

SINCE MARCH 1957 - EDITION #67

CITY COUNCIL NEWS

City Council meets on the second Wednesday of each month. The next meeting is Wednesday, November 13th at 6:30pm at City Hall

VENETIAN GARDENS HOMES ASSOC

Thank you to everyone for coming out to vote and welcomes a new board!

There will not be a meeting in November or December

CITY CODE - DID YOU KNOW?

Do you have a question about a city code? Visit houstonlake.gov to see them online. Including permit applications and contact information.



Picture from Houston Lake Facebook

ART CIRCLE

Neighborhood creatives, come join us for Arts Circle Monthly Social Gathering at City Hall from 10-11am on the last Saturday of the month.

This is a social gathering so bring a smile and maybe share recent work or inspiration.

For more information, see the Art Circle Facebook page.

Editor.HoustonLaker@gmail.com

How I met Linda 70 years ago



Someone wanted to know how a farm boy met a judge's daughter. The Air Force put me through aircraft and engine mechanic tech schooling. Then I was shipped at the headquarters of the 13th Far East Air Force. Eventually I was assigned to be the crew chief (in charge) on the 1930 model cargo plane (one of the first all metal planes built) used for transporting the 13th Air Force Commander-a Two Star General and other VIPs. Once we took the Admiral of the British Navy to Manila. Another time we took a one star general on a 5 day mission to Hong Kong. Through the week I flew on various cargo missions mostly everywhere in the Philippine Island and Taiwan. Besides that I went on many pilot night training flights. For 7 or 8 months I spent many Saturday nights taking the two star to Manila. Eventually a one star came to replace him. The one star wanted a stretcher we carried set up with a sheet and pillow. I don't remember where I found them. On the 30 minute flight it was never used. In the military it is said not to reason why but to do or die. I didn't want to die

so I did. One night something was wrong with "my" plane and the one star flew on another plane with another crew chief. The next day his pilot said the one star fired me because I didn't cater enough to him. And a week later his pilot begged me to come back and be his crew chief. I told him I'd rather haul cargo because I didn't have to cater to it.

This is of the type of cargo I've hauled: a nurse with a baby in an incubator, barrels of gasoline, jeep with loading ramp, liquor for the PX and the clubs on Base, military payroll, military personnel, once we landed on a golf course to get a load of pineapples for the officers, supplies for an army outpost down south, rice for a National emergency, the payroll for the American Embassy in Taiwan and a huge Oriental rug from Hong Kong that almost made the aircraft unflyable-it made it tail heavy.

I'm not sure how I decided to come to Kansas City to see my great uncle Bob. The man I called had the same name as my uncle. It turns out he was the son of a brother that Uncle Bob had raised. He told me to come to his house and he'd take me to see my uncle in Freeman, Mo. Then he told me that General Motors in the Fairfax district in KCK was hiring aircraft mechanics to build 499 F 84F fighter/bombers on a sub-contract with Republic Aviation. At first I assembled some pneumatic components. When they found out that I had aircraft experience, I was moved to the inspection department. I know that many of the workers were ex auto mechanics. For 2 years I inspected those planes. But first, my cousin had found me room/board with an elderly couple with a daughter. It soon became

apparently

that they were looking for a husband for her. When I didn't fit their plan they said that they were moving soon and I needed to find another room. Then he found a room/board with a lady with a grown son. Cecil who wasn't quite allright. When I ate out on weekends she asked if I sold her bath towels to buy food? (That explains to me who Cecil was about) How much could I sell a second hand bath towel for? Oops-too late in bidding for them-I think Cecil had cornered the 2nd hand bath towel market. I couldn't pay her until Sunday but she wanted to get paid on Friday. So she kicked me out. Then my cousin found a room that happened to be just down the street from Linda's in the next block. This was with the landlady that kept urging me to see Linda whose dad was a judge. Finally I recalled how I had been around people of note with my job in the Philippines. Without that experience I'm sure I wouldn't have had nerve to meet a judge. So I went to meet Linda and the judge. I was met at the door by Linda's mom and their dog whiskers. I didn't know until much later that I was being judged by whiskers. Linda said during the war they rented rooms to workers at the bomber plant and if the dog didn't like them they wouldn't rent to them. I told the judge about my background. Linda and I went for a drive. Later I found out that she had a dime in her shoe so she could call for help, if needed.

Linda said her dad had always worn a dark suit with white shirt. When I came around wearing a sport coat and colored shirts-it wasn't long until the judge had himself a sport coat. Linda said she once got him a really loud shirt as a joke. But he wore it to his office one Saturday. He said two young lawyers came in his office and one asked what that noise I hear-the other said it's just the judge's shirt.

Linda once said that she thought her dad thought of me as the son that he never had – him with 3 daughters. But I'm sure he was disappointed that I wasn't an avid fisherman like he was. Fishing was his passion.

When we were married in 1954. My top wage was \$2.37 per hour. (Our first grocery bill was \$17. and gas was at .21 cents per gal.). As the GM contract was ending. I hired on at TWA in 1955 for \$2.01 per hour. The wages at both GM and TWA were union scale wages at that time. Linda's mom made her dress and the judge along with a preacher neighbor performed our ceremony. If we make it until 14th of November we will have celebrate 70 years. All 3 of our grandsons and a great-grandson are engineers making big bucks and can't see how we did that – neither can we.

