

# HOUSTON LAKER

SINCE MARCH 1957 - EDITION #66

## CITY COUNCIL NEWS

City Council Meetings are held the 2nd Monday of the month at 7:30pm at City Hall. These meetings are open to the public. Next meeting is January 8th.

## VENETIAN GARDENS HOMES ASSOC

The next meeting will be held at City Hall on Wednesday, February 21st at 6:30pm. There will not be a January meeting.

## LIFE ON THE LAKE

Are you new to the Lake? Have you lived here a minute and not met your neighbors? Please consider jumping in at a council, HOA meeting or a community event. You have GREAT neighbors!



## IT'S A NEW YEAR..

Gazing into the horizon, one ponders: should I retrace my steps or forge ahead into the new year? Memories of a time when the journey led you to Houston Lake stir within. The magic of this place once bewitched your heart, and still, it holds its spell over you. For this haven and its people hold the promise of untold treasures.

This city has so much to offer and it's because of its residents. Everything about Houston Lake is governed, maintained, built, designed, decorated, planned, developed, (we could go on and on) by its residents.

The City Council is made of Houston Lake residents, the Venetian Gardens Homes Association is made up of residents, the Art Circle, the Community Garden, the Houston Laker, the health of the lake, the caretaking of continued on page 7

## COMMUNITY GARDEN

Do you enjoy gardening? Have you visited or helped at the community garden at city hall? Be sure to follow the Houston Lake Community Garden page on Facebook for the latest news and events.

## ARTS CIRCLE

The next Art change over in City Hall will be in February. We hope that the colder weather will bring you indoors and spark your creativity! At one point in time, we were all artists, we still have those ideas. offer.

[Read More - Page 2](#)

## CAUTION: WINTER LAKE WARNING

It has been a warm winter, so far. What if we get a sudden cold snap and the lake freezes over?

### **The use of Houston Lake is at Your Own Risk**

Just as in the summer and swimming, skating, playing, just being on the lake frozen or not in the winter is at your own risk. Please use caution with your family, guests and pets if you decide to go on the lake.

### **If you see someone or an animal in danger on the lake this winter Call 911**

Expenses for emergency calls and rescues are at the homeowners personal expense. Venetian Gardens Homes Association and the City of Houston Lake are not to held responsible.

## ARTS CIRCLE

We especially encourage those who have not participated recently or at all to step forward, we have a lot of creatives in our community. We love those photographs of the seasons, the animals, the skies; every resident has a different vantage point and the community would enjoy what you have to offer.

## HOUSTON LAKE RESIDENT & ARTIST GENE CHARLES

Gene Charles has been contributing to the City of Houston Lake for many years. One of his many talents is his artwork. He has shared his materials list with us for two of his art pieces that have been displayed at city hall.



### **Purple People Eater**

- Mouth - no idea
- Head - motor stator
- Eyes - blower bearing
- Horn - sheet brass
- Neck - bicycle handle bars
- Body - propane cylinder
- Wings - shovel
- Tail - leaf rake
- Legs - bicycle front fork

### **Don Quixote**

- Hat - no idea
- Head - air pressure regulator
- Shoulders - from a wood cook stove from Independence, KS
- Shield - from thrift store
- Emblem on coat of arms - off a Montgomery Wards lawn mower
- Sword - no idea
- Base - Teflon Skillet



# WIGGED OUT? WINE DOWN

A Women of the Lake Event: Wigs, Wine and Water



Come enjoy conversation and relaxation from the hustle and bustle of the holidays.

Bring your favorite hair and bottle of wine to

**5402 NW Venetian Dr**  
**Saturday, Jan 6@7:30 pm**

Hosted by Victoria and Annemarie



Happy New Year!

December was a very busy month for the VGHA. With an overwhelming membership approval vote the board began work on both lake improvement projects.

The dredge project saw silt fences laid at the silt pond and peninsula. It was a fascinating process as a machine dug the trench and implanted the silt fence about a foot deep. With the rain forecasted for the Christmas holiday, it was decided work on the silt pond would begin after the first of the year weather permitting.



Rigero Bio-Health Pods sent Aaron out for the installation of the new system and it was installed on 12/20/23. Four bio generator grow factories, 2 at Cowan's Cove, 2 at the HOA Swim Beach, one just under the swim dock and the other between the 3rd and 4th bench along the shore, were placed as well as 85 nesting enzyme pods (pictured below).

This picture shows the top of the aerator, the enzyme pack is replaced every 2 months during warm weather. The enzymes work when the water temperature reaches 41 degrees and lie dormant with cooler water. The first change of these will be in late March or early April depending on our winter weather and temperatures.

