Citizens elect two newcomers and three incumbents

Joplin citizens voted to return three Council members and elected two new members to join the City Council at the June 2 election. The municipal election was moved from its original April 7 date due to the COVID-19 public health emergency. Newcomers for the Council include Christina Williams and Charles “Chuck” Copple. Incumbents are Anthony Monteleone, Keenan Cortez, and Phil Stinnett.

General Seats:

Cortez and Williams were elected for a four-year term, and Monteleone will complete a two-year term.

Keenan Cortez, age 55, has been on the Council since 2019 following an appointment to fill the seat of Jim West following his resignation. Prior to his appointment, Cortez has served on various City boards, including the Joplin Police Citizens Advisory Committee, Public Safety Sales Tax Task Force, and the Planning and Zoning Commission.

Christina Williams, age 40, has served on the Solid Waste Advisory Commission Board and worked with community groups to have curbside recycling as an option for citizens. She also has been on the Parks and Recreation Board. She’s employed at Corner Greer Architects as a project designer and is active in the Downtown Joplin Association and Joplin Area Chamber of Commerce. She and her family have lived in Joplin for the past 13 years.

Anthony Monteleone, age 33, returns to Council to complete a two-year term. He was appointed to Council in 2018 to fill the seat until the next election. He is a video editor and has lived in Joplin for 24 years. He is a member of the Young Professionals Network of the Joplin Area Chamber of Commerce.
Citizens elect two newcomers and three incumbents

(continued from front page)

Zone 2
Chuck Copple, age 49, joins the Council after retiring from the Joplin Fire Department. He currently works as a senior field representative for Verisk. He served on the Proposition B Sales Tax Task Force to help disseminate information about the one-half cent sales tax that would close the current Police and Fire Pension Fund, allowing current and new members to join the LAGERS pension plan. He takes the seat previously held by Melodee Colbert-Kean who stepped down after 14 years of service which included serving as Mayor and Mayor Pro Tem for the Council.

Zone 3
Phil Stinnett, age 78, has 16 years of Council tenure. He was first elected in 1998 and served through 2010, including a term as Mayor. In 2016 he was re-elected as a write-in candidate. Prior to serving on Council, he served ten years on the City’s Building Board of Appeals. As a lifetime resident of Joplin, he has been active in the community holding various positions in youth sports organizations.

Stanley and Cortez elected to lead Council

After the seating of the newly elected City Council, Ryan Stanley was elected Mayor by his fellow council members. Stanley has been on the Council since 2014. He succeeds Gary Shaw as mayor.

Council also voted for Mayor Pro Tem, electing Keenan Cortez for the position. Cortez was reelected during this year’s election after being appointed to the Council in 2019 to fill the unexpired seat formerly held by Jim West.

To contact the Mayor or Mayor Pro Tem, please contact the City Clerk’s office at 417-624-0820, ext. 220.
New City Manager wants to hear from citizens

After being here for just a couple months, I have already experienced the friendliness, warmth and integrity of the people of Joplin. It truly is a wonderful community and I’m excited to work for a strong organization that takes pride in serving our citizens.

I am enjoying meeting many people from different sectors of Joplin including community leaders, business owners, entrepreneurs, volunteers, neighbors, and citizens. It’s been enlightening to hear from each one I’ve met.

Please take a minute and allow yourself to dream. As Joplin prepares for the future, I am looking to all of you for your input. To help with this, I have a simple survey with just five questions.

What makes Joplin special? What can we do better? What do you see as opportunities for Joplin? What’s our biggest threat? And what changes would you like for Joplin in the next five or ten years?

I encourage you to take this survey at www.surveymonkey.com/r/JoplinDream or please scan this QR code.

We also have the survey printed that you can find at the Joplin Public Library, Recycling Center, and City Hall’s Main Lobby.

I appreciate you taking the time to let me know your favorite things about Joplin, but also what needs improving. And I’m excited to hear what you want for Joplin’s future.

I’ll share my answer to the first question. What makes Joplin special to me is the people. You are hardworking and willing to help your neighbor. I’m hoping you’ll help me - one of your newest neighbors. I would like to learn more about what you expect for the future of our community.

Thank you. I hope to meet you soon!

Nick Edwards
City Manager

“Great Race” event to bring vintage cars to Joplin on August 24

On Monday, August 24, Joplin will host an overnight stop on the 2020 Hemmings Motor News Great Race presented by Hagerty Drivers Club Monday.

