

HOUSTON LAKER

SINCE MARCH 1957 - EDITION #68

CITY COUNCIL NEWS

The April City Council meeting will be held on Wednesday, April 16th at 6:30pm at City Hall. Newly elected council members will be sworn in.

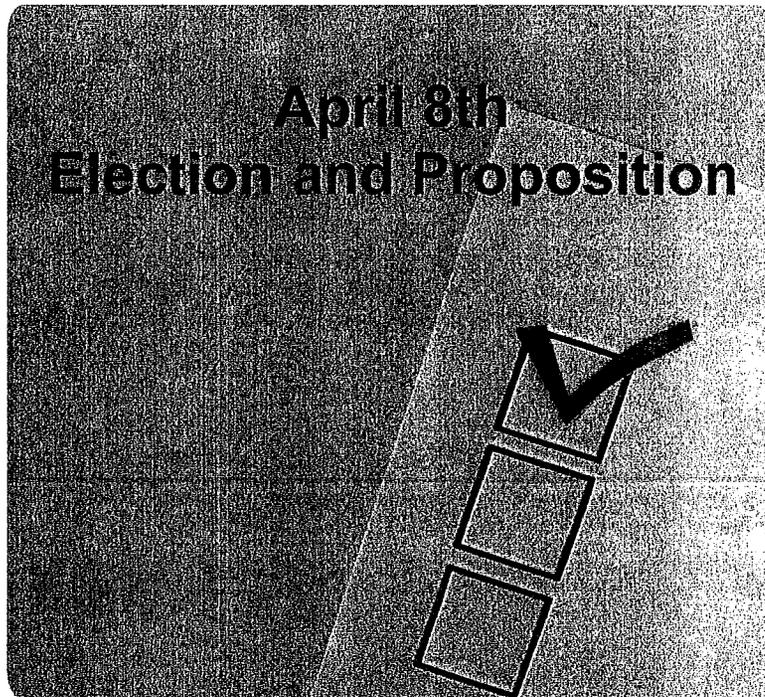
VENETIAN GARDENS HOMES ASSOC

The Semi-Annual meeting of the Venetian Gardens Homes Association will meet at City Hall on Monday, April 21st at 6:30pm

CITY OF HOUSTON LAKE - CITY CODE FOR PET VACCINATION RECORDS

Rabies vaccination records for pets residing in the city of Houston Lake are due to the City Clerk on May 1st of each calendar year.

Chapter 205, Section 205.020



MUNICIPAL ELECTION AND NEW POLLING PLACE

Registered voters in Houston Lake, Missouri, have a new polling place location for the April 8, 2025 Election and Proposition:

HILLS OF WALDEN CLUBHOUSE
5858 N POLK DR
KANSAS CITY, MO 64151

Map of polling place change is included in this edition

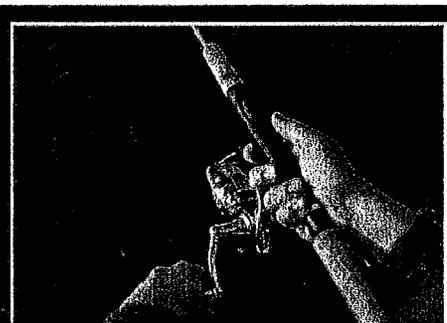


Photo by Laura Stanley:

<https://www.pexels.com/photo/photo-of-person-holding-fishing-rod-2473502/>

VENETIAN GARDENS HOMES ASSOCIATION AT HOUSTON LAKE

"You need a Missouri fishing license and a HOA 2025 bracelet with you".

If you don't have your 2025 HOA bracelet contact Mary Head to get your bracelets.

They are FREE. call 816-741-5639 or email her at maryjewel40@gmail.com

REDBUD

SUBMITTED BY SARAH LORING

My mother recently passed, and I've been thinking a lot about the things she enjoyed and spoke of often. Every spring she looked forward to the early bloom of redbud trees. They were her favorite and this month I wanted to highlight some information and lore around them.

Amid our quiet woods and winding roads, the redbud trees are blooming. Their barren leafless branches draped in a veil of pink- purple blossoms. Redbuds grow all over the United States thriving in all but the hottest and coldest climates. The Arbor Day Society had it on the short list to be considered as our national tree. They are tolerant to drought, black walnuts, fire, and thankfully in our case deer. Redbud trees grow a main taproot that is generally 2-3' deep with off shooting roots for support. Their bark and flowers are edible and have been used throughout history for medicinal uses including treating whooping cough and dysentery. In Appalachia they are sometimes referred to as the "spice tree" with twigs used in teas and flowers fried as a delicacy. Redbud wood has a fine grain that is dense and durable often used to create furniture and cabinets. George Washington was so enamored with their spring color he transplanted some from the woods to his home in Mount Vernon.

The redbud tree has long been surrounded by legend and folklore. Throughout time, this striking tree has been a symbol of both sorrow and beauty, carrying with it tales of betrayal, transformation, and renewal.