The bag should dissolve along with the active enzymes, if there is some left, toss into the lake as it's completely biodegradable.



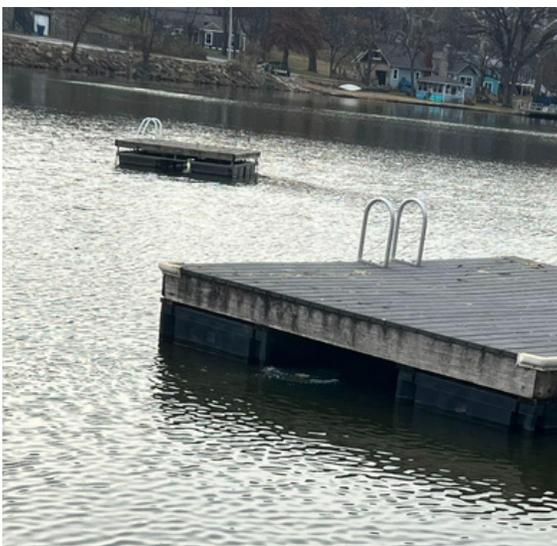
Here is the unit being placed in Cowan's Cove. The blue bag to the left of the aerator is filled with rocks to anchor the unit in place so as to not wash away during storms with high water.





If you look closely you can see both bubbling areas from the units in Cowan's cove. In addition to this, 50 enzyme nests (pictured below) were added to this area. They work with the enzymes from the aerators to dissolve muck, clearing water and help to balance ph levels all free from harmful or harsh chemicals. They are safe for people, aquatic life and bird fowl to be around.

Here are what the nesting pods look like. They are weighted with rocks and will work for approximately 2 years. If you catch one while fishing or run into it while swimming, please toss it back into the lake and leave it in place. The nesting pods are critical to work with the bio-generators. There are approximately 35 nests around the swim dock and beach area.



The aerator here is placed just under the swim dock. This should make a much more pleasant experience next summer for our members to swim in our lake.



And finally, here are the rock coverings that house the pumps. Please do not disturb them as they keep the air flowing to the system. There are hoses trenched just under the soil and sand leading to the lake.

Happy New Year and thank you for your approval to make our little lake a better place.

All my best,  
Pam Freese  
President VGHA

## UN-CLASSIFIED ADS

Full Page	\$20.00
1/2 Page	\$10.00
1/4 Page	\$5.00
1/8 Page	\$2.50

Pricing is per month & includes a listing on the city website [houstonlake.gov](http://houstonlake.gov)

To place an ad, email [editor.houstonlaker@gmail.com](mailto:editor.houstonlaker@gmail.com)

## HOUSTON LAKE COOKBOOK

2nd Edition of the City Cookbook is available for \$3. Limited number of copies, contact Mary Head at [maryjewel40@gmail.com](mailto:maryjewel40@gmail.com)

## HOUSTON LAKE HISTORY BOOK

65 pages of the history of Houston Lake! \$5 each. Contact Mary Head at [maryjewel40@gmail.com](mailto:maryjewel40@gmail.com)

## PARK HILL SCHOOLS

Students return to school on January 4th. Buses will be running regular routes.

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## NEW YEAR

Continued from Page 1

Parks, the flower beds, if it is a part of Houston Lake, it is because of the residents.

So, what does this all mean? It means that the residents get to make the decisions on the community they live in. Yes, there is a board for the city and the HOA and like many other communities, they are elected by the residents. Houston Lake is unique simply by the size of the community. We have entrusted our neighbors, literal neighbors, with the oversight of Houston Lake. So how are we doing as neighbors? How are we doing as a city? How are we doing as a lake community?

The history of Houston Lake as a community goes back to the 1800s. The Brenner family purchased some of the farmland from the Keller family and dammed up the Jumping Branch Creek to make a farm pond, which turned into a 20-acre lake. In 1928, Mr. Houston purchased land from Alma Brenner Hauette for Lake Venetia, a community where people could build a country home and be minutes from Kansas City. Although the name Lake Venetia was recorded in the county records, there was reportedly another lake in the area with the same name, and so it was eventually changed to the Village of Houston Lake. Mr. Houston wanted a community for recreational purposes and vacation getaways with a lot of trees and flowers. In the beginning, there were a number of cabins built around the lake that were rented out to fishermen. Eventually, people wanted to buy the cabins instead of renting them. The area was plotted, and the lake was deeded to the Venetian Gardens Home's Association. Houston Lake was incorporated in 1946. With Kansas City spreading and moving into the area, it was decided to incorporate as a city in 1960. City hall was built in 1968, estimating that 85% of the labor was volunteered and that an unknown dollar amount of building materials was donated by residents.