By "Gene" Charles

BOOKS FOOD & DRINKS

It's almost that time of the year to cuddle up with a good book.

Let us know at editor.houstonlaker@gmail.com if you would be interested in a "Winter Book Club".

HOLIDAYS ARE COMING

Do you enjoy seeing the holiday lights? Do you have a knack for decorating and the time to help a neighbor?

How about a Holiday Decorating Contest?

Contact editor.houstonlaker@gmail.com if you are interested.

PLATTE COUNTY SENIOR SERVICES

NO COST TRANSPORTATION FOR PLATTE COUNTY RESIDENTS 60 YEARS AND OLDER FOR MISSOURI DESTINATIONS!!!

On June 28th, Governor Mike Parson signed the budget bills into law, appropriating funding for a Mobility Management Pilot Transportation Program in Platte and Clay Counties and Jefferson City.

Platte County Senior Fund will start this new program on October 15th. Platte County residents meeting the above qualifications who need transportation to a Missouri destination will have a choice of utilizing this no cost program ride.

All rides must be scheduled no later than 2:00 PM the day before ride is needed.

- NO COST transportation to Missouri destinations with a 50 mile radius for medical, grocery, pharmacy, hospital visitation of immediate family and other essential business.
- Note: Residents of communities with transportation service are not eligible to utilize our transportation service

Call 816-270-2800 for details

Thank you to the City of Houston Lake for providing Fall Brush Pick up last month for the residents!

For any additional tree care needs beyond the brush pickup, you can contact our local Arbor Master representative, **Brian Rex**, at **913-530-6380**.

Autumn Scavenger Hunt

 Red leaf <input type="checkbox"/>	 Fern <input type="checkbox"/>
 Pine Needles <input type="checkbox"/>	 Acorn <input type="checkbox"/>
 Rock <input type="checkbox"/>	 Pine Cone <input type="checkbox"/>
 Squirrel <input type="checkbox"/>	 Yellow Leaf <input type="checkbox"/>
 Birds Nest <input type="checkbox"/>	 Scarecrow <input type="checkbox"/>
 Winged Seed <input type="checkbox"/>	 Bark <input type="checkbox"/>
 Brown Leaf <input type="checkbox"/>	 Feather <input type="checkbox"/>
 Mushroom <input type="checkbox"/>	 Red Berry <input type="checkbox"/>
 Orange Leaf <input type="checkbox"/>	 Animal tracks <input type="checkbox"/>
 Spider Web <input type="checkbox"/>	 Worm <input type="checkbox"/>
 Wild Flower <input type="checkbox"/>	 Conker <input type="checkbox"/>
 Green Leaf <input type="checkbox"/>	

How many different colours can you see?

<http://advertisingadvertising.blogspot.co.uk/>



NOTICE OF ELECTION & CANDIDATE FILING

Venetian Gardens Homes Association 2024 Ballot Candidates for Homes Association Board According to our bylaws you must first Vote for 3 people

If you've ever wondered how you can make a difference in your community, this is your opportunity. You don't need to have all the answers—just be curious, level-headed, emotionally mature, and empathetic. We are all learning together, and you could be a part of shaping the future of Houston Lake.

The next election will be held in April 2025. Houston Lake will have three seats on the ballot:

- Two Aldermen at Large
- Mayor

Details on the duties and qualifications of these roles can be found in [Houston Lake City Code, Chapter 110](#) under [Mayor and Board of Aldermen](#).

Candidate filing will open on Tuesday, December 10th, 2024, and close at 5:00 p.m. on Tuesday, December 31st, 2024.

If you're interested in running, you can request filing forms by emailing the City Clerk at cityclerk@houstonlake.gov.

Those interested in becoming a candidate must file with the City Clerk within this period. Filing forms can be requested by emailing cityclerk@houstonlake.gov.

AROUND TOWN (PARKVILLE, RIVERSIDE, NKC, KC)

NKC Fall Fest
November 2 12pm-5pm
Velo Garage & Tap House
1403 Swift St, KC 64116

Parkville Veterans Memorial
Ribbon Cutting
November 7 at 4pm
8701 NW River Park Dr, Parkville
64152

The Village at Briarcliff Holiday
Lighting Ceremony
November 9 at 4pm
4151 N Mulberry Dr KC 64116

Mistletown Market
November 16-17
Arts in the Park & NKC Parks & Rec
1201 Clark Ferguson Dr KC 64116

KC Metaphysical Holiday Fair
November 22 - 24th
Harrah's Casino & Hotel
1 Riverboat Drive, NKC 64116

37th Annual Parkville Turkey Trail
Trot
November 28 at 9am
English Landing Park, Parkville
64152

Tica Felise (Houston Lakes own)
November 28 6:30-9:30pm
Transparent Brewing Company
14501 White Ave, Grandview
64030

Small Business Saturday
November 30
Support small businesses in the
area and online

A Riverside Christmas
December 5 5:30-6:30pm
Renner Brenner Park
Riverside 64150

Vote for 3 people for Board Member

Pam Freese = 32

Mary Head = 38

Monica Beshears = 37

(Three elected Board Members will serve a two year term)

According to our bylaws you must vote for the President and Vice President.

