

City of Ridgeside – Spring 2016 Notes from the Mayor.....

Just a few notes to keep everyone up to speed on the City's happenings this spring, especially for those of you who are unable to make the City Commission meetings. Our next Commission meeting is scheduled for July 19th, 2016 but we will be moving that meeting up to Monday, June 27th, 2016 at the Pool House so that we may have the second and third readings of the budgets, one for the amended current year (due to overages at the pool), and the other is next year's budget. These will be posted soon on the website for you to review.

A few budget notes:

-While the pool membership fee went up \$24.00 this year to \$199, the pool will still operate with a \$16,000 projected deficit if we are fortunate with the use of the old pumps, etc. It is our plan to bring the pool to a break even operation as it used to be over the next few years. We are a bargain if you shop other local pool memberships.

-the tax rate is being raised from \$2.01 per \$100 of assessed value to \$2.21 in an effort to rebuild the City's rainy day fund that has been depleted. Our budget revenues are approximately \$300,000 and we think that a good, minimum emergency fund should be at least \$75,000. As it now stands, we have no funds for infra-structure emergencies, pool equipment failures, paving, lighting, etc. - all good things that we may need on short notice. So, please bear with us as we work to return to a sustainable, fiscally sound budget.

-the East Ridge Fire and Police contract continues to be our largest commitment at \$100,000 annually. We are continually looking for options that will lower this number.

-the Beautification Fund now has a balance of \$1,000 and the Park Committee along with the Community Club will decide how to best spend this fund. Gifts may be made to this fund in honor or memory, and are tax deductible. Mail to City of Ridgeside, P. O. Box 3265, Chatt. TN 37404.

The City will repair a newly created hole in the storm drain off of the Lynncrest common driveway that serves four houses. It is roped off at this time. Our first estimate is \$3,000 but we also have one for \$360. The City spent over \$49,000 in 2014 in this same area to have the storm sewer drains and inlets replaced. We are continuously reviewing the storm water runoff in the neighborhood and making repairs where necessary.

Pool and Park notes:

Pool memberships are now available, with a discount if you enroll before June 1st. Hope to have everyone on board with a membership even if you don't swim. Great way to support our community.

The playground area will receive much needed upgrades and improvements so it will need to be temporarily closed until these are completed. Please inform your children to not go into the closed off areas behind the orange mesh fences. The Park committee has some great ideas for this spot.

The Commissioners approved a resolution to make the pool a Smoke Free Area in conjunction with the Hamilton County's effort to make the county smoke free. We are participating in an effort to encourage everyone to stop smoking. As part of this initiative, we will receive several new benches which will be placed throughout the City.

City-wide notes:

Our City has become a hot-spot for real estate transactions of late which is always a good sign. Thank you to all of you who do such a fine job of contributing to make our fair City a great place to live. It does take a village and most of you are doing more than your fair share and we thank you.

Many neighbors have noted that street parking continues to be a problem. Please be considerate of your neighbors and do not park on the street, especially for extended periods of time – and especially if you are parking in a curve that causes other drivers to have to drive in the middle of the road. The Commission is working on a street parking ordinance that we will share with you in draft form

when it is ready. Cars parked on the street are a safety issue and a security issue. We appreciate your cooperation with this.

Also a friendly reminder that we do have an animal poop ordinance. All poop should be picked up and disposed of properly. Leaving it around our common areas in plastic bags is not proper disposal. Please take it with you and place in your garbage can.

We continue to investigate lighting possibilities for the City. We have been working with EPB for many months now to see if they would help fund this endeavor (since we have no savings). They just reported that they are unable to incur debt for us. There are other options with the State that we are looking into. We have a great plan and layout that we have had for several years now that calls for approximately 74 lights. Decorative street lighting will enhance safety and security as well as give us uniform City atmosphere and improve property values. We will keep you informed.

The City also maintains many back street and back lot lights. If you have one that is out, please let me know. If you see one out in the park or in the alley way behind Ridgeside, near the pool, etc, please let me know and we will report it by pole number to EPB. You need only give us the location (not the pole number). There are a few lights that are located on residential property and paid for by residents. For these, you will need to make the call. Each pole has a number. It may be noted on your power bill.

We want to thank Brant Mason for serving as the City's CMFO – Certified Municipal Financial Officer. He obtained certification and serves in this role as a volunteer. The City is now required to have this position and Brant will be one signature on our audit each year.

Legal work continues to deal with one probably remaining multiple family dwelling issue. We hate it that the City has to spend money to assure that all residents adhere to the R1 residential designation for each house, i.e. single family dwelling. Rooms and sections of houses may not be rented out.

We appreciate your help in submitting all residential structural changes to the Commission before the work is started. This is required by City ordinance. Also, a building permit must then be obtained from Hamilton County. This permit is not required for fences but we would like to review your plans before you begin. Our City resolutions, created by a group of citizens several years ago, are listed on the City website Ridgeside.net as are the ordinances and City Charter.

If you think you might be interested in serving as a Commissioner, please attend our Commission meetings and see your City at work. It is a big job and requires many dedicated hours each week. Consider civic duty volunteer work as a Commissioner. Elections in 2018.

Thank you to our Pool and Park Committees who are so diligently serving this community. Especially Andy Fitzsimmons, Gabe Thompson, and Bruce Blohm who are giving yeoman's work. We appreciate you all and the many others who serve on their committees as well as the Community Club.

Thank you again to those of you work contribute to make our community a great place to live and raise a family. We have lots of new neighbors so be sure to introduce yourselves several times.

If you see any suspicious activity, please call the East Ridge dispatch at 622-1725. If it is an emergency, call 911.

Our contact information FYI:

Safety, Security and Garbage – Commissioner Kurt Faires, 423-757-0226,
kfares@chamblisslaw.com

Recreation, Pool and Park – Commissioner Blane Haywood, 706-459-9331,
blane.haywood@shawinc.com

Infrastructure, Government, and Oversight – Mayor Janet Jobe, 423-322-9110,
ridgesidemayor@gmail.com