Houston Lake has a long-standing history of "being neighbors" and taking care of what needs to be taken care of. The traditions and legacy should not be overlooked or forgotten.

- Information for this article came from the Houston Lake History book. Article written and submitted by Sarah Schofield.



## Something To Think About

We have finally come up with a solution to hopefully make everyone at Houston Lake happy.

Each and every homeowner has their own opinion on how to clean up Houston Lake, which is great Right? It seems like the members just can not come together for a workable solution to take care of things. Everyone has a different idea which there is nothing wrong with that but the problem is nothing is being done.

***“ Here is how we can solve that problem ”***

What if we get rid of the Houston Lake Home Owner’s Association, abolish the HOA Board and totally do away with the Home Owner’s dues.

If we did that each home owner could take his or her’s dues and do what they wanted to do to clean up the lake. Each home owner could take their ideas and do what they think is necessary to take care of the lake’s problems. If it is your idea then you should have the right to make it work and you should be the one to do the work. Each Home Owner would have \$295.00 a year to do what ever they wanted to do with it to help clean up and maintain the lake. This would have to be done on the “ Honor System” as we would not have anyone collecting the dues or monitoring the work that each home owner actually did.

Just think how fast the work would be done, the lake would be beautiful and everyone would be happy.

***Forget the past, you can’t change it***  
***Forget the future, you can’t predict it***  
*Live in the moment*

**THOUGHT PROVOKING SATIRE SUBMITTED BY DENNIS HODGES**

## 2024 TRASH & RECYCLING DATES

City trash and recycling services are handled by Republic Services. For assistance with your receptacles, issues with pick-up or questions about large items contact customer service at 816-254-1470 or RepublicServices.com.

Trash is picked up every Wednesday. Receptacles need to be at the curb/edge of street by 6am. Leave room for the arm of the truck to pick up and return the receptacles without causing damage to vehicles, fences, etc.

2024 Recycling Dates (2nd Wednesday):

January 10  
February 14  
March 13  
April 10  
May 8  
June 12  
July 10  
August 14  
September 11  
October 16  
November 13  
December 11

2024 Holidays:

January 1st New Years Day - Pick up changed to Thursday January 4th

May 27th MemorialDay - Pick up changed to Thursday May 30th

July 4th Independence Day - No Change pick up will be on Wednesday July 3rd

September 2nd Labor Day - Pick up changed to Thursday September 5th

November 28th Thanksgiving - No Change pick up will be on Wednesday November 27th

December 25th Christmas - Pick up changed to Thursday December 26th

## EMERGENCY -

In case of a Police, Fire or Medical Emergency - Dial 911

Platte County Sheriff Non-Emergency & Animal Control  
816-858-3521

Riverside Fire Department Non-Emergency  
816-372-9024

Grinder Pump Alarm or Backup  
Text 816-305-3196 with Name & Address

## HOA Officers -

President Pam Freese 816-726-4455  
venetian.gardens.homes.assoc@gmail.com

Vice President Wendy Thompson 816-225-1018

Secretary Frank Wilson 509-939-6811  
lmau62@gmail.com

Treasurer/Lake Tags Susan Hodges 816-786-2377  
hodges.susan@outlook.com

Board Member at Large Mary Head 816-741-5639  
maryjewel40@gmail.com

## City Officials -

Mayor Chuck Stone 816-305-3196  
Mayor@houstonlake.gov

City Clerk Open Position  
cityclerk@houstonake.gov

### South Ward Alderwomen

Ashley Fuglestad  
sw1-alderman@houstonlake.gov

Sarah Farsace 816-863-2412  
sw2-alderman@houstonlake.gov

### North Ward Alderwomen

Teena Walker-Robin 816-769-6082  
nw1-alderman@houstonlake.gov

Annemarie Murphy 913-222-4705  
nw2-alderman@houstonlake.gov

Codes Enforcement Open Position  
codesenforcement@houstonlake.gov

As most of the HOA Officers and City Officials have full-time jobs as well, phone calls may not be answered or returned as quickly as a text or email.

City Hall is open during meetings, Listening Sessions, events and by appointment.

# City of Houston Lake City Council Meeting Minutes

Meeting held on 11th, of September 2023 at  
Houston Lake City Hall  
5417 N. Adrian Ave. Houston Lake, MO 64151

## Opening Session of City Council

### Roll Call

Present: Alderman Ashley Fuglestad, Alderman Sarah Loring, Alderman AnnMarie Murphy, Alderman Teena Walker-Robin, Mayor Chuck Stone

### Approval of Agenda for September 11, 2023

Alderman Walker-Robin expressed concern about the agenda lacking additions requested via email. Mayor Stone explained a preference for avoiding agenda items that might be tabled. Alderman Walker-Robin emphasized the need to address unresolved issues.

