

the town crier

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Ellis, Kansas

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On Tuesday, May 28th, the Public Works Department began working summer hours from 7:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.



FIREWORKS

Submitted by Verda Flinn, Assistant City Clerk

We would like to inform the Ellis community of the permitted dates and hours for the discharge of fireworks. Per Resolution No. 608, the permitted dates and hours of discharge of fireworks in 2024 shall be the dates of *July 4th and 5th between the hours of 9:00 a.m. and midnight.* Please observe the dates and times set by Council.

As a reminder to have a safe and fun Fourth of July, please remember to douse your fireworks with water before disposing of them in a proper manner. When your fireworks show is done,

be a good neighbor and clean up your discarded fireworks in the streets and adjacent properties.

The Ellis Police Department would also like to remind you that it is unlawful to discharge fireworks from any public area, including streets and city parks. It is also unlawful to discharge fireworks in the path of any person, group of persons, animal or vehicle.

Have fun and celebrate responsibly!

GRASS

Proper Use of Grass Carts

Submitted by Verda Flinn, Assistant City Clerk

Following the recent hail storm, the City has received several inquiries about whether small twigs broken off trees can be placed in the grass carts. We would like to remind our community that grass carts are exclusively for grass clippings mowed and bagged with a lawn mower. These clippings can be placed directly into the grass carts without being bagged. The sanitation crew empties the grass carts on Mondays and transports the clippings to a local farmer who uses them to feed his cattle. Therefore,

who uses them to feed his cattle. Therefore, please be mindful of what you place in the grass carts.

If you have items other than grass clippings, please bag them and place them in the trash cart, or contact the Clerk's office at 785-726-4812 to schedule a special pickup.



Swimming Pool

PENING/CLOSING POLICY

Submitted by Amy Burton, City Administrator/Clerk

City staff strive to keep the pool open every day; however, Mother Nature sometimes has other plans! It never fails that we get springtime temperatures or storms in the middle of summer. The City's pool opening/closing policy is as such:

- If the water and air temperatures are 70 degrees or above at 12:30 p.m., the pool will open at 12:30 p.m.
- If the water and air temperatures are less than 70 degrees at 12:30 p.m., the temperatures will be reevaluated at 1:30 p.m. If, at that time, the water and air temperatures are 70 degrees or above, the pool will open at 1:30 p.m. If they are not, the pool will remain closed for the day.
- In the event of stormy weather, all patrons will be asked to leave the pool area for 30 minutes. If the weather does not clear, the pool will close at that time. In the case of lightning, the pool may reopen 30 minutes after the last visible lightning
- The pool reserves the right to close early due to the lack of patrons (less than 5 patrons for at least 30 minutes, with evaluation starting at 2:30 p.m. - so the earliest the pool would close would be 3:00 p.m.)
- Illness/Accident (fecal, vomiting or blood incidents): the pool will be cleared for at least 30 minutes while the pool is shocked. If the incident is such that longer chemical treatment is necessary, the pool will close.

All pool closings are at the discretion of City staff. We want to ensure that everyone has a safe and enjoyable experience at the pool. We will exercise caution in making sure the pool is safe to use!





Flooding in Ellis

Submitted by Steve Homburg, Certified Floodplain Manager

Parts of the City of Ellis are in a Special Flood Hazard Area (SFHA). These areas are susceptible to flooding from Big Creek or the tributaries of Big Creek. If you live in the SHFA, Flood Insurance should be considered. To see if your house is protected from flooding, contact your insurance agent. For renters and home owners, contents insurance is available for flooding. There is a 30-day waiting period for the policy to take effect, so waiting for a flood to occur, then buying a policy will not work.

If there is water running across a street or road. Turn Around, Don't Drown is a message that could save your life.

It is a good idea to store any valuable records and possessions in a water tight container.



Always check at the Public Works Office before any building or improvements are started to see if you need a building permit and a floodplain permit.

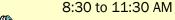
Keeping trees and other brush cleared in the natural drainage of the town keeps the water flowing and stops it from backing up and causing a rise in the water level.

ELLIS RECYCLING CENTER



HOURS

Mon, Tues, Thurs, Fri & 1st and 3rd Sat of Month







Wednesday – 3:00 to 7:00 PM



Who Let the Dogs Out?