The Great Race will bring 120 of the world’s finest antique automobiles to town with the first car

The Great Race is not a speed race, but a time/speed/distance rally. The vehicles, each with a driver and navigator, are given precise instructions each day that detail every move down to the second. Scoring occurs along secret check points, with penalty of one second given for each second either early or late. As in golf, the lowest score wins.

Cars start – and hopefully finish – one minute apart if all goes according to plan. The biggest part of the challenge other than staying on time and following the instructions is getting an old car to the finish line, organizers say.

The public is welcome to come to the downtown finish line to view the cars as they cross the finish line between 5:00 and 8:00 p.m. It’s a great chance to view 120 vintage vehicles and visit with race participants. Local car clubs will be on display as well.

The 2020 Great Race starts in San Antonio, Texas on August 22, with Joplin hosting the end of the second day of this event. For more information, contact the Joplin Convention and Visitors Bureau at 417-625-4789.

- REMINDER -
Basketball goals & other items should not obstruct roadways

Please do not place basketball goals in or on the side of neighborhood streets. It is a violation of City Code, Sec. 106-7 “Unlawful obstructions and deposits”.

This creates a dangerous situation for both game participants and drivers passing by the area. We want to keep all of our citizens safe and appreciate your cooperation.
CONGRATULATIONS TO THE FOLLOWING EMPLOYEES ON THEIR RECENT PROMOTIONS.

Karsten Creech to Firefighter/EMT
William Davis to Police Captain
Brad Eichelberger to Fire Driver
Kenny Gubera to Equipment Operator in Street Maintenance, Public Works
Lindsey James to Recycling Coordinator
Anthony Mahder to Firefighter/EMT
Brian O’Dell to Communications Tech Manager
Dan Pekarek to Assistant City Manager
Ben Phillips to Fire Captain
Mike Redshaw to Fire Battalion Chief
Sloan Rowland to Police Chief
Trish Smith to Human Resources Assistant
Jason Stump to Police Sergeant
Taylor Sullivan to Airport Operations Worker
Jared Swann to Police Corporal
Tristan Weathers to Wastewater Lab Tech

Congratulations to the Planning, Development and Neighborhood Improvement Department and the Public Works Department along with Olsson Associates and Guidehouse for their work in recent infrastructure projects following the 2011 tornado. These partnerships and consulting services help bring best practices and better outcomes to the community.

Recently, Olsson Associates received an Engineering Excellence Award from the American Council of Engineering Companies of Missouri (ACEC Missouri) for their work with the City on the infrastructure projects completed. Receiving the Grand Conceptor and Grand Award, Olsson served as the City’s project manager for several large projects including the rebuilding of Main Street from 26th to 15th Streets; 20th Street, along with the numerous neighborhood surface projects that focused on streets, sidewalks, curbs and gutters in areas affected by the disaster.

Guidehouse, a firm to ensure compliance with planning, implementation and administration of funding received through the U.S. Dept. of Housing and Urban Development’s Community Development Block Grant Disaster Recovery program, has also been a strong partner throughout the City’s recovery work.

RETIRED

Thanks to the following employees for their service with the City:

Jan Clark, Community Health RN, from Health Dept., with nearly 15 years of service
Police Chief Matt Stewart, Police Captain Joe Moore, and Police Officer Justin Barnett with each serving 20 years with the JPD
Fire Captains Michael Adel and Aaron DeArmond with both having 20 years of service
Elizabeth Willhite, Neighborhood Improvement division after 5 ½ years of service
Rhonda Bloom, Nutritionist II in Health Dept. after 10 years of service

Get your permit before burning yard debris

Burn permits available at City Hall and Fire Stations 1,2,4, and 6

After cleaning the yard and gathering leaves and other yard debris, many plan to burn the piles. But before you light the match, remember – citizens need to get a Burn Permit for this chore. Currently, burn permits are only available from the City’s Finance Department or these fire stations:

- Fire Station 1, 303 East 3rd Street
- Fire Station 2, 2825 W Junge,
- Fire Station 4, 3402 S. Main
- Fire Station 6, 5302 W. 32nd Street

Due to the pandemic, Fire Stations 3 and 5 remained closed to the public. Permits cost $10 and are good for three consecutive days. The Finance Department, located on City Hall’s third floor, accepts cash, check, debit card, money order, or credit card payments. It is open 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday.

Permits are available at Fire Stations from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m., seven days per week. Please note there may be times when firefighters are not at the station to issue permits, due to the nature of their job. Please pay by check or money order if getting your permit at the Fire Station.

No matter where the Permit is obtained, residents must still inquire with the Joplin Fire Department about weather conditions and if burning is allowed on each day. Residents can obtain this information by calling the Joplin Fire Department at 417-623-0403.