- Alderman Loring: Motion to approve including Alderman Walker-Robin's additions
- Alderman Murphy: 2nd
- Roll Call Vote - Alderman Loring: Aye, Alderman Murphy: Aye, Alderman Walker-Robin: Aye, Alderman Fuglestad: Aye

### Minutes for 8/28/2023

- Tabled

### Minutes for 8/24/2023

- Alderman Murphy: Motion to approve the City Council Special meeting minutes for August 24th, 2023
- Alderman Walker-Robin: 2nd
- Roll call vote - Alderman Murphy: Aye, Alderman Walker-Robin: Aye, Alderman Fuglestad: Aye, Alderman Loring: Aye

### Minutes for 7/17/2023

- Alderman Murphy: Motion to approve City Council Meeting minutes from July 17, 2023
- Alderman Loring: 2nd
- Roll call vote - Alderman Walker. Robin,: Aye Alderman Fuglestad: Aye Alderman Loring,: Aye and Alderman Murphy: Aye

## Emergency Management

### Fire Dept. Report

Fire Marshal Keith Payne provided an update on recent fire department activities, highlighting four calls over the last month and a half, including a minor incident with a trash truck and a couple of lift assists. He announced the fire department's open house on October 7th from 10 am to 2 pm, sponsored by Red X, featuring food and a flu shot clinic by the health department. Alderman Sarah Loring inquired about the flu shot clinic's convenience and speed. Fire Marshal Payne clarified that only influenza vaccines would be administered, not COVID vaccines. Alderman Loring then raised concerns about trees obstructing roads and the need for clearance, emphasizing the requirement for at least 13.5 feet for the ladder truck's passage. Mayor Chuck Stone sought clarification on the required clearance from the side. Fire Marshal Payne confirmed the necessity for adequate clearance on the sides, emphasizing the importance of

having distance from the shoulder, especially when navigating corners. The discussion highlighted the significance of maintaining clear roads for emergency vehicles, especially ladder trucks, to ensure effective response and prevent damage to firefighting equipment.

### **Sheriff's Report**

Captain Woodrow Painter from the County Sheriff's Office reported on August activities, detailing nine calls, 41.38 working hours, and seven traffic stops. Notable were a couple of animal calls related to pit bulls, which have been an ongoing concern. Despite repeated citations, the issue persists. Captain Painter highlighted that budget allocation for building a kennel is in progress, aiming to enhance the ability to address stray and off-leash dogs. Mayor Chuck Stone acknowledged the efforts on the pit bull matter and expressed concern over an officer being attacked, to which Captain Painter responded with a commitment to ongoing resolution.

## **Venetian Gardens Homes Association Report**

Mary Head from the Venetian Gardens Homes Association announced a meeting on September 20th at 6:00 PM to discuss the budget for the upcoming year. Additionally, the annual Venetian Gardens Homes Association meeting is scheduled for October 21st at 1:00 PM at City Hall. Mary clarified a misprint in the paper regarding the date and emphasized the correct date is October 21st, on a Saturday, at 1:00 PM at City Hall.

## **Public Discussion**

Resident Bobbi Baker expressed concern about ongoing issues with trash pickup since August 30th, despite multiple calls and escalating the matter. She emphasized the hardships faced by disabled households relying on door service, noting the trash attracting raccoons. Mayor Chuck Stone acknowledged the problem, highlighting communication challenges with text messages. Alderman Sarah Loring suggested contacting the trash company and offered personal assistance with moving the trash. Mayor Stone shared insights into the new truck driver's challenges and suggested a yard sign reminder. Resident Baker stressed the urgency of the matter, emphasizing the need for city support. Alderman Loring committed to reaching out to the regional sales manager, Tyler, for assistance. Mayor Stone acknowledged his delayed response to the issue and reiterated the city's commitment to resolving the problem. Alderman Loring offered to assist with moving the trash if needed, expressing concern for the resident's situation.

## **Burn Permits**

None

## **Building Permits**

None

## **Treasurer's Report**

- Alderman AnnMarie Murphy: Motion to approve the Treasurer's report
- Alderman Sarah Loring: Second
- Roll call vote - Alderman Ashley Fuglestad: AYE, Alderman Sarah Loring: Aye, Alderman AnnMarie Murphy: AYE, Alderman Teena Walker-Robin: Aye

## Pay Bills Resolution 09.11.2023

Alderman Ashley Fuglestad sought clarification on a \$500 water bill mentioned in an email, questioning if it were missing from the 911 resolution. Mayor Chuck Stone explained that while the total amount due was over \$500, the bill for the last month was \$449.85. He detailed a water bill dispute, highlighting an unexpected usage of 52,500 gallons in 28 days. Mayor Stone took immediate action, contacting the water service and placing a stop on billing until the issue is resolved. The discrepancy is under investigation, involving an inspection of water pipes and collaboration with the water company. Mayor Stone expressed intent to discuss the matter with the construction supervisor and emphasized the city's efforts to resolve the issue before payment.