Submitted by Avery Smith, Chief of Police

Several times a week, the Ellis Police Department is dispatched to calls for service concerning a dog running at large. Ellis City Code prohibits dogs running at large. Ellis City Code 2-206 states that;

RUNNING AT LARGE; FINE.

- (a) It shall be unlawful for the owner or harborer of any dog to permit such dog to run at large within the city at any time;
- (b) Any dog running at large within the city shall be impounded as set out in section 2-207;
- (c) For the offense of an animal running at large the owner or harborer claiming any dog shall pay the board bill for the dog in addition to a fine to be set by Resolution of the City of Ellis, Kansas, which increases incrementally for subsequent offenses.

A conviction for the first offense of Dog at Large carries a \$90 fine, and the fine increases incrementally for each subsequent conviction.

Currently, the impound fees set forth by Ellis City Council are as follows:

• \$30 for the first calendar day, and \$20 for each calendar day after that. The per day fee increases by \$5 if the total average price per gallon of gas in Ellis is over \$3.75/gal. This price increase is due to our dog impound caretaker driving from Hays to care for our impounded dogs.

In recent weeks, the Ellis Police Department has taken several calls about dogs attacking our community members or their pets. We must remind our community members that if your dog attacks another animal or attacks another community member, you could be subject to significant fines and penalties, as well as have to comply with a strict set of guidelines as ordered by the Municipal Court. If your animal is territorial or aggressive, please do your part to keep the community at





Crunching Numbers!

Submitted by Amy Burton, City Administrator/Clerk

I can't believe we are already planning for 2025! However, it is that time of the year again where Council starts building the annual budget, which is one of their most important duties. The budget is important because it gives the City authority to spend. Without an approved budget, the City wouldn't have the authority to pay for repairs, personnel, utilities, maintenance or equipment. In the coming months, Council will once again take on the task of determining the next years funding priorities for the City. Numerous equipment items in the Public Works Department are well past their life expectancy, and many of the City's buildings need maintenance items completed.

As you experience an increase in your monthly personal expenses, the City experiences those same cost increases also. The Council works hard to make sure your tax dollars are used wisely. During the budget process, Council sometimes has to consider hard decisions, such as having to forgo certain services or increasing fees for those services. All of these situations, and many more, are closely evaluated each year during the budget process.

Municipalities must budget under the provisions of the "Tax Transparency Act", which prohibits a city from levying a single dollar more than the prior year without a Revenue Neutral Rate hearing. We are allowed to hold the Revenue Neutral Rate hearing on the same night as our annual budget hearing.

My goal this year will be to again propose a budget to Council that will use our tax dollars efficiently and effectively. The budget process is very time consuming - City staff and Council spend many hours getting all the pieces to fit together. However, the City's goal in the end is to approve a budget that will allow the same level of services, while trying to maintain a balance between fees charged and expenditures for operation. Please stay tuned for the September issue of the *Town Crier* for details of the approved 2025 budget.



While doing your yard work, please remember that the City's

BURN SITE

accepts ONLY tree limbs, branches and brush.

The Site does *NOT* accept grass, leaves, lumber, or miscellaneous wooden items.

Take your grass, leaves and garden waste to the COMPOST SITE.





All programs are at the Ellis Public Library unless noted otherwise. 907 Washington, Ellis, Kansas 67637 785-726-3464 Submitted by Steve Arthur, Ellis Public Librarian



Neighborhood Revitalization Plan

Submitted by Amy Burton, City Administrator/Clerk

The City Council approved Resolution No. 606 formally adopting a Neighborhood Revitalization Plan (NRP). The plan is intended "to promote the revitalization and development of the City of Ellis." If eligible, participants will be provided tax rebates for new construction or improvements to existing properties. The entire City of Ellis is included in the Plan!

- Improvements and new construction must conform to all applicable building/fire codes, rules and regulations in effect at the time improvements are made.
- Tax rebate will be based on the increase of appraised value on January 1, the year after completion of the project. That fixed dollar differential will be the incremental difference used for calculating the tax rebate for the entire 10 years.
- Applications MUST be submitted and approved prior to starting any project.