The City ordinance allows for burning of residential vegetative waste only in piles no larger than three foot in diameter by two foot high. The burn piles must be located at least fifty feet from any structure and be monitored until extinguished. A fire extinguisher or garden hose shall be present during burning operations.
Library launches Summer Reading Program for all ages

Readers of all ages can explore favorite stories, rediscover classics, find new favorites, and imagine their own stories this summer during Joplin Public Library’s all-ages summer reading challenge. The 2020 Summer Reading Program, “Imagine Your Story”, is ongoing and continues through July 25.

Due to COVID-19, we have included the need to practice social distancing during the Summer Reading Program. Participants can track their progress on physical game boards, available on their website and at the library. For the first time ever, participants can now have the option to track their reading electronically!

By utilizing Beanstack, an online reading tracking platform, partakers can log reading and activities to document prizes earned. Beanstack awards badges for every hour read as well as for activities completed. Participants can redeem their virtual badges for prizes or entries into prize drawings.

Registering is easy! Visit https://joplinpubliclibrary.beanstack.org to register yourself or your whole family!

The 2020 Children’s Summer Reading Program is open to children ages 0-12 and is divided into three categories: pre-readers (ages 0-4), early readers (ages 5-8), and readers (ages 9-12). For each level completed (two levels total), participants will earn a free book!

Our summer reading events will look different this year as well. Check out upcoming events at www.joplinpubliclibrary.org

Beanstack is also being utilized for both the Teen Summer Reading Challenge, open to teens in grades 6-12, and the Adult Summer Reading Program, open to adults ages 18 and up. This program will help participants track and monitor activity progress to earn prizes. Opportunities for entries into the grand prize drawing will also be available.

Participants can pick up physical game boards during the library’s hours; they may also download game boards at http://www.joplinpubliclibrary.org/summer-reading-program/

All programs are free of charge and no library card is required to participate in the summer reading challenges. For more information, call the library at 417-623-7953 or visit our website.
**Back to school vaccinations available at Health Department**

The first day of school in Joplin is August 13. Now is the perfect time to get vaccinated!

The Joplin City Health Department has vaccinations required for school. We want to help you make sure your child is prepared. **If your child lives within the Joplin city limits or is enrolled in a Joplin public or private school, we want to offer assistance.** Appointments are now being spaced for safety. Only one parent may enter the building with the student, and we only vaccinate one child at a time – if you have more than one child, please bring an adult to wait in the car, and we will rotate them in. Anyone over the age of 2 should wear a mask when entering the building. If you do not have a mask, please wear a scarf to cover your nose and mouth.

**We provide immunizations for the uninsured or underinsured, and those with Medicaid. We also accept many area insurances. You may call ahead to verify coverage.**

Tdap is required for entry into the 8th grade. Another requirement is two doses of Meningococcal (MCV) before grade 12. Your child may be denied entry into school without these mandatory immunizations.

Avoid the back to school rush and call now to schedule an appointment during our regularly scheduled immunization clinics BEFORE school starts.

Immunizations will be given in the upper level entrance (West side) of the Joplin Health Department, 321 E. Fourth Street. **Please note that a parent/guardian ID and the child’s Social Security Number and immunization record is required, so bring them with you to the clinic.**

For questions about immunizations, please call the medical division of the Health Department at 417-623-6122, ext. 257.
Joplin Bungalows provides permanent housing for seniors and homeless veterans

Through a diverse partnership of community agencies and agencies, a housing program dedicated to serving homeless veterans and seniors has opened. This is one of the largest partnerships assembled dedicated to housing.

The project, Joplin Bungalows, LLC, was introduced to both fill the void of affordable, permanent senior housing within the Joplin area and address the Mayor’s Challenge to Address Veteran Homelessness. Groundbreaking for 20 bungalow-style homes was held in March 2019 and residents moved in this spring. They are located at 2617 McCoy Avenue.

Joplin Bungalows brought together many, including the City of Joplin, Economic Security Corporation, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), Vecino Group, Southwest Missouri Bank (SMB), Joplin Housing Authority and The Homeless Coalition.

“The City recognized the need for affordable senior housing early in the recovery process following the tornado,” said Joplin Assistant Planning Director, Patty Heagel. “We are fortunate that the Economic Security Corporation took the initiative to create a ‘neighborhood and front porch’ concept to house some of the City’s most vulnerable populations.”