- Alderman Sarah Loring: Motion to approve 9.11.23
- Alderman AnnMarie Murphy: 2nd
- Roll call vote - Alderman Sarah Loring: Aye, Alderman AnnMarie Murphy: Aye, Alderman Ashley Fuglestad: Aye, Alderman Teena Walker-Robin: Aye

## Old Business

### **Codifying of Ordinances**

The discussion centered on codifying ordinances, prompted by an email from Alderwoman Walker-Robin following up on an inquiry from a vendor about an ongoing project. Mayor Chuck Stone clarified that he was in favor of digitizing, but details were unclear, and he mentioned an earlier quoted price of around \$500. Alderwoman Walker-Robin expressed confusion about services covered in the quoted price, questioning if it covered hosting ordinances online or digitizing. Mayor Stone acknowledged the lack of clarity and suggested revisiting the details before moving forward. Alderman Sarah Loring recommended reaching out to former city clerk Sarah Schoefield for clarification. Mayor Stone mentioned the need to rewrite ordinances to align with code book standards and acknowledged some confusion about the process. He mentioned a desire to edit some of the ordinances and the possibility of consulting legal or following the MML city clerk manual for ordinance writing. Despite the complexity, Mayor Stone favored involving the attorney for accuracy, even if it meant a higher cost. The overall sentiment was a need for clarity and detailed understanding before proceeding with the codification process.

### **Mutual aid agreement with PCSO**

The discussion focused on a mutual aid agreement with the Platte County Sheriff's Office (PCSO). Acting City Clerk Alderman Walker-Robin mentioned that PCSO claimed to have sent the agreement back in February but hadn't received a signed copy. Mayor Chuck Stone expressed certainty that the city had signed the contract and speculated that the confusion might be related to law enforcement training fees. Alderman Loring sought clarification on the specifics of what PCSO was requesting. Alderman Walker-Robin read from the email received, explaining that PCSO was inquiring about the signed agreement sent in February. Mayor Stone expressed confusion, stating that there was no record of receiving any documents from PCSO in February. Captain Painter inquired about the sender, and Alderman Walker-Robin identified Samantha Braeken. Mayor Stone suggested reaching out to Samantha Braeken to clarify and obtain any documentation sent in February. Captain Painter offered to find out more information. The overall sentiment was a need for clarification and resolution of the discrepancy regarding the mutual aid agreement.

### **Building regulations question**

Alderman Walker-Robin requested information from the council on building regulations to respond to an email inquiry received regarding the city's building regulations. The email sought information on whether the city of Houston Lake, Missouri, has adopted building codes and, if so, whether building permits are enforced with inspections or only regulate zoning setbacks. Captain Painter shared that he received a similar email, noting that such inquiries often come from architects or contractors seeking details about building codes and permit enforcement. Mayor Stone suggested treating these inquiries cautiously, and Alderman Walker-Robin agreed, stating that the email would be ignored as spam. The consensus was to handle these types of requests with caution and potentially disregard them as spam.

### **Vendor requirements**

Alderman Walker-Robin sought information from council for a response to an icecream from an ice cream vendor questioning the need for a license to operate in Houston Lake. She expressed uncertainty about the city's requirements and mentioned checking Missouri statutes, which indicated local governance. Mayor Stone clarified that the city code mandates all vendors, including ice cream trucks, to have an ID card issued by the city. Alderman Walker-Robin raised the question of how the city would go about issuing a card after verifying the vendor already holds a state restaurant license. Alderman Loring suggested replying to the vendor, confirming the city's requirement for an ID card and prompting him to respond with details about his state license. This approach would shift the responsibility to the vendor and potentially extend the decision-making process. Mayor Stone humorously suggested advising the vendor to drive the truck around the lake first to gauge interest before pursuing the permit. The overall tone of the conversation was lighthearted, with a decision pending based on the vendor's response.