The Plan requires a minimum investment of **\$15,000** for residential improvements, or **\$25,000** for commercial properties for eligibility.

95% of the increase in taxes (based on assessed value after improvements) paid in the first year after completion of the project and each year thereafter for 10 years will be eligible for rebate.

Please visit our website at www.ellis.ks.us or the City Clerk's office for an application!



Junked Motor Vehicles

Submitted by Avery Smith, Chief of Police

The Ellis Police Department has received numerous complaints about junked or abandoned motor vehicles around town. Ellis City Code, Chapter VIII, Article 3 uses the following definitions as they pertain to this ordinance:

- (a) <u>Inoperable</u> means a condition of being junked, wrecked, wholly or partially dismantled, discarded, abandoned or unable to perform the function or purpose for which it was originally constructed.
- (b) <u>Vehicle</u> means, without limitation, any automobile, truck, tractor or motorcycle which as originally built contained an engine, regardless of whether it contains an engine at any other time.

Article 3 further states that;

NUISANCES UNLAWFUL; DEFINED; EXCEPTIONS. It shall be unlawful for any person to maintain or permit any motor vehicle nuisance within the city.

(a) <u>A motor vehicle nuisance</u> is any motor vehicle which is not currently registered or tagged pursuant to K.S.A. 8-126 to 8-149 inclusive, as amended; or parked in violation of city ordinance; or incapable of moving under its own power; or in a junked, wrecked or inoperable condition.

Any one of the following conditions shall raise the presumption that a vehicle is junked, wrecked or inoperable;

- (1) Absence of a current registration plate upon the vehicle;
- (2) Placement of the vehicle or parts thereof upon jacks, blocks, or other supports;
- (3) Absence of one or more parts of the vehicle necessary for the lawful operation of the vehicle upon street or highway.
- (b) The provisions of this section shall not apply to:
 - (1) Any motor vehicle which is enclosed in a garage or other building;
 - (2) To the parking or storage of a vehicle inoperable for a period of 30 consecutive days or less; or
 - (3) To any person conducting a business enterprise in compliance with existing zoning regulations or who places such vehicles behind screening of sufficient size, strength and density to screen such vehicles from the view of the public and to prohibit ready access to stored vehicles by children. However, nothing in this subsection shall be construed to authorize the maintenance of a public nuisance.

Throughout the summer months, Officers will be making a concerted effort to address junked motor vehicles. Officers will begin by speaking to community members about their options and work with them to remedy the situation. If a remedy cannot be made, Officers will then serve the owners with notices of non-compliance that gives the owner 10 days to remedy the situation before the matter is set before the municipal court. Fines for junked motor vehicles are \$100 per day after the 10-day non-compliance notice expires.

I was recently notified that there are several charitable organizations that will remove junked or inoperable motor vehicles free of charge, and will even provide a tax-deductible receipt for owners of the vehicle. All you need to do is contact them and have a title available for the vehicle. These resources are listed below for our community members to utilize if they so choose.

Junked Motor Vehicle Resources

Cars Helping Veterans: www.carshelpingveterans.org/donate-a-car/
Vehicle must have a title present or available • Vehicle doesn't need to be operational
Vehicles for Veterans: www.vehiclesforveterans.org/car-donation-form/
Vehicle must have a title present or available • Vehicle doesn't need to be operational
Habitat for Humanity: www.habitat.org • 1(877)277-4344

Vehicle must have a title present or available • Vehicle doesn't need to be operational Vehicles for Change: www.vehiclesforchange.org/online-car-donation/

Vehicle must have a title present or available • Vehicle doesn't need to be operational **Make-a-Wish Foundation:** www.wheelsforwishes.org/junk-car-no-title/

No title required in Kansas, if you have applied for a duplicate title • Vehicle doesn't need to be operational Catholic Charities of SW KS: https://careasy.org/nonprofit/Catholic-Charities-of-Southwest-Kansas • 1(844)313-4483 Vehicle must have a title present or available • Vehicle doesn't need to be operational

📤 DEA Drug Take-Back Day

Submitted by Avery Smith, Chief of Police

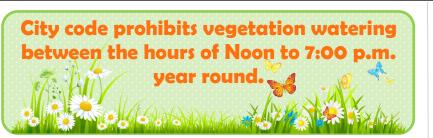
Police Departments and Sheriff's Offices across the United States partnered with the Drug Enforcement Administration on April 27th to provide a safe, confidential, and effective way for our community members to dispose of their unused, unwanted, or expired prescription and over-the-counter drugs. The Ellis Police Department received approximately 20lbs of unwanted drugs! We look forward to making this a yearly event that we provide to our community!