Please write down the name you choose for each:

Pam Freese, Susan Hodges, Monica Beshears, Mary Head or Frank Wilson

President = Pam 26, Mary=5, Monica=5, Frank=2

Vice President = Frank 22, Pam=1, Mary=8, Monica=6

Vote for Association Annual Assessment (circle one). \$425.00 = 11

\$450.00 = 19

\$475.00 = 7

Do you approve the Budget (circle one) Yes = 28 or No = 10

(Our Fiscal Year for Dues & Budget starts October 1, 2024 and ends September 30, 2025)

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 9
November 13
December 11

2024 Holidays:

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

May 27th Memorial Day - 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
Haynes Equipment Service 913-782-5013

HOA Officers -

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

Vice President - Frank Wilson (816) 520-3931
imua62@gmail.com

Secretary - Monica Beshears (573) 356-4118
weety30@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

HOUSTON LAKE CITY OFFICIALS

City Hall - (816) 741-0644

Mayor -
mayor@houstonlake.gov

City Clerk - Lisa A. Shepard
cityclerk@houstonlake.gov

City Collector - Kathryn Kreider
citycollector@houstonlake.gov

City Treasurer - Kay Honeycutt
khoneycutt@houstonlake.gov

Custodian of Records -
cityclerk@houstonlake.gov

Board of Aldermen

Teena Walker-Robin nw1-alderman@houstonlake.gov

Vacant nw2-alderman@houstonlake.gov

Ashley Fuglestad (serving as Mayor)
sw1-alderman@houstonlake.gov

Sarah Loring sw2-alderman@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.



**CAST YOUR OFFICIAL BALLOT ON
NOVEMBER 5TH, 2024**

**ELECTION POLLS
OPEN 6:00AM AND CLOSE AT 7:00PM.**

**HOUSTON LAKE RESIDENTS VOTE AT
HEARTLAND CHURCH OF CHRIST**

**6120 NW PRAIRIE VIEW ROAD
KANSAS CITY, MO. 64151**

**ABSENTEE VOTING FOR THE NOVEMBER 5 GENERAL ELECTION BEGINS
SEPTEMBER 24 AT 8:00AM**

VOTER REGISTRATION DEADLINE FOR THE GENERAL ELECTION IS OCTOBER 9

LAST DAY TO REQUEST A MAILED ABSENTEE BALLOT, 5:00PM IS OCTOBER 23

**FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT PLATTE COUNTY BOARD OF ELECTIONS AT
PHONE (816) 858-4400 OR VISIT THEIR WEBSITE AT PLATTE@SOS.MO.GOV**

**2600 NW PRAIRIE VIEW ROAD, PLATTE CITY, MISSOURI 64079
OFFICE HOURS 8:00 A.M. TO 5:00 P.M.**



From Linda Charles:

I want to thank my Houston Lake Friends and Neighbors for the food, flowers, trips to the store and offers of help during my recent illness. Reinforces what we have known since 1957. Houston Lake is a great place to live.

**EDITOR - MARY HEAD - MARYJEWEL40@GMAIL.COM 816-741-5639
CONTENT & LAYOUT - SARAH SCHOFIELD 816-394-8828
EDITOR.HOUSTONLAKER@GMAIL.COM**

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Best wishes to you,
Marlene

Maddox Strobbe Makes a Big Catch!



Houston Lake had an exciting day on **September 29, 2024**, when **Maddox Strobbe**, age 9, landed an impressive **5 to 6-pound bass** while fishing with her father. Maddox, the youngest member of Houston Lake's "fishingest" family, continues to demonstrate her angling skills, and this latest catch might just earn her the title of **"Queen Fisher Person of Houston Lake!"**

This is no small feat, especially when considering the size of our lake. While Houston Lake may be small in size, it is home to some big fish! Maddox's impressive catch is a reminder that our waters offer excellent fishing opportunities, and you never know what might be on the other end of your line. Whether you're a seasoned angler or just casting out for fun, the lake has proven time and again that it's full of surprises and trophy-worthy catches.

The Strobbe family, known for their love of fishing, has been making the most of Houston Lake's rich fishing opportunities for years. With Maddox's latest catch, it's clear that the next generation of anglers is keeping the family tradition alive. This big bass is proof that some of the best fishing happens right here in our own backyard.

So, the next time you find yourself by the water, keep in mind—Houston Lake might be our small slice of nature, but it's packed with big fish and even bigger fishing tales. Join us in congratulating Maddox on her fantastic catch and be inspired by the joy and adventure our lake brings to our community.

— Who knows, maybe you're next to land a big one!



Maddox's fishing memories on Houston Lake



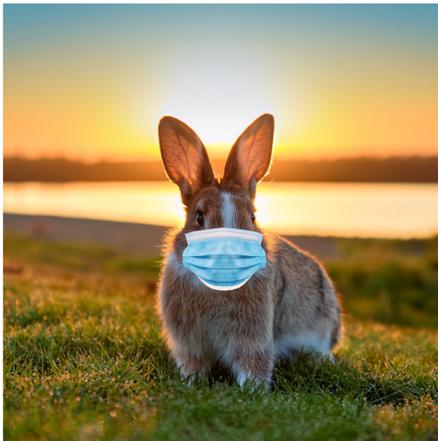
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Vote by mail

2020

== YOUR VOTE IS IMPORTANT ==

Caring for Wildlife in Our City



What to Do When You Encounter Sick or Injured Animals

As a city filled with nature lovers, we know that many of our residents care deeply about the well-being of local wildlife.