### **Maintenance of Ditches and Culverts**

The discussion focused on concerns about resident confusion regarding responsibility for maintaining ditches and culverts. She referenced a prior discussion in March '23, where residents complained about debris-filled ditches causing flooding. Despite efforts at clarification and photo documentation, a clear policy was not established. Mayor Stone clarified that local statute designates property owners as responsible for ditches on their property, even those parallel to the road. Alderman Loring suggested conducting a community education initiative on this matter. *Additionally, an off-topic discussion ensued with Resident Sarah Schoefield, who requested the city address and correct a filled ditch across the street from her property, causing flooding in her home during rain. This matter was formally brought to the city's attention during the meeting.*

### **110.10: The Board of Aldermen shall publish semiannual statements**

During the discussion, attention was drawn to Houston Lake City Code section 110.10, which mandates the semiannual publication of financial statements by the Board of Aldermen. The conversation emphasized the importance of reviewing expenditures, particularly for items budgeted for specific purposes. Alderman Loring highlighted the routine approval of monthly expenses but acknowledged that major or unusual expenditures were usually discussed. Alderman Walker-Robin expressed the usefulness of these reviews, citing an example of legal fees budgeted at \$10,000 due to concerns that did not materialize. She suggested questioning the ongoing need for such budget allocations. Alderman Murphy agreed, emphasizing the significance of periodic evaluations, especially halfway through the budget cycle. Mayor Stone noted that the budget is not immutable, and adjustments can be made based on changing circumstances. The discussion underscored the need for periodic reviews to ensure alignment with current priorities and expectations.

### **Gathering quotes for restoration of Missing Drywall in the basement at City Hall**

The discussion focused on gathering quotes for the restoration of missing drywall in the basement at City Hall. Alderman Walker-Robin initiated the conversation, stating that the drywall was removed during mold removal last summer, leaving the basement with exposed studs up to 4 feet on each wall. She suggested exploring the cost of restoration. Mayor Stone questioned the importance of getting the discussion on record. Alderman Walker-Robin mentioned receiving a ballpark quote of approximately \$8,000 from a contractor who was in the area doing work at her home. She sought input from other members regarding alternative quotes or ideas for the restoration. Alderman Loring questioned the necessity of drywall in the basement, expressing uncertainty about its added value to City Hall. Alderman Murphy echoed similar sentiments, considering the investment in space that might not be regularly used. Alderman Walker-Robin advocated for gathering information before making decisions, acknowledging her lack of expertise in the field but highlighting the potential impact on property value. The conversation concluded with an agreement to explore options and costs further.

### **Mayor's resignation redaction**

Alderman Walker-Robin raised the issue of Mayor Stone's resignation, referencing an email sent to all aldermen and the city clerk and so in the official record, on the morning of the August 2023 City Council meeting announcing his resignation following the meeting that evening.

Alderman Walker-Robin relayed information received from Missouri Municipal League (MML) on how to remedy the on the record discrepancy. MML suggested two alternatives: 1) Mayor Stone could either send another email redacting the resignation or 2) Mayor Stone could verbally confirm his decision during the current meeting. Mayor Stone acknowledged changing his mind for personal reasons and considered it a personal problem. Alderman Loring clarified that Mayor Stone had indeed changed his mind and opted to stay on as mayor for the record.

### **Notice of Tax Levy Meetings**

Alderman Walker-Robin discussed the cost of posting notices in the Landmark Newspaper, which for tax levy meetings are running \$115 each. She shared information again from MML that suggested alternative methods. Specifically, that the notices could be posted at City Hall, the nearest post office, and a local grocery store with a bulletin board to meet the legal requirements without incurring any associated cost.

### **How the board as a body decides to go about filling the city clerk's position**

Alderman Walker-Robin highlighted the need for defining a process to fill the vacant clerk position, referencing recommendations from the Missouri Municipal League (MML) and Mayor Stone's undefined preferred method. Alderman Murphy expressed agreement, emphasizing the importance of leveraging various resources to find a suitable candidate. Alderman Walker-Robin proposed a dual approach, allowing the mayor to pursue his recruitment method, while she follows the steps recommended by MML. Alderman Loring suggested that the board handle the interviews to enhance transparency and address past challenges in retaining candidates.

### **General Ledger Tax Levy Rate Reduction**

The discussion focused on the 3% reduction in the General Ledger tax rate on the 2023 tax levy in addition to the greatly debated Fire Suppression rate reduction. Alderman Loring clarified that the reduction was voted on during the tax levy meeting even if it were not specifically pointed out that the General Ledger was also taking a voluntary reduction. Mayor Stone explained that the reduction was based on the revenue-neutral concept of the Hancock Amendment, aiming for neutrality in city profits from rising housing values. He referenced a pamphlet with a formula for tax rate calculation that provided the formula he used to arrive at the reduction. Alderman Walker-Robin noted the state auditors' reduction had already serviced the Hancock Amendment.