One of the most well-known narratives links the redbud tree to the story of Judas Iscariot, the disciple who betrayed Jesus. According to this tale, the tree was once a tall and mighty species, bearing strong branches. It is said that after Judas took his own life by hanging from its limbs, the tree, overcome with shame, shrank in size and could no longer support the weight of a man. Its blossoms, once pure white, blushed a deep pink, symbolizing sorrow and repentance. Because of this story, some people still refer to the redbud as the "Judas Tree,"

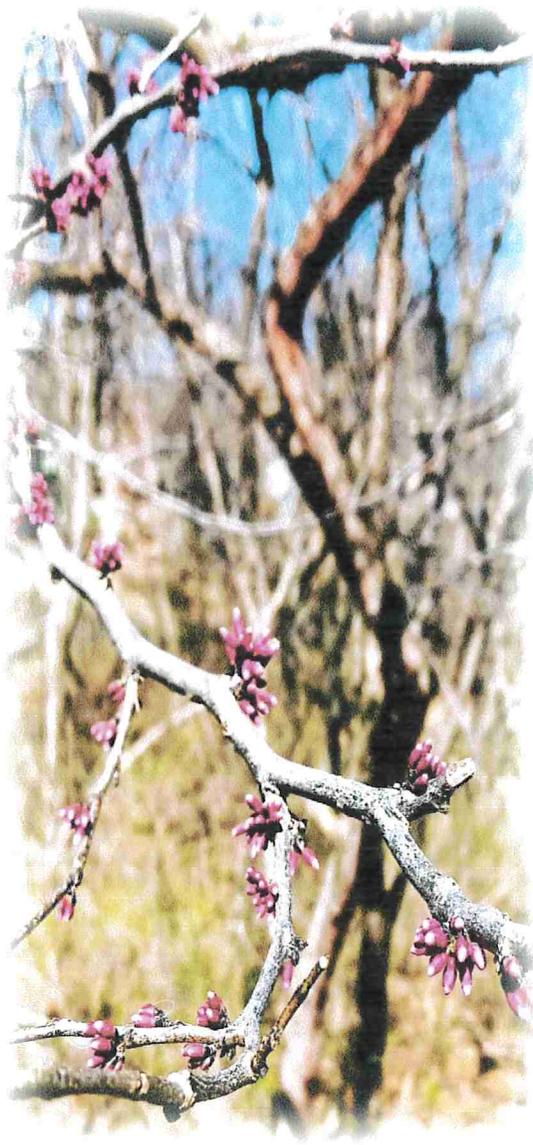
To the Cherokee and other Indigenous peoples, the tree was a messenger of spring's arrival and the end of winter's hardship.

Its flowers delicate, and edible, were sometimes gathered for food, while its bark and roots were used for medicinal use. Some believe that planting a redbud near your home will bring protection and prosperity, its heart-shaped leaves a symbol of love and harmony.

Our densely wooded community is one of my favorite attributes of Houston Lake. Seeing our redbuds bloom and announce the beginning of spring was always so welcomed, even more so now. They remind me that life is filled with loss and renewal, and that even the heaviest hearts can find beauty once more.



PHOTO BY BURAK BAHADIR BUYUKKILINÇ :
[HTTPS://WWW.PEXELS.COM/PHOTO/BEAUTIFUL-CHERRY-BLOSSOM-BRANCHES-AGAINST-BLUE-SKY-31275821/](https://www.pexels.com/photo/beautiful-cherry-blossom-branches-against-blue-sky-31275821/)



Houston Lake Community Garden Meeting – March 8th, 2025

Thanks to all of the neighbors and friends that attended our first garden meeting of 2025. And because of your generous donations of over \$200.00, it will be possible to do all the repairs and planting for this year's garden.

The garden is in need of some added chicken wire along the bottom, secured with 12 inch staples, to prevent the critters from entering. Also needed are 4 (2"x4"x10') replacements boards for the upper structure. The repairs will start sometime in mid April. Volunteers will be greatly appreciated.

Kathryn Krieder said that out compost this year will probably cover only one section of a

bed so a few bags of compost in each section will be needed before we start planting.

Some planting will start before the repairs in the first bed.... lettuce, kale, chives, spinach etc. In the next couple of weeks we will need some "weed whisperers" to help that along.

Thank you all again for the wonderful meeting... with lots of sharing ideas, laughter and pretty good pizza too! Please remember that this garden is for all residents of Houston Lake whether you help plant, harvest, donate or not.

Marsha Duncan

816.419.5051 (call or text) mduncannkc@aol.com



Save the Date:

April 26 , 2025 9:00-12:00

Please come and give back to your community by helping with our annual Lake Cleanup Day. The VGHA will provide bags and a dumpster to clean up lake grounds, Mayor's Park and other areas. We appreciate you and look forward to working together to keep our lake and parks safe and healthy.

News from your VGHA,

We're finally thawing out and healing up from surgery. Lake Clean Up Day is scheduled for April 26, 9:00-12:00, please come and help if you're around. We'll have donuts available at 9:00.

This year the HOA has dedicated funds towards tree removals, beach renewal, edge of lake maintenance, back of dam and spillway maintenance. We start water testing in May and will continue through September to be sure e coli levels are safe for swimming. The swim docks and trash pickups will be provided again for the summer season. The biohealth pod pucks will be changed every 2 months for maximizing our money out of them, I will be measuring muck depth at the beginning of the season and after the end of season to have evidence of how much muck dissolving is taking place. I'll be certain to have those figures by the annual meeting.