This post provides local contacts for the Missouri Department of Conservation and information on how to safely assist sick or injured animals to protect both them and our community.

Here's recommendations from the experts on what you should do if you encounter wildlife in need of help:

- **Observe from a Safe Distance**

The first step is to watch the animal carefully, but from a distance. Not all animals need immediate help—sometimes, young animals might appear abandoned when they are actually just waiting for their parents to return. Look for signs of injury, unusual behavior, or lethargy before taking action.

1. Missouri Department of Conservation
2. MO Wildlife Rescue

- **Avoid Direct Contact**

Wild animals can carry diseases or parasites that can harm both you and your pets. Avoid touching or handling the animal, especially without proper protective equipment like gloves. If you must move the animal to a safer location, such as away from traffic, use a towel or shovel to do so.

1. Missouri Department of Conservation
2. MO Wildlife Rescue

- **Contact a Wildlife Professional**

The **Missouri Department of Conservation** and licensed wildlife rehabilitators are trained to handle injured or sick animals. For assistance, you can contact the Missouri Wildlife Rescue Center or find local rehabbers using resources like **Animal Help Now**, which offers a free directory of professionals across the state.

1. MO Wildlife Rescue
2. Wildlife 411

- **Do Not Attempt to Feed or Treat the Animal**

Although it may be tempting to offer food or water, sick or injured wildlife need specific care and diets. Feeding them the wrong food could worsen their condition. It's best to leave care to licensed rehabilitators

1. Missouri Department of Conservation
2. Wildlife 411

- **Report Disease Concerns**

If you come across an animal that seems to be showing signs of illness, such as mange, rabies, or other visible diseases, contact the Missouri Department of Conservation. They monitor wildlife health closely and can help prevent disease outbreaks in local ecosystems

1. MO Wildlife Rescue

- **Keep Pets and Children Away**

To protect your pets and children, make sure they stay at a safe distance from the injured or sick animal. Wildlife, even when injured, can become defensive and pose a risk to people or animals that get too close.

1. MO Wildlife Rescue

By following these guidelines, we can ensure that our community continues to care for wildlife responsibly. Thank you for your compassion and care for the animals that share our city with us. If you have any questions, don't hesitate to reach out to local wildlife professionals for assistance.

For more information on what to do when you find sick or injured wildlife, visit the **Missouri Department of Conservation's website** or contact the **Missouri Wildlife Rescue Center**.

Local contacts for the Missouri Department of conservation are listed by county on their website. At present local contacts for PLATTE COUNTY, are listed as given below:

Aaron Post
Responsibility: Conservation Agent
816-244-0702
Kansas City Regional Office
12405 SE Ranson Rd
Lees Summit, MO 64082
United States
Counties Assigned To:Platte

Doug Yeager
Responsibility: Conservation Agent
816-835-6086
Kansas City Regional Office
12405 SE Ranson Rd
Lees Summit, MO 64082
United States
Counties Assigned To:Platte



End

Happy Anniversary Listening Sessions



On **November 10, 2024**, the City of Houston Lake will celebrate the **third anniversary** of our Saturday morning *Listening Sessions*.

These informal gatherings were established to provide a space where residents can share their questions, concerns, or suggestions directly with a city representative.

While turnout is often low, with many Saturdays passing quietly, the goal remains clear: these sessions are about **listening to you**, our residents.

Houston Lake is a small, close-knit community where city officials, including the mayor and council members, serve on a volunteer basis with only a modest honorarium. With City Hall typically closed outside of **City Council** and **HOA monthly meetings**, *Listening Sessions* offer a rare chance for residents to engage with their local government informally. These sessions aren't about officials delivering updates or making speeches—they are focused on giving **you** a voice.

The city council believes that effective governance goes beyond public meetings—it depends on ongoing communication and direct engagement with the community. **Listening Sessions** reflect this commitment, providing a welcoming, accessible space for genuine conversation. There' are's **no Robert's Rules** and no minutes—just an opportunity to be heard. If one resident shows up, it's a one-on-one conversation. If more arrive, we shift to a town hall-style discussion. The focus remains on **active listening**, ensuring that city representatives understand the concerns and needs of our community.

When we take the time to listen to one another, we build mutual understanding and gain valuable insights into the unique challenges and perspectives of our neighbors. These conversations help shape the future of Houston Lake, and we encourage everyone to stop by, share their thoughts, and be part of this open dialogue.

If you're just out for a stroll on a Saturday morning feel free to drop in, even if it's just for the coffee and pastries.

We're here to listen, and we look forward to hearing about what matters to you!



Septic Tank 411: What You Need to Know as a Houston Lake Homeowner



Septic systems come with specific responsibilities—essentially, you’re managing your own small-scale water treatment facility. Many newer homeowners may not realize the care and maintenance required to ensure their system is functioning properly, or that there are city codes regulating septic tanks in Houston Lake.

Key Regulations and Responsibilities

Houston Lake has its own **sewer line** system, and the city’s statutes, along with those of **Platte County**, set clear guidelines regarding septic tanks.

Permit Requirements: Platte County law requires homeowners to obtain a **permit** from the **Platte County Health Department** for any septic system installations or modifications. You can reach them at **(816) 858-2412** for more information.

Malfunctioning Systems: If your septic system malfunctions, it’s not just an inconvenience—it’s considered a **nuisance** by law. Homeowners must connect to the **public sewer system** if it’s available. This helps prevent environmental hazards like groundwater contamination.