City of Ellis Vision Statement

A truly unique Kansas community,
Ellis celebrates its rich heritage of
friendly people that value family and
strong work ethics while actively
promoting quality education
and public services.

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Adventures Await?

Submitted by Verda Flinn, Tourism Committee Member

Get ready to step out and explore the incredible attractions Kansas has to offer—for free! Discover how the program works by taking a test run at our local attractions. The Ellis Railroad Museum & Doll Display and the Walter P. Chrysler Boyhood Home Museum are providing free admission through the Sunflower Summer program for Kansas families. This is a fantastic opportunity to explore with the kids and create lasting memories. You might even enjoy it so much that you'll want to road trip to the other 200+ locations

participating in the program.



To start your family's adventure, scan the QR code and follow the steps below to sign up for the Kansas Sunflower Program. Once you're registered, your family is ready for a fun-filled journey. Why not kick it off right in your hometown? Our community museums are open and eager to showcase their treasures.





Summer Fire Safety Tips

Submitted by Chris Cline, Lieutenant

As the warmth of summer calls us outdoors for barbecues, camping trips, and fireworks displays, it's essential to keep fire safety at the forefront of our minds. The combination of dry weather, increased outdoor activities, and the use of fire in various forms can significantly raise the risk of accidental fires. Here are some key tips to ensure a safe and enjoyable summer:

1. Grill Safety

- Positioning: Always place your grill at least 10 feet away from your house, deck railings, and overhanging branches. Ensure it is on a flat, stable surface to prevent tipping.
- Maintenance: Regularly clean your grill to remove grease buildup, which can ignite and cause dangerous flare-ups.
- Supervision: Never leave a lit grill unattended.
 Keep children and pets at a safe distance to avoid accidental burns.

2. Fireworks Safety

- Legal Compliance: Only use fireworks that are legal in your area. Follow all local laws and guidelines regarding their use.
- Adult Supervision: Ensure that fireworks are handled and ignited by responsible adults. Keep spectators at a safe distance.
- Precautionary Measures:
 Have a bucket of water or a hose ready to douse any accidental fires. Never attempt to relight malfunctioning fireworks.

3. Yard Maintenance

 Clear Debris: Remove dead vegetation, leaves, and other flammable materials from your yard. Keep gutters and roofs clear of debris to reduce the risk of ignition.



 Safe Storage: Store flammable liquids, like gasoline, in approved containers away from living areas. Keep them in a cool, dry place.

By following these fire safety tips, you can help ensure that your summer remains a season of fun and relaxation, free from the dangers and disruptions of accidental fires. Always prioritize safety and be prepared to call 911 in case of an emergency.

The Ellis Fire Department wishes everyone a safe and fun summer.

City of Ellis MISSION STATEMENT

The City of Ellis efficiently promotes infrastructure and beautification programs, supporting community growth while preserving its intrinsic small town charm.



Save the Wall Project

Submitted by Karen Day, Cemetery Committee Member

The wall that was built by the WPA (Works Projects Administration) in 1940 around the Mt. Hope Cemetery is deteriorating. The caps on the top need replaced as shown in the photos. The caps help to protect the wall from water running and snow sitting on top of the limestone blocks. Also, there is the fact of safety that a cap does not come loose and fall on someone. There is also some tuck pointing that will need to be performed.

The City of Ellis has been putting money aside every year to fund this project, but at the rate the caps are failing and the cost to repair them, it will be a race to see which will happen first. There is already \$50,000 set aside, but estimates for replacement a few years ago was around \$100,000. With inflation, the cost will probably be more. The longer it is put off, the higher the expense will be.