If you have an area of interest you'd like to be involved in, please reach out to me at 816-726-4455.

Have a great spring season!

Warmly,
Pam Freese

PLEASE DO NOT FEED THE GEESE

Why we do not feed the geese...

They become reliant on human food and abandon their natural nutrition sources, which may cause health issues. In addition, they become accustomed to human activity and will use the park and beach as their restroom.

GOOSE POPULATION CONTROL

Goose Egg Addling will begin this March, with teams walking around on the North and South side of the lake. Please do not be alarmed as these teams will be looking for nests, near the shore, weekly for several weeks.

**CHUCK AND LAURA HAVE VOLUNTEERED TO DO THE GOOSE EGG
ADDLING THIS YEAR.**

**IF YOU SEE GOOSE NESTS AROUND THE LAKE TO PLEASE CONTACT ONE OF
THESE HOA BOARD MEMBERS.**

PRESIDENT PAM FREESE

816-726-4455 OR EMAIL VENETIAN.GARDENS.HOMES.ASSOC@GMAIL.COM

SECRETARY MONICA BESHEARS

573-356-4118 OR EMAIL WEETY30@GMAIL.COM

BOARD MEMBER MARY HEAD

816-741-5639 OR EMAIL MARYJEWEL40@GMAIL.COM

Information Regarding the April 8, 2025 Election and Proposition

Election of Aldermen

Historically, the City Council of Houston Lake was composed of two Aldermen serving the North side of the lake, and two Aldermen serving the South side of the lake. The Ward System was abolished last year. This means all four Aldermen now serve the entire community on the City Council. Each year two alternating Aldermen seats are on the ballot.

Proposition: The Fire Suppression Tax Levy - Fire Protection Fund

The Fire Protection Fund is a voter-approved funding mechanism that ensures our city has fire suppression services. It has been in place for years and requires renewal every four years. The City of Houston Lake does not have its own fire department. Instead, we contract with Riverside Fire Department for fire protection services. The Fire Protection Fund ensures that there is a reliable funding source to pay for this contract.

If the city stops collecting funds for fire protection, the city will continue paying Riverside Fire Department until the remaining funds run out. Once the fund is depleted, the fire protection contract will end. Residents will then be responsible for arranging their own fire protection services.

Without a city contract, Riverside Fire Department (or any responding fire service) may bill the homeowner directly for any services provided.

Residents are encouraged to reach out to their homeowners insurance provider to understand how this may affect their policy.



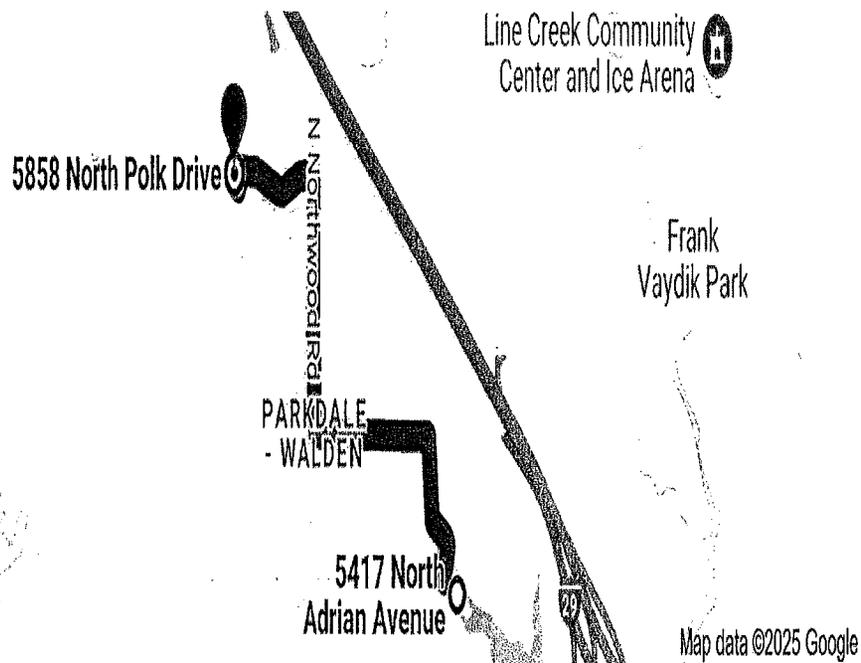
April 8, 2025 Election and Proposition

NEW POLLING PLACE LOCATION

Registered voters in Houston Lake, Missouri, have a new polling place location for the April 8, 2025 Election and Proposition:

**Hills of Walden Clubhouse
5858 N Polk Dr
Kansas City, MO 64151**

(Directions from Houston Lake City Hall to Hills of Walden Clubhouse)



OFFICIAL BALLOT
 General Municipal Election
 Platte County, Missouri
 April 8, 2025

JUDGES' INITIALS

7

Instructions

Completely fill in the target next to the candidate or question response of your choice like this: ●

If you do not see the name of the candidate for whom you wish to vote, darken the target opposite the write-in line and print the name of the candidate on the write-in line provided.