## **New Business**

None

## **Reports from Aldermen**

**Alderman Loring:** Inquired about the recent tree trimming around the city and expressed appreciation for the effort. Mentioning concerns about the brush cleanup, the Mayor and fellow Aldermen suggested that J.C. Ellis may have performed the trimming pro bono. Alderman Loring extended thanks to Mr. Ellis for the proactive tree maintenance, noting the positive impact on road safety.

**Alderman Walker-Robin:** The Ministry of Merriment (MoM) plans to distribute candy during the Halloween Trick or Treat event on Halloween from 6 to 8. While the expectation is not for a large turnout, MoM intends to give out full-sized candy bars. Additionally, MoM will provide cold drinks and popsicles from the porch during the park mulch spreading event, contributing to community engagement. Further details, including the date for the mulch spreading event, will be communicated once finalized.

**Alderman Murphy:** A heartfelt thank you to Mayor Stone was extended by residents for his prompt and compassionate response to a challenging situation. Mayor Stone assisted in the removal of a deceased deer, addressing concerns about an unpleasant odor in the neighborhood. The residents expressed gratitude for the Mayor's hands-on approach, acknowledging his kindness and willingness to help with this unpleasant task. The neighborhood is appreciative of Mayor Stone's leadership and support during this time.

**Alderman Fuglestad:** No report.

## Mayor's Report

Mayor Stone provided updates on recent challenges faced during lawn maintenance, including getting mowers stuck in mud. New tires are being installed for better traction.

Mayor Stone indicated he will serve as the new FEMA floodplain administrator, and will undergo training to address increased knowledge on the subject.

Mayor Stone mentioned hosting the Platte County Mayor's meeting at City Hall, where discussions included concerns about mailbox robberies and insights into shoreline ownership from Lake Waukomis and Weatherby Lake mayors.

Mayor Stone also sought information on Houston Lake's privately owned land and its correlation with plats and property lines. Further research is needed to clarify the distinctions between lot numbers and property lines. Residents were advised to use gel pens for checks and consider secure drop-off locations to prevent check washing.

## Adjournment

- Alderman AnnMarie Murphy: Motion to adjourn the meeting
- Alderman Sarah Loring: Second
- Roll call vote - Alderman Fuglestad: Aye, Alderman Loring: Aye, Alderman Murphy, Alderman Walker-Robin: Aye

Meeting ended at 9:02 pm.

Final minutes approved: 12/12/23

Teena Walker-Robin  
Acting City Clerk / Alderman

VENETIANGARDENS HOMESASSOCIATION BOARD  
WORKING MEETING

Summary of October 24, 2023, Zoom Meeting

Board Members presented via Zoom: Pam Freese, Susan Hodges, Mary Head, WendyThompson, Frank Wilson

The meeting was called to order at 5:25 pm by Pam Freese.

This was Frank's first meeting as a Board member and Secretary of the Board. It was decided that the documents, seal, and other records held by the outgoing secretary would be given to Mary who would give it to Susan for safekeeping.

Mary to provide contact information for dock repair contractor to Pam.

Pam announced that Rigerio personnel coming to visit VGHA on the 6th at 11 am to walk the lake and make recommendations. The Board members discussed where to place 4 pods if it were decided that only 4 pods would be purchased.

2 pods at the swim beach to purify the water and reduce the organic muck on the bottom. Two pods would be placed in Cowan's Cove. It had more soft muck than silt and would be a good test location. Electrical sources already in place at the swim beach and from the VGHA property on the peninsula.

Pam explained that the dredging proposal from Edwards Construction would be down to 8 or 10 feet. They would stop when they hit clay. Susan had deep concerns about how much silt the land could hold without causing additional problems. They don't have additional funds to have it hauled away. Pam thinks some of the VGHA residents may want some fill dirt and would pay to have it provided.

Mary asked if Pam had received other bids as we should have at least 3 bids.

Pam and Susan discussed the past bid from Steven, which was about \$400,000 for less silt removal, and what Dredge America had discussed in the past. Pam said she would ask Critchfield for a bid. Sue said they knew from prior bids what to expect. Pam said that Edwards Construction was giving VGHA a good price because December, January, February, and March was a slow time for them. Pam would talk to Edwards Construction regarding the latest date they could start. A notice will be put in the Houston Laker about an upcoming vote on the projects and the reason for the need for expediency.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 6:05 pm.

VENETIANGARDENS HOMESASSOCIATION BOARD  
WORKING MEETING  
Summary of November 18, 2023, Meeting at City Hall

Board Members present: Pam Freese, Susan Hodges, Mary Head, Wendy Thompson, Frank Wilson

Meeting called to Order at 11:42 am.