The Cemetery Committee is started a fundraising campaign to obtain the money necessary to renovate the wall caps. On Memorial Day, the committee was at Mt. Hope taking donations. They also plan to be at Riverfest on June 15th accepting donations. If you would like to donate to this project you can send your contribution to the City of Ellis, 815 Jefferson, Ellis, KS 67637. Make sure to put in the memo "Mt. Hope Cemetery Project".







Tree Maintenance

Submitted by John Leiker, Public Works Director

As trees have turned green along city streets and sidewalks, they have started to hang lower from the extra weight. City ordinance Chapter XIII, Article 4, Section 1 states:

13-401. GROWING AND PLANTING TREES.

It shall be unlawful for the owner or occupant of any lots abutting upon and adjacent to any sidewalk line of any public street, to plant, care for, grow, keep or maintain any trees, shrubbery or hedge so that any branch, limb or part thereof shall project over the sidewalk line at any time lower than eight (8) feet above the surface of the sidewalk or the established sidewalk grade where there is no sidewalk, or lower than thirteen (13) feet from the traveled portion of any street, avenue or alley used for vehicular traffic, regardless of whether the trunks of such trees be within or without the lot line or on the inner or outer side of the sidewalk or sidewalk space. No person shall plant any tree within ten (10) feet of any curb.

13-402. DUTIES OF OWNERS OR OCCUPANTS.

It shall be the duty of all owners or occupants of lots, tracts, or pieces of land, to trim and keep trimmed all trees on or opposite their respective lots or tracts of land so as to comply with the requirements of section 13-401 of this article, and upon failure of any owner or occupant to cut or trim any trees, shrubbery, or hedge overhanging, obstructing, or interfering with public travel on any sidewalk or street of the city, the same may be done by the city in the manner hereinafter provided.

13-403. WHEN PROPERTY OWNER NEGLECTS DUTY.

Whenever any property owner or occupant whose duty it is to keep the trees, shrubbery and hedges trimmed or cut, as provided in section 13-402, shall fail to do so, the public works supervisor/city superintendent shall report the same to the city clerk. The city clerk shall serve notice or cause notice to be served on such owner, requiring the obstructions to be trimmed or cut forthwith. If the owner or occupant shall fail to trim or cause such trees, shrubbery or hedge to be trimmed or cut in accordance with the notice within fifteen (15) days after the same shall be served by the Ellis Police Department, the public works supervisor/city superintendent or some other competent person authorized by the city council shall trim such trees, hedge or shrubbery or cut down or remove the same as may be necessary to remove any such obstruction. The work shall be done in a careful and workmanlike manner as not to injure or destroy any such tree, shrubbery or hedge. Thereupon, a report of the cost of doing the work shall be reported to the city clerk, and the clerk shall certify the cost thereof to the county clerk to be taxed against any such lot or tract of ground on which or in front of the which trees, hedge or shrubbery may be located; provided, that in the event the owner of the property is unknown or the property unoccupied, the notice hereinbefore required shall be published once in the official city paper requiring that the obstruction be removed with fifteen (15) days; provided further, that if there is great danger to life or property by reason of any such obstruction, the same may be removed forthwith by the city superintendent without any notice.

Please keep this in mind as you begin yard work this year. Thank you.



HOLIDAY TRASH SCHEDULE

Thursday, July 4 Thursday & Friday trash routes will be run NO trash pickup.

City closed for **INDEPENDENCE DAY** observation.

Monday, September 2 Tuesday, September 3 NO grass or trash pickup on LABOR DAY

Monday grass and Monday & Tuesday trash routes will be run







Coming to Fruition

Submitted by Verda Flinn, Assistant City Clerk

The Council has voted to collaborate with Mindy's Murals to create a new mural on the south side of the municipal building. Mindy Allen, a talented artist known for her murals across the State of Kansas, will be bringing the Council's vision to life. This mural will integrate the City's incorporation date, historical figures, architecture, and sunflowers to create a captivating visual story that invites visitors to explore, learn, and connect with our community's past, present, and future.

Additionally, the Council has directed the Clerk's office to apply for grants to help offset the cost of the project. Applications have been submitted for the Office of Rural Prosperity Rural Mural & Public Art Grant and the Dane G. Hansen Foundation Grant, and we are awaiting notification of the awards.