If you are in favor of the question, completely fill in the target opposite "YES". If you are opposed to the question, completely fill in the target opposite "NO".

NOTE: The ballot reading device in use is designed to only record votes cast as a filled in target. There can be no erasures, stray marks, check marks, or cross outs on the ballot. If you make an error marking the ballot, see an Election Judge to receive a replacement ballot.

Park Hill School District

For School Board Member

(Vote for TWO)

Daryl Terwilleger

Shereka Barnes

Write-in

Write-in

Proposition G

Shall the Park Hill School District of Platte County, Missouri, be authorized to increase its adjusted operating tax levy 10 cents per one hundred dollars of assessed valuation for the purpose of paying teachers and staff competitive salaries and benefits?

If this question is approved, the adjusted operating property tax levy of the District is estimated to increase from \$4.8354 to \$4.9354 per one hundred dollars of assessed valuation.

YES
 NO

Proposition O

Shall the Park Hill School District of Platte County, Missouri, issue its general obligation bonds in the amount of \$128,000,000 to acquire, construct, renovate, improve, furnish and equip its school facilities, including but not limited to (a) construction, improvement and renovations to various school buildings, including the Phase 1 replacement of Park Hill High School, stadium and field improvements at Park Hill South High School, and additions to various elementary schools, and (b) the purchase of land?

If this question is approved, the adjusted debt service levy of the District is estimated to increase from \$0.5601 currently to \$0.8601 per one hundred dollars of assessed valuation.

YES
 NO

City of Houston Lake

For Mayor

(Vote for ONE)

Sarah Schofield

Write-in

For Alderman At-Large

(Vote for TWO)

Marsha Duncan

Ashley Fuglestad

Write-in

Write-in

Question 1

Should the City of Houston Lake, Missouri continue the existing special tax levy of fifty-two and fifty-seven hundredths cents (\$00.5257) per hundred dollars (\$100.00) of assessed valuation for an additional period of four (4) years for fire suppression services?

YES
 NO

Turn ballot over



CITY OF
HOUSTON LAKE

STATE OF
MISSOURI

BILL NO. 031925

ORDINANCE NO. _____

AN ORDINANCE REPEALING SECTION 230.025 OPEN BURNING RESTRICTIONS AND CREATING SECTION 800, RECREATIONAL FIRE ORDINANCE.

WHEREAS, the Board of Alderman of the City of Houston Lake, Missouri, have determined that it is in the best interest of the residents of the City to repeal Section 230.025 Open Burning Restrictions, in order to eliminate the need for residents to submit burn permits annually.

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE BOARD OF ALDERMEN OF THE CITY OF HOUSTON LAKE, MISSOURI AS FOLLOWS:

1. Section 230.025 Open Burning Restrictions of the Houston Lake Code, is hereby repealed.
2. A new section of the Houston Lake Code titled RECREATIONAL FIRE ORDINANCE, is hereby enacted as follows:

Houston Lake Recreational Fire Ordinance.

Section 800.010. Definitions.

As used in this section, the following terms shall have the meanings ascribed to them:

- a. "Recreational Fire", a fire used for cooking, warmth, or recreational enjoyment in an outdoor fire pit or fireplace, which is not used for disposal of waste or refuse.
- b. "Fire Pit/Fireplace", a device used for containing an outdoor fire, including fire pits, fire bowls, chimineas, and other similar structures.

Section 800.020. Recreational Fire Requirements

- a. The fire pit or outdoor fireplace shall not exceed 36 inches in width.
- b. The fire pit or fireplace shall be specifically designed for outdoor use and built to contain flames and embers safely. The fire pit or fireplace shall have a proper fireproof base (such as stone, metal, or fire-resistant materials) to prevent the fire from spreading to the surrounding area.

c. The fire pit or fireplace shall be made from non-combustible materials like steel, cast iron, brick, or stone. The structure shall naturally control flame spread, and include a protective barrier (such as a screen or lid) to contain flying embers.

Section 800.030. Location and Safety Zones

a. **Clearance from Combustible Materials.** The fire pit or fireplace shall be placed at least 15 feet away from any combustible materials, including but not limited to: wooden decks, fences, sheds, trees, bushes, or shrubs with dry leaves or pine needles, furniture made of wood, or other flammable materials.

b. **Surface Stability.** The fire pit shall be placed on a flat, stable surface to prevent tipping. The fire pit shall not be placed directly on grass. Stone, brick, or other stable materials shall be used to create a foundation.

Section 800.040. Fuel and Materials for Burning

a. **Allowed Fuels.** Only dry, seasoned wood shall be burned. This includes small branches and twigs from trees that have been pruned or trimmed, as long as they fit comfortably within the fire pit.

b. **Prohibited Fuels.** The following materials shall not be burned: trash, including plastic, paper, and chemicals, yard waste such as leaves or large branches that cannot fit within the fire pit, pressure-treated wood, painted wood, or wood with chemical finishes.