Board members Pam, Mary, Susan, and Wendy approved August minutes with changes noted. The July, August, and September minutes were put on the website.

Unanimous yes vote for \$100 gift cards for Jake and Laura to show our appreciation.

There was a short discussion regarding changing attorneys to Robert McGraw. Frank will research Missouri lien laws to see if the VGHA can proceed without need of an attorney.

Frank also volunteered to review the new revised VGHA bylaws if necessary.

Susan gave a short update regarding the accounting software update and Quickbooks Essentials.

Susan is still working with the Platte County Assessor's Office to confirm that the VGHA property is not within the jurisdiction of Kansas City. There was discussion regarding whether VGHA could qualify as an IRS 501(c)3 non-profit so as not to be subject to property taxes. Further inquiry will be made.

There was discussion regarding replacing the boat dock. It was agreed that the dock needed to be replaced and maybe it should be placed at the end of the peninsula for easier access for all who use the lake. The dock will be replaced but no decision was made as to placement.

#### Dredging Proposals

The two remaining dredging proposals were discussed:

Scott's \$138,000 proposal

-remove 6 feet out of silt pond

-dredge both sides of east side of peninsula

-no dredging of S curve under bridges (car and foot)

Edwards Construction \$150,000

- will remove as much silt as VGHA have room to store
- will remove down to the 8 or 10 foot level of the silt pond
- will build berms for silt placement with double layer of fencing
- will reposition rocks around and along the banks where necessary
  - Three bowls will be dug out for placement of silt (peninsula, Barnes property next to the silt pond, and the backside of Venetian across from the peninsula)
- will put notice out to residents for free dirt from the three bowls
- After silt has dried they will grade and level
- Pam found no bad reviews on Facebook for Edwards
- Susan found very good reviews

All Board members voted for the Edwards Construction proposal. It was noted that their proposal provided more silt removal and better placement of silt. Susan noted that we needed a more detailed written proposal to be available for the VGHA members.

#### Rigero Bio-Health Pod System

Pam provided a detailed explanation of the pod system and some of the board members reviewed the material and references which been received prior to the meeting, Rigero presented the board with two proposals --- 30 pods or 4 pods. It was evident that the VGHA could not afford to install the 30 pod proposal while proceeding with any dredging proposal. The 4 pod \$24,000 proposal seemed more realistic. Mary was concerned about the \$24,000 cost and she was not comfortable with such a young company with no sales in Kansas City. It was noted that the Rigero system was already successfully in use in many other states at golf courses, RV Resorts, and some HOA lakesides. The science of the pod system was discussed, as well as the continual costs of pods, and how many more would be needed if the VGHA decided it worked well enough to expand it's use. There was discussion regarding placement of the four initial pods, hook-ups, and maintenance. It was determined that hook-ups and maintenance would not be a problem for these four pods.

A vote was taken on using the Rigero system was taken. Mary Head voted no, all others yes.

A vote was taken on the 30 Pod proposal or the 4 pod proposal. No one voted for the 30 pod proposal. Mary Head vote no on the 4 pod proposal, all others yes.

Susan noted that next year's budget would be skinny/tight and we would have no money for special projects as only \$26,000 would remain at end of fiscal year ending 9.30.2024.

It was decided to hold VGHA informational meetings on Wednesday, November 29th at 6:30 pm, and on Saturday December 2nd at 1 pm. The vote would be held at a Special VGHA meeting on December 9 at 1 pm.

Meeting adjourned at approximately 1 pm.

# VENETIAN GARDENS HOMES ASSOCIATION

MINUTES OF SPECIAL MEETING

Saturday, December 9, 2023

1 pm. City Hall

A special meeting was held to vote on two proposals. The results of the in-person and absentee ballot votes was as follows:

## Proposal No. 1

Edwards Construction Silt Excavation - Remove silt from silt pond, horseshoe canal around bend, and foot bridge to southeast end of peninsula. Cost: \$150,000.

YES 33

NO 11

## Proposal No. 2

Rigero Bio-Health Pod Systems - Remove muck and reduce algae and invasive weed growth from portion of lake. Cost: \$24,000

YES 29

NO 14

Both proposals passed.

The meeting was called to order by Wendy Thompson at 1 pm and voting commenced. Board members present were Pamela Freese, Susan Hodges, and Frank Wilson. Prior to the voting members were asked if they had any questions. Three members had questions. Those questions were answered and the voting began. Voting was completed by 1:30 pm. Judges counting the ballots were Shelly Broll, Monica Montalves-Beshears, and Deborah Wilson. The count was completed by 1:40 pm, certified, and the results immediately publicized. The meeting adjourned at approximately 2 pm.

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Best wishes to you,  
Marlene