City Code Requirements: Houston Lake City Code **Section 500.220** specifies that:

- **All new residences** must be connected to the city’s sewer line system.
- If a home is **damaged** beyond 50% of its value and reconstructed, it is required to connect to the city’s sewer line.
- **Septic systems are prohibited** for new installations, except for existing systems. If you plan to expand your home’s living space, you must first connect to the city sewer.

Resources for Septic Tank Owners

In addition to Houston Lake’s regulations, **Platte County** has a **Sewage Program** that outlines the county’s sewage ordinance and standards. If you own a septic system, it’s a good idea to review these guidelines to ensure compliance and proper maintenance.

Missouri State also provides an excellent resource: “**An Onsite Wastewater Treatment System Owner’s Manual**”, which covers everything you need to know about maintaining your septic system.

Did you know there are still around **38 homes** in Houston Lake that rely on septic tanks? As a lake community, this is important because septic systems can present environmental risks, especially when it comes to groundwater contamination.

If you’re a homeowner with a septic tank, this post is for you.

Houston Lake City Code Section 500.220.

Connection to City Sewer System Required – When. [Ord. No. 282 §10, 10-14-2002; Ord. No. 306, 12-12-2005]

All new residences are required to be connected to the sewer line system serving the City. All residences damaged to the extent of fifty percent (50%) or more of its value, exclusive of its foundation, and reconstructed are required to be connected to the sewer line system serving the City. No sewage lines will be permitted nearer than thirty-five (35) feet to any portion of the lake. Septic systems or other on-site sewage disposal systems are prohibited, except for existing systems. The living area of any residence not connected to the City sewer system shall not be enlarged or added to unless such residence is first connected to the City sewer system.

Protecting Our Community and Lake

Living in a lake community means we all share the responsibility of protecting our environment. Maintaining your septic tank and knowing when it's time to connect to the city sewer system is critical for the health of our water and community.

- **Permit Requirements:** Platte County law requires homeowners to obtain a **permit** from the **Platte County Health Department** for any septic system installations or modifications. You can reach them at **(816) 858-2412** for more information.
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 - **Septic systems are prohibited** for new installations, except for existing systems. If you plan to expand your home's living space, you must first connect to the city sewer.

For any questions or additional information, please reach out to the **Platte County Health Department** or review the full **Houston Lake City Code**.

By staying informed and proactive, we can help keep Houston Lake a safe, clean, and thriving community for everyone.

Resources

- ~ [Houston Lake City Code Section 500.220](#)
- ~ [Platte County Sewage Program](#)
- ~ [Platte County Sewage Ordinance and Standards.](#)
- ~ Missouri State [Onsite Wastewater Treatment System Owner's Manual.](#)



End

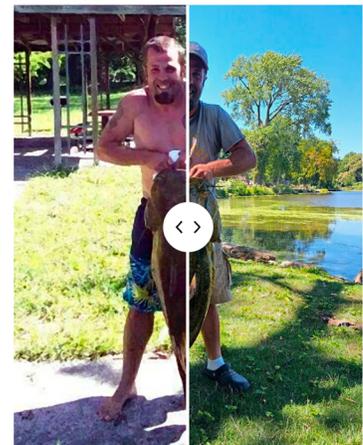
The Legendary Catfish of Houston Lake

In 2017, **Luke Strobbe** made waves at Houston Lake by catching an enormous **40 to 50-pound catfish**—one of the biggest ever pulled from our waters. Known for his commitment to **catch and release**, Luke let the giant fish go, keeping the lake's fishing ecosystem thriving and leaving behind a story that would only grow in size.

Fast forward to 2023, when Luke hooked what seemed to be a slightly larger catfish. Some say it was the same fish, now grown even larger, making its return. Locals are starting to believe this massive catfish might have a few more tricks up its sleeve, with many joking that it's a **catfish with nine lives**—and still survives to this day in the depths of Houston Lake.

As the legend grows, the catfish has become a symbol of Houston Lake's thriving wildlife and the incredible surprises it holds.

Who knows—maybe the next time someone reels in this legendary catfish (Goliath? Hercules? Houdini?), it'll be you. Keep your lines in the water—there's always another great catch waiting in Houston Lake!



2017 / 2023



Government for the People, by the People



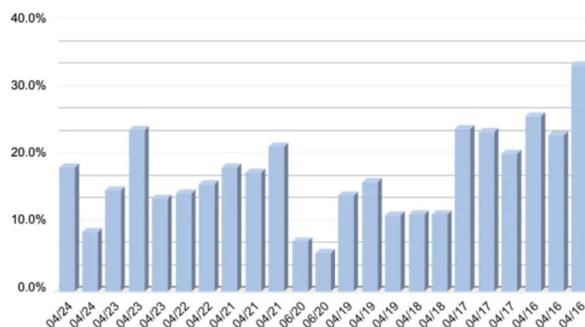
The City of Houston Lake relies on five elected officials—four Aldermen at Large and a Mayor. These positions are essentially volunteer roles, acknowledged with only a modest honorarium. No one serves for the money, and no one remains in office forever. It's a system that depends on community members stepping up.

At this level, these are **entry-level positions** in local governance. No one joins the City Council with all the answers, but thankfully, we don't have to create them from scratch. The guidance is already there in the form of city codes and state regulations. Our job is to find the relevant information, interpret it, and figure out how to apply it to Houston Lake. Being an effective city official means staying curious, researching, and sharing knowledge with the rest of the community.