Section 800.050. Supervision and Fire Safety

a. **Supervision.** Constant supervision of the fire is required by an adult. The fire shall never be left unattended at any time while burning.

b. **Fire Extinguishing Equipment.** An extinguishing agent shall be kept nearby. Acceptable extinguishing agents are: an operable garden hose with water, a bucket of sand, a fire extinguisher rated for outdoor use (Class ABC), a shovel and dirt to smother the fire.

c. **Duration of Use.** The fire shall be completely extinguished before leaving it unattended by an adult. All embers shall be fully extinguished, and the area shall no longer be hot.

Section 800.060. Fire Size and Control

a. **Fire Size.** The fire shall remain small and manageable. Excessive flames and heat shall not occur. Only appropriate-sized logs for the fire pit shall be used, and the amount of wood added to the fire shall be regulated.

b. **Wind Conditions.** A fire shall not be ignited when wind gusts exceed 15 mph.

c. Flame Height. The flame height shall not exceed the height of the walls or screen of the fire pit. Loose materials (e.g., leaves, twigs) shall be kept away from the flames at all times.

Section 800.070. Extinguishing the Fire

a. Dousing the Fire. When extinguishing the fire, the fire shall be completely extinguished. If using water to extinguish the flames, water shall be poured evenly and slowly over the fire to saturate the entire pile of embers. If using sand to extinguish the flames, embers shall be buried with the same and then stirred to ensure full coverage.

b. Checking for Heat. The area surrounding the fire pit shall be checked for residual heat. Feel the ground around the fire to ensure it has fully cooled before leaving the site.

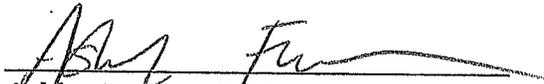
Section 800.080. Violations and Penalties

a. Any violation of this Section will be subject to penalties as outlined in the City of Houston Lake Municipal Code. Violations may include fines, cessation of the fire, or other actions as determined by the City of Houston Lake.”

2. This Ordinance shall become effective immediately upon its passage and adoption by the City Council of Houston Lake.

3. The City Clerk is authorized and instructed to make the appropriate insertion of Section 800, in the Houston Lake Code of Ordinances.

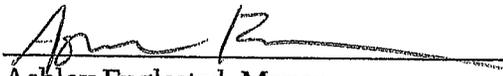
PASSED this 19 day of MARCH, 2025.


Ashley Fuglestad, Mayor

Attest


Lisa A. Shepard, City Clerk

APPROVED this 19 day of MARCH, 2025.


Ashley Fuglestad, Mayor



City Council Meeting Minutes

Date: Wednesday, the 15th day of January, 2025

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 on Wednesday, January 15, 2025 at 6:33 PM. It was a hybrid meeting of both in person and virtual participants.

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

REVIEW OF AGENDA FOR 01/15/2025

The agenda was included in the notice for the meeting. There were no additions.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Loring moved to approve the 12/11/2024 City Council Meeting minutes as presented and the 01/08/2025 Working City Council Meeting minutes as presented. Beshears 2nd. Via roll call vote, all the Aldermen approved the minutes.

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

Fire Department Report - In the absence of Keith Payne, Assistant Chief, Shepard offered his report. 3 calls in November, 2 medical and 1 down power. 1 call in December - medical.

Sheriff's Report - Captain Woodrow Painter's report indicated six calls for service last month for a total of just over 31 hours. 1 animal, 2 welfare checks, 1 suspicious person, 1 threat, and 1 traffic stop.

VENETIAN GARDENS HOMES ASSOCIATION (VGHA) REPORT

Shepard reported for Mary Head - no VGHA meeting scheduled for January. The deadline to submit news of any kind for the February edition of the Houston Laker is January 21, 2025.

PUBLIC DISCUSSION

Resident, Teresa Olson, reported her observations regarding the snow removal company. Council discussion about other reported dissatisfaction with the snow removal. Beshears reported likelihood of looking for a new service provider in future. Olson also asked about fencing permits. Fences in question were identified as non-permanent fences. VGHA and City did approve a recent fence next to VGHA property.

PERMITS

Burn - for 5444 NW Venetian Dr permit. Discussion paused since a burn ordinance is to be discussed later in the meeting.

FINANCIAL REPORTS

Discussion. Financial Reports dated 12/31/24 were accepted as presented. A Financial Report for the first 6 months of 2024-2025, prepared by Kay Honeycutt, was reviewed and discussed.

Loring moved to print this report, on behalf of the Council, in the Houston Laker, including a header referencing the Missouri Statute that supports publicising such a report. Beshears 2nd. Via roll call vote, all the Aldermen approved. Council mentioned brush pickup can be paid from the Fire Suppression Fund. Recent second snow removal, requested by the fire department, can be paid from the Fire Suppression Fund.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS - None

NEW BUSINESS

Burn Ordinance (to replace Burn Permits) discussion. When ordinance is ready, the title of the ordinance should be included in the agenda. Likely old code setting out Burn Permit needs to be repealed. Further direction needed by the city's attorney. Discussion tabled.

