increasingly more of our Fire and EMS departments are now paid professionals. Volunteers still are a very important part of the Fire Department, however, because of the required training those individuals are more difficult to attract. In fact, as of October 1 of this year we provide full time in-house Paramedic Services to our residents.

All of the city's costs continue to increase, and historically the one service or product that has been easiest to justify short-changing in the budget has been our streets. Police and Fire are obviously the highest priority services that we as a council manage on our (the residents') behalf, however, streets are still a vital part of the total package that require constant attention for both safety and sustainability purposes. Without consistent maintenance and replacement of our streets, they fall into ill-repair and become less safe and compromise the property values of every resident of this city. As streets deteriorate and become less safe, the community suffers economically and aesthetically as well.

On two occasions there have been ballot initiatives attempting to garner enough votes to implement a special property tax to produce money that could only be used for maintenance and repair of our streets. Both ballot initiatives failed. In the time from the first attempt in 2003 until the present, our 5 year street program has fallen seven years behind. Consequently, council has been left with no choice but to find funding mechanisms to raise enough revenue to re-establish a full blown street program in order to fulfill our obligation of being responsible custodians of our city assets and treasure.

Council has spent roughly 2 years exhaustively researching adequate funding mechanism that will provide enough money in the general fund to fund “all” of the services we are required to provide. Infrastructure and Streets are a critical part of these services and council has made the decision to ensure that they are given their fair consideration.

The end result is that Council has decided to spread the burden of costs over three categories. All of these ordinances are available for residents on the City Website.

Ordinance 14-12 Created a Vehicle Sticker Fee of \$35.00 per year* effective January 1, 2013

Ordinance 15-12 Raised the Payroll Tax from 1% to 1.15% effective January 1, 2013

Ordinance 16-12 Raised the Insurance Premium tax from 6% to 8% effective July 1, 2013

Over the course of the past year all of these have been discussed in Open Meetings as well as in committees. Council solicited input and participation through various newspaper articles, the city website and citywide email. Less than ten people attended the meetings or responded in any capacity. My hope is that this is because we are a responsible community that desires to hold ourselves to the highest standard of safety and community. My guess is that this article will provoke some less than flattering feedback. That’s okay. Know that you have elected the most active, conservative council members in Northern Kentucky. Our desire is to make sure that everyone has as much information as possible. We welcome input and suggestions from all of our residents.

Every resident has an ownership stake in all that we are and do.

Best regards,

Joe Nienaber, Jr.

Joe Nienaber, Jr.

Mayor

* Homestead exempt property owners receive \$25.00 off per vehicle--maximum of two

Senior Luncheon

The Annual Senior Luncheon for Senior Residents of Fort Wright will be held on Thursday, November 8, 2012 beginning at 12:00 PM at the South Hills Civic Club.

RSVP’s are a must as space is limited.

Call today to reserve your spot at 331-1700.

City Offices Closed

City Offices will be closed on the following dates for the Holidays:

Thursday, November 22

Friday, November 23

Monday, December 24

Tuesday, December 25

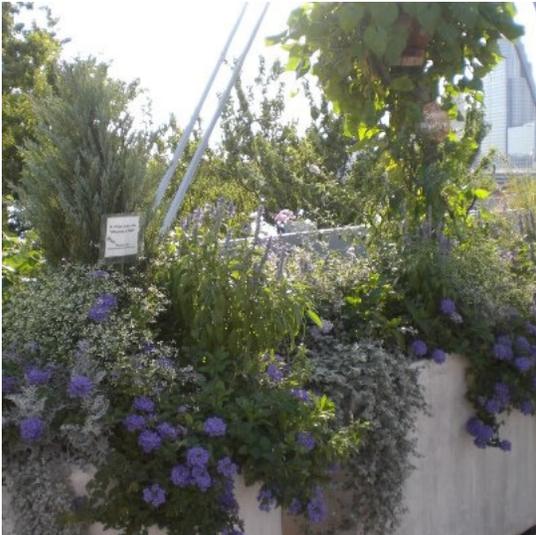
Tuesday, January 1

Fort Wright Garden Club's Garden of the Month Winners

For many years, the Fort Wright Garden Club has chosen some outstanding gardens in the neighborhood for special recognition. One garden on the "east" side of Fort Wright and one on the "west" side are selected for the months of June, July, August and September. The winners for June are John and Betty Barton at 9 Lake Street and Don and Karen Buecker at 44 Park Road. July's winners are Gary and Jeannie Lenhof at 1844 Mt Vernon and Jim and Beth Brueggeman at 275 St. Agnes Circle. The club congratulates them on managing to have a beautiful yard in this difficult growing year.