Even a small city like ours is held to the same legal and operational standards as larger municipalities. There are no exceptions for size. A portion of our funding arrives automatically, but much of it has to be actively pursued by city officials, which takes both time and energy.

Voter turnout in Houston Lake's elections over the last eight years has averaged just **17.9%**. Governance is a two-way street—it's not only about voting, but also about **servicing**. We all have busy lives, filled with work, family, and countless other commitments. Yet, in the last election, there were two open council seats and no candidates. Two of our three current council members had intended to step down, but they stayed on because no one else came forward.

Voter turnout 2016-2024



If you've ever wondered how you can make a difference in your community, this is your opportunity. You don't need to have all the answers—just be curious, level-headed, emotionally mature, and empathetic. We are all learning together, and you could be a part of shaping the future of Houston Lake.

The next election will be held in **April 2025**. Houston Lake will have three seats on the ballot:

- **Two Aldermen at Large**
- **Mayor**

Details on the duties and qualifications of these roles can be found in **Houston Lake City Code, Chapter 110** under Mayor and Board of Aldermen.

Candidate filing will open on **Tuesday, December 10th, 2024**, and close at **5:00 p.m. on Tuesday, December 31st, 2024**. If you're interested in running, you can request filing forms by emailing the **City Clerk** at cityclerk@houstonlake.gov. Those interested in becoming a candidate must file with the City Clerk within this period. Filing forms can be requested by emailing cityclerk@houstonlake.gov.





VENETIAN GARDENS HOMES ASSOCIATION

April 15, 2024, MEETING

6:30 pm City Hall

Board Members Present: Mary Head, Susan Hodges, and Wendy Thompson appeared in person, and Frank Wilson appeared via video hookup. Pam Freese had an excused absence.

Wendy Thompson called the meeting to order at 6:35 PM.

Sue Hodges gave the Treasurer's report: The dues are slowly coming in with approximately \$38,900 left to receive. Liens will be filed after August 31, on all homeowners with unpaid dues. The VGHA tax return has been filed. We do not pay taxes on dues collected, but do pay taxes on bank interest received. This year we paid \$1,120.00 to the federal government, and \$127 to Missouri. There was no tax due for the grant received as the funds were spent in the same year. We should remember to spend any grant money received in the same taxable year.

Committee Reports:

Wendy - Sean reports that a piece of his equipment broke and work stopped while under repair. He moved the silt off the peninsula to the Barnes property.

Frank - Frank was appointed to the Oversight Committee. On March 27, 2024, The Oversight Committee met. VGHA board members were present to review the new proposed bylaws. After extended discussion it was determined that further refinement was necessary. The Board and the Oversight Committee decided that it might be useful to obtain copies of bylaws of other lake property HOAs. Thought will also be given to joining one of the several national HOA organizations to draw from their experience and resources. Because of scheduling conflicts the April Oversight Committee meeting is cancelled.

Mary - April 24 is the news deadline for the Houston Laker.

Wendy - Wrist bracelets are available for pickup from Susan Hodges.

Wendy reported that while walking she came upon a goose tangled in fishing line as well as being hooked. Shelly also reported that her dog had become entangled in fishing line. We are all reminded to use fishing rods and reels safely and not to discard fishing line into the lake.

Wendy reported that the City Directory is done and available. An update page will soon be printed to list the new City of Houston Lake officials and personnel, including Lisa Shepard who was recently hired as the next City Clerk. The Directory will be updated every two years. Any residents who want their directory information changed should submit the information to Wendy.

The clean-up day is April 20, 9 AM to Noon. Donuts and coffee at 9 and pizza at noon. Remember the dumpster can only be used for clean-up day. Large objects cannot be put in the dumpster. Tires and other large objects should be placed next to the dumpster. It was noted that in the past non-Houston Lake residents had put trash in the dumpster. We will see if we can get a dumpster with a locking lid. It was also noted that someone has been dumping concrete chunks and other building material waste on the other side of the footbridge.

There was discussion as to where the new docks should be placed because of the low lake levels in several places. One resident offered to take care of one of the new docks if it were put where an existing dock is located. Wendy stated that we will wait until the dredging is completed before making any final decision as to dock locations.

A resident asked about dredging the S curve. Wendy reported that it will be done after the main channel is dredged. A small number of the small trees will be removed to allow access to that side of the channel. Big rocks will not be removed but repositioned if they have become dislodged and fallen into the channel. We don't yet know how much dirt will remain on the HOA property on the north side of the main channel. Sean will have to measure so he can tell KC sewer the size the sewer manhole extensions have to be.

Frank reported that the minutes of the March 18, 2024, VGHA meeting had been de facto approved when each board member had been given the opportunity, and some did, make changes to the minutes before the final copy was presented.

The next VGHA meeting is scheduled for May 20th at 6:30 PM at City Hall.

Meeting adjourned at 7:12 PM.



City Council Meeting Minutes

Date: Wednesday, the 11th day of September, 2024

Location: Houston Lake City Hall, 5417 NW Adrian, Houston Lake, MO 64151

The regular meeting of the City Council of Houston Lake, MO, was called to order by Mayor Pro Tem Ashley Fuglestad at 6:33 PM.