As Ms. Allen brings this vision to fruition, the Council looks forward to an artwork that will be cherished and admired for generations to come.





Swimming Pool Passes

Submitted by Amy Burton, City Administrator/Clerk

The City will once again offer 15-day and 30-day passes for both children and adults; however, passes will no longer be maintained by the pool staff. We have designed a business-sized laminated punch card that will need to be presented for entry. Passes are now simplified by no longer being designated by person, but simply adult or child. The passes do not expire and will be available for sale at the pool.

Children 6-12	15-day pass	\$21.00
	30-day pass	
Adults 13 and Up	15-day pass	\$28.00
Adults 13 and Up	30-day pass	\$54.00



Summertime Fun at the Pool!

Submitted by Amy Burton, City Administrator/Clerk

We are super excited to welcome everyone back as we kick off the 2024 pool season on May 28th at 12:30 p.m.! Our regular hours will be 12:30 p.m. - 6:00 p.m. each day with *adult open swim* and *water aerobics* on Monday's and Wednesday's from 6:15 p.m. - 7:15 p.m.

There will be two sessions of *Swimming Lessons*: the first session will be held June 17th – June 28th and the second session will be July 8th – July 19st. DEADLINE FOR SWIMMING LESSON SIGNUP: Session 1 – June 14, 2024; Session 2 – July 5, 2024. Costs per session is \$25.00 for the first child in the immediate family; \$20.00 for the second child in the immediate family; and \$15.00 for the third child and any other subsequent children in immediate family. Sessions must be paid for at the same time in order to receive the discount. Class sizes may be limited!

Our daily admission fees remain unchanged:

5 and under - Free • Age 6 to 12 - \$1.50 • Age 13 and over - \$2.00 Open Swim/Water Aerobics - \$3.00

15-Day and 30-Day passes are also available! (see left for pricing)

We also offer *pool parties!* Private parties may be scheduled from 6:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m. on Friday, Saturday and Sundays. The fee is \$75.00 per party, or \$100.00 if you wish to have access to the pool slide. A \$25 non-refundable deposit will secure your pool party date, with the balance due the day of the party.

Please contact the Pool Staff to sign up for swimming lessons, to purchase pool passes, or schedule a pool party. There is something for everyone at the Ellis Municipal Swimming Pool!



calendar

JULY



- 3 City Council 6:30 pm
 - Municipal Court 8:00 am
- 14 FLAG DAY

Signup Deadline Session I Swim Lessons

- 16 FATHER'S DAY
- 17 City Council 6:30 pm

Swim Lessons: June 17 to June 28

24 Planning Comm 7:00 pm

- City Council 6:30 pm
- 4 FREE Swim at Pool
- 5 INDEPENDENCE DAY Observed City offices closed Signup Deadline Session II
- Swim Lessons
 Swim Lessons: July 8 to July 19
- 15 City Council 6:30 pm
- 19 Municipal Court 8:00 am
- 22 Planning Comm 7:00 pm

AUGUST

- 2 Municipal Court 8:00 am
- 5 City Council 6:30 pm
- 16 Municipal Court 8:00 am
- 19 City Council 6:30 pm 26 Planning Comm 7:00 pm





Emergency Alert System

Submitted by Verda Flinn, Assistant City Clerk

The City of Ellis implemented an alert system through Nixle that will send out a text/email if there is an emergency situation, or even if a water leak is in your area. All you have to do is **OPT IN** to receive notifications for free. There are two ways to sign up below.

- ❖ TEXT "ELLISCITY" to 888777 and follow prompts.
- ❖ Go to www.nixle.com and click on "Resident Login", then click on GREEN "Sign Up" box.

If you sign up through text, you will still need to go to www.nixle.com to set up an account in order to select notification preferences. On the "Settings" tab, mark the box for City of Ellis. On the "Locations" tab, we strongly encourage putting your address in. This will enable us to ONLY send out messages relevant to your neighborhood, i.e. waterline breaks, police activity, etc.

The alert system is a great way to stay informed! If you are not sure how to set it up, please call the Clerk's Office (785) 726-4812 or stop by, and we will help you.