* * * * *

Fort Wright Garden Club Wins Award



The Fort Wright "Dirty Hands" Garden Club won the prize for best planter in the amateur category for their planting on the Purple People Bridge. The theme for the contest was "Bloomin Music," in honor of the Choir Games. The Fort Wright Club decided to title their 3-container planting, "Rhapsody in Blues" using blue, silver and white plant material and topped off with a hand-made birdhouse with the sign, "Songbirds Welcome."

Marylou Westling, of Morris Road, was the project leader.

The Garden Club welcomes new members. Check their facebook page for date and location.

Christmas Trees



Christmas trees will be mulched in January, watch message board for an exact date to drop the trees off by. Trees can be dropped off at the City Building anytime after December 27th. An area will be marked as in years past. Again, we ask that you remove all ornaments, lights, twine, garland and wire from the trees.



Happy Birthday

November

November 2 - Police Chief Dan Kreinest
November 30 - Public Works Nick Zumdick

January

January 8 - Firefighter/EMT Greg Aylor
January 9 - Police Officer Brian Cornett
January 11 - Firefighter/EMT Michael Gorman

December

December 15 - Police Officer George Kreutzjans
December 20 - Police Officer Jonathan Colwell

February

February 6 - Firefighter/EMT Jared Powers
February 16 - Police Specialist Andy Vonderhaar
February 16 - Firefighter/EMT Tim Deye
February 24 - Police Sergeant Marc Schworer

March

March 7 - Assistant City Clerk Jennifer Lipson
March 29 - Assistant City Clerk Julie Bosley



FORT WRIGHT CIVIC CLUB EVENTS

115 Kennedy Road

'Ladies, Mark Your Calendars!'

"LADIES NITE OUT"

Saturday, November 3rd

7:00 p.m. – 10:00 p.m.

Cover Charge: **\$5.00**

Lots of Lady Likes and Surprises!

Like and Follow Us on Facebook for Details:

Fort Wright Civic Club, Inc.

Need More Info? 331-1150 or 630-3102

Entertainment Books

The Fort Wright Volunteer Fire Department, Inc., is selling the Entertainment Book again this year.

The books are currently available for Sale for \$30.

Stop by the City Office to pick up your book today!

Checks should be made payable to Fort Wright Volunteer Fire Department Inc.



MOMS Club of Ft. Wright Area

The MOMS Club is an international support group for mothers who stay home with their children including those who work part time. The group has monthly meetings, weekly activities including park play days, fire station tours, ice cream socials and much more! We also have monthly mom's night out, a book club, holiday activities and service projects benefiting needy children in the community, along with other activities chosen by its members.

For more information about the group, please email fortwrightmomsgroup@yahoo.com.

Museum News

We'd like to thank city personnel, the re-enactors, living history interpreters and museum volunteers who participated and visitors who came to the park and museum for Battery Hooper Days! We appreciate your support and hope everyone had a great time.

Upcoming Events

Veterans Day Observance

When: Sunday, November 11, 2012 Time: 2:00 PM

Where: Highland Cemetery, 2167 Dixie Highway, Fort Mitchell, KY

This year we will pay special tribute to post-Vietnam-era veterans. If you'd like to be included, please send us an email with your information. RamageCivilWarMuseum@gmail.com

Civil War Christmas

When: Sunday, December 9, 2012 Time: 1:00 PM until 5:00 PM

Where: James A Ramage Civil War Museum, 1402 Highland Avenue, Fort Wright, KY

Join us as we go back in time to celebrate Christmas. The museum will be decorated as homes would have been during the 1860s. Children will be able to help decorate the tree by making an ornament. We'll have a special visitor too! Santa Claus will be able to take time out of his busy schedule to visit with us.

Museum Winter Break

The Museum will close after the Civil War Christmas event on December 9th for its winter break. The Museum will reopen to the public in early March, 2013. Please check the website for more information.

*****Special Announcement*****

The museum board is actively seeking new members. If you are interested in joining this very active board, please contact **Mary DeSalvo (341-5168)** or send an email to RamageCivilWarMuseum@gmail.com for more information.