Residents were greeted into their home with furnishings, welcome baskets and other amenities donated by area churches and organizations. Furniture donors were St. Thomas the Apostle Episcopal Church, SMB, South Joplin Christian Church, Horizon Bank, Joyce and David Hair, John Vaughn, St. Paul’s United Methodist Church’s Lamplighters and United Healthcare. Ozark Center sponsored a new pet exercise area. The Elks Lodge Women’s Auxiliary provided “welcome home” bags. St. Paul’s also provided “Welcome to the Neighborhood” baskets.

Funding for this project was through the Community Development Block Grant-Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) program offered to the City of Joplin from HUD following the May 2011 disaster.

“We want to thank our partners that worked tirelessly to bring this dream to fruition,” said Debbie Markman, ESC Resource Development Director. “There were many and we appreciate everyone involved.”

If interested in viewing the apartments and would like to fill out an application, please call Audre Lentz at 417-622-0022.

Strong rebound from tornado allows City to close Recovery TIF several years earlier than planned

Strong recovery efforts following the 2011 disaster were evident as new businesses opened and residential areas were populated with homes for displaced families. This rebound was not only evident in the City’s landscape, but was also proven in strong tax revenues through these past few years that has allowed the City to close the Recovery TIF (Tax Increment Financing) District created in 2013 to help stimulate Joplin’s rebuilding efforts.

Following the 2011 disaster, a TIF District was established as part of Joplin’s recovery plan. The “Recovery TIF”, as City and community officials referred to it, was approved to help facilitate recovery and economic revitalization in a planned manner. To achieve this goal, the Joplin Redevelopment Corporation (JRC) issued TIF bonds in 2013 for two separate purposes. The bond proceeds were used to:

1) purchase additional property for planned redevelopment, and;
2) provide the local match for the Economic Development Authority (EDA) grant that was used to build the new Joplin Public Library.

The Recovery TIF is the largest TIF district on record for Missouri and included portions of the city most impacted by the tornado and the downtown area. In total, it consisted of 3,129 acres with 6,142 parcels. Thanks to strong performance, the TIF is closing about nine years earlier than anticipated by City leaders, and will direct tax dollars back to other public entities. The early repayment of the bonds resulted in interest savings of over $8 million on behalf of residents and visitors to our community.

“The sheer size of the TIF area has helped our progress and the collections have been strong,” said Mayor Gary Shaw. “It is exceptional to be able to close the TIF district this early. It will help all of our community as we continue to grow and seek new opportunities.”

Closing the TIF allows sales and property taxes that went into to the TIF to go to the City, the Joplin School District and other taxing jurisdictions. An estimated amount of $3.8 million will be dispersed including about $1.7 million for Joplin Schools; $445,000 for Jasper County; $100,000 for Joplin Special Roads District, and $44,000 for Jasper County 911. The City of Joplin will receive an estimated $1.3 million for its general fund and special sales taxes to support public safety, parks and stormwater, transportation and capital improvements projects.

“The sales tax collections from this area far exceeded the projections when the TIF was formed,” said City Finance Director Leslie Haase. “This is a reflection of the successful recovery of our community following a disaster of this magnitude.”

If interested in viewing the apartments and would like to fill out an application, please call Audre Lentz at 417-622-0022.
Joplin Museum offers One Small Step: The History of the American Space Program

The United States was caught completely off-guard by the Soviet launch of Sputnik, the first man-made satellite to orbit the Earth, in October 1957. This event spurred the U.S. to seriously pursue its space program, beginning the Cold War race to be the first to put a man on the surface of the moon.

Learn the history of our country’s first steps into space, its triumphs and failures, and ultimate success in the exploration of space, the moon, our solar system, and even landing a mechanical explorer on the face of Mars, through original documents and artifacts from the collection of Allen Shirley. Learn the fascinating stories of these First Small Steps.

The exhibit, “One Small Step: The History of the American Space Program” is hosted by the Joplin History & Mineral Museum from July 18 through September 5. Admission to the museum is $3 per person, with ages 12 and under free. Children must attend with an adult please.

Please call the museum at 417-623-1180, or email joplinmuseum@sbcglobal.net for hours and policies during COVID-19 recovery.

This exhibit is from the collection of Joplin resident Allen Shirley.

Citizen newsletter schedule resumes

If you think you missed the spring edition of this newsletter, you didn’t. The City did not publish an April newsletter due to the coronavirus pandemic. The City’s capacity to keep routine communications with the public becomes strained during a crisis, as we work to address the needs during a disaster. We appreciate your understanding.

The normal quarterly schedule resumes with this summer edition. We hope you enjoy it. For suggestions about topics, please contact Lynn Onstot, Public Information Officer, at 417-624-0820, ext. 204.