Language needed for Fire Suppression Proposition - discussion. The proposition to be placed on the ballot in April is a reduction in the special tax levy for the next four years. Fuglestad read the ordinance setting out the "Special Tax Levy for Fire Suppression Services for the City of Houston Lake for the Tax Year 2025" twice. Loring moved, Beshears 2nd. Roll call vote: Loring - aye; Beshears - aye; Walker-Robin - aye; Fuglestad - aye. Ordinance approved.

Revisit burn permit for 5444 NW Venetian Dr. Tabled until Fuglestad can inspect the fire pit.

REPORT FROM CITY CLERK

Shepard plans to attend Floodplain webinar. Regarding Sunshine Request received from the League of Women Voters, she will ask direction from the Platte County Board of Elections.

REPORTS FROM COUNCIL MEMBERS

Walker-Robin indicated she will be submitting her receipts from the holiday party next month.

Loring was also not pleased with the recent snow removal service. She thanked those in the neighborhood who reached out and checked on others in the neighborhood, ahead of the recent storm, to ensure they had everything they needed.

Beshears mentioned issues with the snow removal service earlier in the meeting.

Fuglestad has contacted our trash removal service since some trash pickup has been missed recently. She would like residents to continue to report when their trash pickup is missed. She hopes to have an update on bridge quotes for the next meeting. She announced Sarah Schofield intends to run for mayor in April; Fuglestad and Marsha Duncan intend to run for Aldermen. She indicated, sadly, Teena Walker-Robin will be leaving the council.

NEXT MEETINGS AND ADJOURNMENT

The next Working Meeting will be Wednesday, January 29, 2025 at 6:30 PM at City Hall. The next City Council meeting will be Wednesday, February 12, 2025 at 6:30 PM at City Hall. Then the next Working Meeting will be Wednesday, February 26, 2025 at 6:30 PM at City Hall.

Fuglestad adjourned the meeting at 7:31 PM. .

Minutes submitted by: City Clerk, Lisa A. Shepard

Approved 02/26/2025



City Council Working Meeting Minutes

Date: Wednesday, the 5th day of February, 2025

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

The Working Meeting of the City Council of Houston Lake, MO, was called to order by Mayor Pro Tem Ashley Fuglestad at 6:35 PM.

The following members were present via Google Meet: Mayor Pro Tem / Alderman Ashley Fuglestad (Acting Mayor), Alderman Jesse Beshears, Alderman Sarah Loring, and Alderman Teena Walker-Robin.

CITY COUNCIL DISCUSSION

Electrical Permit for 3610 NW Edgewater Trail. Discussion. Beshears moved to approve the electrical permit for 3610 NW Edgewater Trail. Walker-Robin 2nd. Via roll call vote, all the Aldermen approved the Electrical Permit.

Discussion regarding bids for the bridge and submitting a Storm Water Grant for possible funding. Still wanting bids for both a walking and a drivable bridge. Create a spreadsheet for ease in comparing the bids. Several options were again discussed, especially regarding types of materials to be used. It was suggested to consult the Platte County Engineer as a good resource. Hobie Crane, Platte County Civil Engineer - resource. Want to use the same specifications when requesting bids.

Shepard reports need to complete an insurance questionnaire regarding property owned by the city. If there is not a known list of property, she will request this information from our insurance company as a place to begin a list.

Discussion regarding starting the budget process for next year. Shepard and Kay Honeycutt will work on a first draft.

Shepard has attended Floodplain webinars recently. It does not appear the floodplain impacts our community. Council agreed no more time needs to be invested in research regarding the floodplain.

Next City Council meeting rescheduled from February 12 to February 19 due to scheduling conflicts. February 12 time might be used for a committee meeting regarding a Storm Water grant. Beshears wants to post the snow removal equipment on an auction site.

Discussion regarding basement remodel and new garage door opener needed for City Hall basement garage door. There is still funding available in this year's budget for these types of projects.

Bshears to bring bids to the next city council meeting for basement remodel and new garage door opener. **Fuglestad** will send out an email to council members to review for bridge quotes. **Loring** will contact Hobie Crane.

ADJOURNMENT

Fuglestad adjourned the meeting at 7:34 PM.

Minutes submitted by: City Clerk, Lisa A. Shepard

Approved 02/26/2025



City Council Meeting Minutes

Date: Wednesday, the 26th day of February, 2025

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

The regular meeting of the City Council of Houston Lake, MO, originally scheduled for February 12, 2025, was postponed twice - for scheduling conflicts and staff illness.

The regular meeting of the City Council of Houston Lake, MO, was called to order by Mayor Pro Tem Ashley Fuglestad on Wednesday, February 26, 2025 at 6:35 PM.

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

REVIEW OF AGENDA FOR 02/26/2025

The agenda was included in the notice for the meeting. There were no additions/corrections.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Loring moved to approve the 01/15/2025 City Council Meeting minutes as presented and the 02/05/2025 Working City Council Meeting minutes as presented. Walker-Robin 2nd. A voice vote resulted in unanimous approval.

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

Fire Department Report - Keith Payne, Assistant Chief, reported a small structural fire on Venetian.