Volunteer Opportunities – Are you interested in the Civil War or history in general, like to meet new people, help children learn about our area, or just enjoy doing volunteer work? Consider becoming a museum volunteer! Our volunteers staff the museum during operating hours, help conduct group tours, get involved with teaching KERA approved programs to school-aged children, and help staff and plan special events. Put your talents to use by helping us! If you'd like to become a volunteer, stop by the museum and fill out an application or download one from the "Volunteer Opportunities" section on the museum's page on the city's website. If you have any questions about becoming a volunteer or would like more information before making your decision, email us at ramagecivilwarmuseum@gmail.com

The Museum is open Friday and Saturday from 10:00 AM to 5:00 PM and Sunday from Noon to 5:00 PM. We are closed on holidays. Phone number: 859-344-1145

2012 PROPERTY TAX PAYMENTS

Tax bills have been sent out. If you did not receive your tax bill and are responsible to pay it, please contact the City Office. If you did receive the property tax bill, but have an escrow account from which the property tax is paid, please make sure you forward the bill to your mortgage company. With the holiday schedule for this year, the City Office will be open on Monday, December 31st, from 7:30 AM - 5:00 PM to accept walk-in payments. The property tax payments **MUST** be postmarked by no later than December 31st. If they are postmarked or brought in later than that date, penalty and interest fees will be added to the property tax bill. If you drop your bill in the mail on December 31st, it may not be postmarked until January 2nd or 3rd, making it delinquent, so if you will be mailing your payment, we recommend that you put it in the mail by no later than December 28, to ensure proper postmark.

Please note the following with regard to the holidays and City office hours. Regular City office hours are from 7:30 A.M. to 5:00 P.M., Monday through Friday. City Offices will be closed on Monday, December 24, and Tuesday, December 25, 2012. Tax payments should be paid by the close of business at 5:00 PM on December 31, 2012. There is also a mail slot in the front door of the City Building for you to place your property tax bill payments before or after City office hours, prior to December 31st. For any additional questions, please call (859) 331-1700.

Holiday Trash Collection:

(This has been copied straight from Rumpke's website.)

Thanksgiving Day: Thursday, November 22, 2012

There will be NO DELAYS, trash will be picked up on regular days, including Thanksgiving Day.

Christmas Day: Tuesday, December 25, 2012

Customers with service on Monday will not be affected by Christmas.

Waste and Recycling service will not occur on Tuesday, December 25, and collection will be delayed one day for the rest of the week.

Everyone in Fort Wright will be delayed 1 day for pickup this week.

New Year's Day 2012: Tuesday, January 1, 2013

Customers with service on Monday will not be affected by New Year's Day.

Waste and Recycling service will not occur on Tuesday, January 1, 2013, and collection will be delayed one day for the rest of the week.

Rumpke will return to its regular collection schedule the week after New Year's.

Everyone in Fort Wright will be delayed 1 day for pickup this week.



Direction 2030 Public Meetings

The first meeting will be a **Goals and Objectives Workshop** held on Wednesday, November 7, from 6:00PM to 8:00PM at the Blessed Sacrament Church in the Undercroft facility. The address is 2407 Dixie Highway, Fort Mitchell, Kentucky.

The intent of the workshop is to provide the public, various interest groups and organizations an opportunity to comment on the draft statement of the plan's goals and objectives. There will be brief presentations and time for questions and comments. In addition, legislative bodies or organizations that wish to have a more focused group discussion on the draft may arrange to do so before or during the session. This is the last scheduled meeting for acquiring input prior to the draft being finalized.

The second meeting will be a **Capstone Meeting** held on Monday, November 12, from 6:00PM to 8:00PM at the Community Christian School, in the Reception Hall. The address is 11875 Taylor Mill Road, Independence, Kentucky.

This event will be hosted in an open house format to present the final statement of goals and objectives before it is considered by each of the 20 legislative bodies and the Kenton County Planning Commission.

SNOW EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

By City ordinance, in the event of a "Snow Emergency", residents have three hours to remove their vehicles from the streets. Police officers are authorized to tow or affix a citation to any vehicle parked on a City street during this time. Please cooperate when a Snow Emergency is declared, in the interest of public safety, so that police, fire, and ambulance vehicles can safely and quickly access each residence and place of business in the City.

Snow emergencies are declared through local media, and an email is sent to everyone on the City's email listing. You may sign up for the email list on the City's website at www.fortwright.com, scroll down on the left side of the screen under the menu, where you will find the link to sign up for emails.



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