On roll call, the following members were present: Mayor Pro Tem / Alderman Ashley Fuglestad (Acting Mayor), Alderman Sarah Loring, and Alderman Teena Walker-Robin.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA FOR 09/11/2024

Walker-Robin moved to approve the agenda for 09/11/2024. Loring 2nd. A voice vote resulted in unanimous approval.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

City Clerk Shepard indicated she had been checking parliamentary procedure regarding whether or not a vote needs to be taken to close a meeting (it might be proper for the Mayor to adjourn a meeting without voting to do so). Since there was no definitive answer at this time, she indicated she could update the end of each of the three meeting minutes being presented by including the vote to close the meetings for each one. Walker-Robin moved to approve the 08/14/24 City Council Meeting minutes, the 08/28/2024 Tax Levy Meeting minutes, and the 08/28/24 Working Meeting minutes, including the changes Shepard will make to the endings of each meeting regarding a vote to close each meeting. Loring 2nd. A voice vote resulted in unanimous approval.

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

Fire Department Report - this report was placed on hold because the Chief had not yet arrived at the meeting.

Sheriff's Report - Captain Woodrow Painter reported the department worked a little over 30 hours in August. He reported a broken out window from a car which is suspected to be an attempt at theft. Also two traffic stops. He introduced Major Erik Holland who will soon be the new Sheriff. Major Holland greeted the crowd and will become Sheriff January 1, 2025. He is replacing Sheriff Mark Owens who is retiring after serving over 47 years in several local cities. Walker-Robin asked if there were plans for an animal control officer. No plans at the moment. The County Commissioner is part of the decision making progress in order to install a new animal control officer. There is no one available to pick up stray dogs at this time but a deputy can still be called in the case of a vicious dog.

VENETIAN GARDENS HOMES ASSOCIATION (VGHA) REPORT

Mary Head reported the next VGHA meeting is scheduled for Monday, September 16, at 6:30 PM at City Hall and the annual budget will be discussed. The annual meeting of the VGHA is scheduled for Saturday, October 19, at 2:00 PM. The meeting will include voting on board

members, the annual budget, and dues. Grass seed and straw will be put down in either October or November. The deadline for articles for the Houston Laker remains the 21st of each month.

PUBLIC DISCUSSION

Bobbi Baker-Hughes reported several persons in our city are supposed to have trash picked up at their homes, rather than at the curb. Those residents who have this service really need it and, recently, Republic has not provided the service required. She requested the city contact Republic, again, since her communication with Republic does not seem to improve the service. Walker-Robin indicated pictures representing service which was not performed properly can be sent to her and she will address with Republic's sales representative. Baker-Hughes then asked about the sewer smell in her area and asked what could be done about it. Others mentioned other areas in the city regarding the same issue. Walker-Robin suggested looking for a service that could investigate and offer suggestions for addressing this issue.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Shepard explained that she has learned, through her training as City Clerk, that part of her duties are to "serve as the general accountant of the City" per the *Municipal Code of the City of Houston Lake, MO Section 115.090. City Clerk - Election - Duties*. While she did not find any additional information as to what that really entails, she has taken it upon herself, since the annual budget meetings, to begin working directly with the bookkeeper and tax collector to make certain all three are working in concert for the benefit of the City and so that she is better able to explain the financial reports offered at City Council meetings, should the need arise. Regarding the August financial information, she explained that these are now reflecting "checkbook balances" rather than "bank balances" as a more accurate reflection of the monthly status of the financials for the City. Kay Honeycutt, bookkeeper, shared with Shepard that this change is a good step for the City. Shepard complimented Honeycutt as a "smart cookie" based on her individual meetings with Honeycutt, and said the City is lucky to have her. Shepard anticipates individual meetings with Kathryn Kreider, Tax Collector, in the near future and is certain she will likely be able to say the same thing about Kreider. Loring moved to approve the Treasurer's Report dated 08/31/24 as submitted. Walker-Robin 2nd. A voice vote resulted in unanimous approval. The Council extends its compliments to Honeycutt on the new format.

Fire Department Report - Assistant Chief Keith Payne, having arrived at the meeting, gave his report. He apologized for his late appearance since he had been called, last minute, to return to the station just as the meeting commenced. He presented flyers for their upcoming Open House scheduled for Saturday, October 5th from 10 - 2. He reported one minor medical call during the last 30 days. Health Department's drive thru flu shot is tentatively scheduled for October 2nd. Fuglestad reported Spire and AT&T have checked their lines and confirmed their lines are 15' to 16' in height. They both reported they will not do any preventative work but they will fix any issues that may arise. Bobbi Baker-Hughes complimented the fire department on efficiently getting to her home several times recently.

PERMITS

Building - 5488 NW Venetian Dr (including contingency that new fence is not more than 50' from the existing fence line). Walker-Robin mentioned she is in favor of all permit and bond checks being deposited rather than held. The VGHA should be alerted to reseeding needed in

the fence area. Walker-Robin moved to accept the permit including the contingency. Loring 2nd. A voice vote resulted in unanimous approval.

Burn - 5488 NW Venetian Dr. Loring moved to accept the permit which was updated to an “in ground, homemade burn pit with stone”. Fuglestad 2nd. A voice vote resulted in unanimous approval.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Update regarding utilities raising the utility lines: the utilities have reviewed the height of their lines which will allow adequate clearance for the Fire Department’s new pumper truck. If residents notice lines sagging, especially if the lines are covered by vines, they can individually contact the utilities to report this.