Sheriff's Report - Captain Woodrow Painter's report was read in his absence. It indicated seven calls for service in January for a total of just over 31 hours. 1 welfare check, 1 structure fire, 3 suspicious person calls, and 2 traffic stops.

VENETIAN GARDENS HOMES ASSOCIATION (VGHA) REPORT

Mary Head reported the next VGHA meeting is scheduled for Monday, March 17. Annual dues are due and can be dropped in the box by Friday, February 28. The deadline to submit news of any kind for the April edition of the Houston Laker is March 21, 2025.

PUBLIC DISCUSSION

Resident, Sharron DeLaFuente, thanked Walker-Robin, the MOM committee, and all those responsible for the planning and execution of the holiday party at City Hall which was held in December 2024. Sharron was thanked for providing Santa.

PERMITS

Burn - for 5444 NW Venetian Dr permit (renewal). Loring moved to renew the permit. Beshears 2nd. A voice vote resulted in unanimous approval.

Building - for 5426 NW Venetian Dr (extension). Walker-Robin moved to extend the permit. Loring 2nd. A voice vote resulted in unanimous approval.

Electrical - for 5451 NW Venetian Dr (fees determined to be \$60 permit fee and \$100 bond). Beshears moved to approve the permit pending signature on form and check for payment. Walker-Robin 2nd. A voice vote resulted in unanimous approval.

FINANCIAL REPORTS

Discussion. Financial Reports dated 01/31/25 were accepted as presented. It was noted 2 CDs are maturing in April and should be discussed at the March meeting.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Burn Permit - Fuglestad explained the goal is to move away from yearly burn permits to a burn ordinance that covers everyone and is more easily enforced. This led to a discussion about Houston Lake's ordinances which were last codified in 2016. Ordinances need to be brought up to date then codified.

NEW BUSINESS

Bridge Update including Storm Water Grant - Beshears mentioned he and his committee of Loring, Shepard, and Treasurer, Honeycutt, have been working on completing a Storm Water Grant proposal which is due to be submitted by March 21, 2025. Discussion. A road bridge appears to be outside of Houston Lake's budget being cost prohibitive. A pedestrian bridge is the most likely to be able to be funded with a combination of the City's available funding and the Storm Water Grant - if it is awarded to Houston Lake. Suggestions regarding whom to contact regarding possible written support to be included with Houston Lake's Storm Water Grant proposal were offered: local - adjacent to Houston Lake - city mayors, Parkhill High School track team, Houston Lake residents, City Council, VGHA, police and fire departments, local trails association to propose Houston Lake can be connected for possible future expansion. The grant committee will work out more details to be presented at the March City Council meeting ahead of the grant proposal deadline. Next committee meeting will be March 5, and all aldermen are invited to attend.

REPORT FROM CITY CLERK

Shepard suggested information should be shared with the community, ahead of April 8, regarding the election and proposition. Specifically, the fact that the North and South wards were recently abolished and explain the reduction in the tax levy for Fire Suppression. Need to determine what portion of the recent snow removal expense can be attributed to the needs of the fire department. She offered a Covid fund report - the need for her authorization to be updated in order to complete the reporting.

REPORTS FROM COUNCIL MEMBERS

Loring has spent all of her recent time on the bridge. Residents recently asked her what was going to be on the ballot in April and how to vote. She confirmed with the Council that she can share her personal views - the Council itself cannot advocate for any candidate or issue, especially publicizing views in the Houston Laker - only general information can be presented, by the City Council, in the Houston Laker.

Beshears mentioned a resident has reported a culvert collapse next to the road that needs to be repaired - perhaps both can be addressed at the same time. The auction for the selling of city owned equipment ended. The two snow plows sold for \$60 each. The salt spreader sold for \$700. He has a verbal bid to fix the basement - \$2,500 and the city will need to provide the paint and the vanity(s). Fuglestad asked for a detailed bid in writing.

Fuglestad has no other updates than what was already presented tonight.

Walker-Robin had no report.

NEXT MEETINGS AND ADJOURNMENT

The next Storm Water Grant Committee Meeting will be Wednesday, March 5, 2025 at 6:30 PM at City Hall. The next City Council meeting will be Wednesday, March 12, 2025 at 6:30 PM at City Hall. Then the next Working Meeting will be Wednesday, March 26, 2025 at 6:30 PM at City Hall.

Fuglestad adjourned the meeting at 8:00 PM.

Minutes submitted by: City Clerk, Lisa A. Shepard

Approved 03/19/2025

ADDYS AWARD IN HONOR OF RICK COWAN

Submitted by Wendy Thompson

Saturday night, February 22nd, the American Advertising Awards Show, commonly known as the Addys, presented the Rick Cowan Award for the Best Locally Filmed Commercial at the Uptown Theater in Kansas City. TorchHouse Studios received the trophy for the work they did on a commercial for UMKC School of Theatre and Dance.

This award is presented each year for work that was inspired by the standards set by the late Rick Cowan, a resident of Houston Lake for many years. The Addys Award was presented by Rachel Kephart, the Film Commissioner of Kansas City, and is funded by the KC Film Office each year. Wendy Thompson, Rick's widow, usually presents the trophy, but was unable to attend this year.