City Council Review of 2023-2024 Accounts: Walker-Robin reminded the Council that a Missouri statute requires the Council to review the City’s accounts semi-annually and to publish their report. A draft of all accounts was presented and discussed. Report can now be published in the Houston Laker.

Spire offer to repair failing restorations - update: Walker-Robin explained the recent milling of Adrian and how it was initially assumed to be part of the Spire repairs needed. It was actually, and just happened to be, the county’s use of its Covid funding to repair a road in our area. Walker-Robin reported Spire will now make their needed repairs next week ahead of the county’s resurfacing of Adrian.

NEW BUSINESS

Prepare for upcoming election in April 2025, steps needed: Fire Protection Fund is due to be placed on the April 2025 ballot, as well as elections for Mayor and Aldermen. In addition, the Use Tax needs to be presented. The Platte County Board of Elections will be providing information on how to prepare for April in the next couple of months. Shepard should contact the Board of Elections to make certain information is forthcoming. A campaign can begin regarding articles placed online and in the Houston Laker regarding the upcoming elections for Houston Lake, as well as the Fire Protection Fund and explaining the Use Tax.

Recent milling of Adrian Avenue: was explained under the Spire offer above.

REPORT FROM CITY CLERK

Shepard reported she would be taking two weeks vacation soon. She noted the City Hall trash needs to be taken to the curb on Tuesdays over the next two weeks. She will be absent for the Working Meeting scheduled in two weeks. She reported locating the broken Houston Lake sign, formerly located at the corner of 56th Street and Adrian, in the garage at City Hall. Shepard and Honeycutt will be working on reviewing and reporting on the Covid funds the City received from the government by the report’s deadline at the end of this year.

REPORTS FROM COUNCIL MEMBERS

Fuglestad reported she is working on scheduling the annual brush pickup. She is working on obtaining bids for the bridge from a number of companies regarding all options, including driving or walking bridge.

Loring - no report.

Walker-Robin asked Bobbi Baker-Hughes about her experience with trail cameras on her properties. Walker-Robin is researching cameras to monitor city property. She's been chatting with AT&T regarding billing issues and because of her frustration with their service, she is willing to investigate other options. The MOM committee is going to pass out candy from City Hall again this year on Halloween.

NEXT MEETINGS AND ADJOURNMENT

The Working Meeting will be Wednesday, September 25, 2024 at 6:30 PM. The next City Council meeting will be Wednesday, October 9, 2024 at 6:30 PM at City Hall.

Loring moved to adjourn the meeting. Walker-Robin 2nd. A voice vote resulted in unanimous approval.

The meeting adjourned at 8:01 PM.

Minutes submitted by: City Clerk, Lisa A. Shepard

Approved 10/16/2024

NOTE: Missouri State Statute RSMO 79.160 requires Boards of fourth class cities (such as Houston Lake) to review and publish a semi-annual financial report. This July 1, 2023 to June 30, 2024 statement was reviewed by the Council at the City Council Meeting on 09/11/24.

City of Houston Lake
Condensed Statement of Income and Expenditures

Beginning July 1, 2023 and Ending June 30, 2024

	General Fund	Road Fund	Grinder Pump Fund	Fire Protection Fund	Municipal Court	Municipal Court Bond	TOTAL ACCOUNTS	BUDGET
BALANCE AS OF 07/01/23	141,837.94	23,655.95	27,092.34	42,900.84	1,468.01	519.75	237,474.83	
INCOME & RECEIPTS								
Building Permits	1,350.00						1,350.00	500
VGHA Reimbursement	1,152.01						1,152.01	2,000
KC Sewer / Trash	125,149.13						125,149.13	127,000
Municipal Court Fines	7,488.00						7,488.00	7,000
Parkville Road District		2,765.85					2,765.85	2,000
Personal Property Tax	5,953.81						5,953.81	12,000
Railroad & Utility Tax	1,596.93						1,596.93	2,000
Real Estate Tax	15,798.62						15,798.62	22,000
Grinder Pump Tax			9,600.00				9,600.00	14,400
Special Fire Tax Levy				20,000.00			20,000.00	31,018
Transportation Sales Tax		22,000.00					22,000.00	14,000
Utility Franchise Tax	41,700.23						41,700.23	36,000
Vehicle Tax Rebates		11,882.91					11,882.91	11,000
Interest Earned	183.05	20.65	239.68	333.94			777.32	100
TOTAL INCOME & RECEIPTS	200,371.78	36,669.41	9,839.68	20,333.94			267,214.81	281,018
DISPURSEMENTS								
Attorney/Acctg/Codifying	8,856.35						8,856.35	9,500
Building Permits City Hall	900.00						900.00	500
Utilities Domestic Shelter Law	5,560.88						5,560.88	5,235
Enforcement Training Election	154.00						154.00	165
Expenses Equipment/Fuel Gifts	154.00						154.00	165
& Awards Insurance KC Sewer	329.14						329.14	800
Maintenance Law Enforcement	1,093.67						1,093.67	2,300
Services MO Municipal	721.51						721.51	0
League/Prof Dev	7,133.00						7,133.00	6,000
Newspaper/Online Ads	85,858.92						85,858.92	86,000
	16,750.21						16,750.21	17,000
	675.00						675.00	550
	668.76						668.76	400