Rick was a filmmaker who produced three feature films, and over two hundred television commercials during his life, but he started out as a location scout. He discovered he had a special talent for finding exactly the scene the director envisioned. To him, the right location was an important character in the story he was telling, whether it was a thirty-second spot or a two-hour feature film. One of those perfect locations was right here on the lake.

Early in his career, Rick was scouting for a well-organized garage for a commercial shoot for Sutherland Lumber, which used to be in North Kansas City. They were looking for a garage that had exposed beams.

Rick noticed that feature in his neighbor's garage. Don Mackey let him take a look, amid lots of questions of course. So, Rick snapped some photos to show the director. The director liked the look and selected Don's garage as the star. At that point, the final negotiations began.

No one is ever really prepared to have a film crew descend on their property. Even though Rick was always honest about the scope of that endeavor, it can be overwhelming. Sure enough, as the trucks and cameras and lights and crew moved in, the entire neighborhood became concerned. Even Chuck Burgess, next door to Mackey's house, got involved by offering a place to park their food truck to feed the crew. As a resident of the community, Rick had taken for granted his authority to bring this commotion into the neighborhood. It wasn't until Mary Head, the mayor's wife at the time, asked 'what the heck was going on' that Rick saw that he needed to smooth some ruffled feathers. Since it was on private property and they weren't blocking the streets, a formal permit was not needed. Still, Rick did his best to make sure that everything ended well so that film crews would be welcomed back.

Don confirmed that it was a good experience, although he recently said he turned down another inquiry for the same thing a few years later. Once is enough. Rick knew better than to let a film crew shoot at his own house, although that decision may have been influenced by his wife.

A STORY FROM GENE CHARLES

Here is a case of curiosity gone horribly wrong:

The day after we arrived in the Philippines, we were taken to the Provost Marshal's office to have our photos taken for ID. The truck I was on had a 200 gallon aircraft tank with all of the openings uncovered, yet, guys were smoking around it anyway.

As we were rolling down the street the guy next to me lit his cigarette and moved his lighter dangerously close to a vent hole in the tank wondering if there were fumes in the tank. I couldn't believe what I was seeing.

Several guys were back on the truck and I was maybe 10 or 15 seconds from getting back on the truck when I heard a boom and saw an ugly ball of red and black fire above the tank. I thought I saw someone jump over the side of the truck.

One guy, Linsey, spent a month in the hospital with burns. He later became one of my best buddies. Fast forward to the present then back up several years. I had written a letter and located him. We were talking on the phone one day and he said that he had had his legs stretched across the top of the tank and when it split open it flipped him backwards over the side of the truck. I wanted to tell him, but didn't, that he was lucky that burns was all he got because if that had happened as we were rolling down the street it would, no doubt, have been a different outcome. The truck driver was reprimanded for hauling the tank around.

2025 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.

2025 Holidays:

January 1st New Years Day -

Pick up changed to Thursday January 2nd

May 26th Memorial Day - Pick

up changed to Thursday May 29th

July 4th Independence Day -

No Change pick up will be on Wednesday July 2nd

September 1st Labor Day -

Pick up changed to Thursday September 4th

November 27th

Thanksgiving - No Change
pick up will be on Wednesday
November 26th

December 25th Christmas -

No Change pick up will be on Wednesday
December 24th

2025 Recycling Dates (2nd Wednesday).

January 8	July 9
February 12	August 13
March 12	September 10
April 9	October 8
May 14	November 12
June 11	December 10

LAKE LIFE

April

1 - April Fools Day!

8 - General Municipal Elections

9 - Recycling Day

16- City Council Meeting
at City Hall 6:30pm

20 - Easter Sunday

21 - VGHA Semi-Annual Meeting
at City Hall 6:30pm

21 - Articles, photos and news
for the Laker are due

22 - Earth Day

25 - Arbor Day

26 - VGHA Lake Clean Up Day
9am-12noon Meet at City Hall

HOUSTON LAKE COOKBOOK

1st and 2nd Edition of the Houston Lake Cookbooks is available for \$3.00 each.

Email Mary Head at
maryjewel40@gmail.com or call her at
816-741-5639.

HOUSTON LAKE HISTORY BOOK

65 pages of the History of Houston Lake. \$5.00 each.

Email Mary Head at
maryjewel40@gmail.com or call her at
741-5639.

IN CASE OF A POLICE, FIRE
OR MEDICAL EMERGENCY - DIAL 911

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

Fire Non-Emergency Riverside Fire Department (816) 372-9024

Grinder Pump Haynes Equipment Services (913) 782-5013

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

Jesse Beshears nw2-

alderman@houstonlake.gov

Ashley Fuglestad (serving as Mayor)

sw1-alderman@houstonlake.gov

Sarah Loring

sw2-alderman@houstonlake.gov

VENETIAN GARDENS 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

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

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

THE WORKS by MARLENE

a licensed Style Salon

816-587-1550

by appointment only

In Houston Lake!

Over 35 years of experience

Convenient hours

Haircuts Uniquely for You

Specializing in Haircolor

Color Correction

Grey Coverage

Enhancing the Grey

Brow Shaping

Best wishes to you,
Marlene